Core and a Physics Major

Core is a community of faculty and students who value ideas and who share an ongoing conversation about the texts, inventions and discoveries that have shaped our world.

In Core, majors and faculty from a wide variety of disciplines come together in small discussion classes capped at 16 students, to examine the most fundamental questions of human life. Students learn to think beyond the boundaries of any particular discipline and develop the perspective necessary for creative and innovative thought.

First-year students in a demanding major such as Physics particularly benefit from the close personal relation with faculty and other students that Core provides, both in class and in opportunities such as

- Scholarships for Summer Study Abroad in Athens
- Specialty Core housing in central campus
- The Devlin Award for excellence in writing, and the Core Polytropos Award for seniors
- Visits to the Museum of Fine Arts, Symphony Hall, and the opera
- Student-run Core activities, including our annual student-run Corte Journal

Core aims to explore the connections between the Natural Sciences and the Humanities and Social Sciences, giving Physics students a vantage point from which to consider the relation of science to the other disciplines.

>> For example, CC 101—the first-year Core Humanities course—explores the literature and culture of the Hebrew Bible, Mesopotamia, and Ancient Greece, and looks at the two creation stories in Genesis in comparison to evolution and the Big Bang, topics discussed in the Core science courses. CC 102 examines the relation of human beings and nature in authors as diverse as Aristotle, Confucius, Laozi and Dante.

>> CC 112 and 211, the Core Social Sciences, examine how human beings’ “natural” condition is seen by social theorists alongside the development of modern, scientific approaches to the study of society.

>> Finally, CC 201 and 202—the second-year Humanities—round out a student’s liberal education by examining the literature, philosophy, art, and music that brought us to the modern world. Along with CC 212, CC 202 returns us to 21st century America with a new ability to understand the world we live in.

Since Core satisfies all Hub and Writing requirements, interested students have ample time to complete the program. Natural Science students can complete Core by taking the four Humanities and two Social Science classes, and may choose to spread these out over three or even four years of study. Students who complete Core have “Completed the Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum in Arts and Sciences” recorded on their official Boston University transcript.

Students who complete the Core with a grade of at least B+ in their Core classes are eligible for Core Honors. Students generally take CC 101 / 102 their freshman year. However, as long as the Humanities are taken in order, Core classes can be taken at any time during your BU career.

For more information contact Prof. Nelson at nelson@bu.edu / 617-353-5404 or Chris McMullen in the Advising Office: cmcmull@bu.edu / 617-353-2400.

Whenever you’re on campus, please feel free to stop by the Core Office for a visit. We’re in CAS 119, 685 Commonwealth Ave, by the Tsai Auditorium, near the GSU.