

# Academic Programs: Introduction & Curriculum Overview

At the heart of the Albion Experience is an intellectually stimulating commitment to the liberal arts. Albion's core curriculum is a program of learning that is initiated with the First-Year Seminar and culminates with the conferring of the bachelor's degree. Students begin their academic careers in a First-Year Seminar designed to familiarize them with the liberal arts tradition in an intimate classroom environment that fosters open communication, nurtures critical thinking, and promotes improvement in writing and speaking. Albion is committed to having students complete their undergraduate education with an experience that brings continuity, coherence and focus to their academic course work and that involves the students themselves, soon-to-be graduates, as teachers, facilitators and presenters.

Between the First-Year Seminar and graduation, students complete other core courses: five Modes of Inquiry courses and four category requirements. These courses provide analytic tools for understanding the world, offer rich and complex accounts of social life, encourage examination of these accounts, and contribute to a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of learning and living in a global community. In addition, courses are distributed across the four divisions of the College: fine arts, humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, and social sciences. The liberal arts core serves as the impetus and context for lifelong learning, preparing students for the phase after college when they must themselves provide education and expertise as well as continue to learn, collaborate, and facilitate at home, at work, and in a local and global community.

In addition to the core curriculum, all students are required to complete a major, which provides a depth of intellectual study that prepares students for graduate and professional school, as well as for a rich diversity of careers and life experiences. These majors may be a conventional departmental major, a not-so-conventional interdepartmental major or the unconventional individually designed major. A commitment to academic excellence within all academic departments ensures every student that fulfilling the requirements of the major will be a comprehensive and challenging scholarly experience. Other opportunities for in-depth exploration and clustering of courses include minors and concentrations.

Choice characterizes the general education requirements as well as the major. Each Albion student is an adult, capable of making sensible decisions about his or her personal future. But inherent in the right to make decisions is the potential to make mistakes. So Albion College provides assistance to students in planning their education. During their first year at Albion College, academic advisers are assigned to all students to monitor academic progress and help each student begin fulfilling his or her graduation requirements. After the first year, students are free to choose a faculty adviser who will help develop a program of study based on the student's goals. Students who do not meet with their adviser during each semester's academic advising period will not be allowed to register until they have proof of advising.

**It is ultimately the student's responsibility to be aware of and fulfill all graduation requirements.**

To assist students in this endeavor, the Registrar's Office prepares and maintains an audit for each student at the end of the sophomore year. These reports indicate progress toward completing graduation requirements. Students are provided with updated audits prior to each fall semester. Audits are available from the student's adviser or directly through the Registrar's Office.

## Curriculum Overview

The primary responsibility for meeting the College's academic requirements rests with each student. This chart serves as a guide to the required and elective courses that fulfill the units needed for graduation. They are explained in greater detail on the following pages. The complete requirements for graduation are outlined in the [Academic Regulations](#) section of this catalog.

### Core Requirement

## **I. Liberal Arts 101** (First-Year Seminar; 1 unit)

## **II. Modes of Inquiry** (1 unit in each)

Artistic Creation and Analysis  
Historical and Cultural Analysis  
Modeling and Analysis  
Scientific Analysis  
Textual Analysis

## **III. Category Requirements** (1 unit in each)

Environmental Studies  
Ethnicity Studies  
Gender Studies  
Global Studies

The Brown Honors Institute [core requirements](#) are found in the Departments and Courses section.

## **Units for Core: 10**

**Among the 32 units required for graduation, the following distribution of courses must also be fulfilled. These courses can count toward modes, categories, majors, minors and/or concentrations.**

- Two units in humanities (can be from same department): English, Foreign Languages, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Honors
- Two units in mathematics or natural sciences (can be from same department): Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geological Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, Honors
- Two units in social science (can be from same department): Anthropology and Sociology, Communication Studies, Economics and Management, History, Political Science, Psychology, Honors
- One unit in fine arts: Art and Art History, Music, Theatre, Honors

**Major Requirement: All students are required to complete an approved major.**

## **Departmental Majors**

Anthropology and Sociology	German
Art	History
Art History	Mathematics
Athletic Training	Music
Biology	Philosophy
Chemistry	Physical Education
Communication Studies	Physics
Computer Science	Political Science
Earth Science	Psychology
Economics and Management	Religious Studies
English	Spanish
French	Theatre
Geological Sciences	

## **Interdepartmental Majors**

Mathematics/Economics

### **Interdisciplinary Majors**

American Studies  
Ethnic Studies  
International Studies

Public Policy  
Women's and Gender Studies

### **Individually Designed Majors**

**Units for Major: 8-10**

**Minors: Students may choose to complete a minor.**

### **Departmental and Interdisciplinary Minors**

Anthropology and Sociology  
    Anthropology, Sociology  
    Anthropology/Sociology  
Art  
    Art, Art History  
Asian Studies  
Biology  
    Cell and Molecular Biology  
    Environmental Biology  
Chemistry  
Communication Studies  
Computer Science  
Economics and Management  
    Economics, Management  
English  
    English, Journalism  
Foreign Language  
    French, German,  
    Spanish  
Gender Studies  
Geological Sciences  
    Geology, Environmental  
    Geology, Geographic  
    Information Systems,  
    Paleontology

History  
Mathematics  
    Mathematics,  
    Applied Mathematics,  
    Statistics,  
    Computer Science  
Philosophy  
    Philosophy, History of  
    Philosophy, Philosophy  
    of Mind, Value Theory  
Physical Education  
Physics  
Political Science  
Psychology  
Religious Studies  
Theatre  
    Dance  
Women's Studies

**Concentrations: Students may also choose to complete a concentration designed to prepare them for specific careers. Some of these concentrations are linked to the College's Institutes, and, in these cases, students must be admitted to the respective Institute to participate fully in its curriculum. The available concentrations and Institutes are listed below.**

Environmental Science  
Environmental Studies  
Human Services  
Law, Justice, and Society  
Mass Communication  
Neuroscience  
Professional Management  
Public Policy and Service

## **Institutes**

Brown Honors Institute  
Institute for the Study of the Environment  
Ford Institute for Public Policy and Service  
Gerstacker Institute for Professional Management  
Liberal Arts Institute for Premedical and Health Care Studies  
Shurmur Education Institute

**General Electives:** Electives are courses that do not count toward a specific program (such as a major) but contribute toward the total units needed for graduation.

**Units for Electives: 12-14**

**Writing Competency Examination:** All students must also pass the writing competence requirement before they graduate.

**Total Units for Graduation: 32**

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