SEARCH
GENERAL EDUCATION AT ALVERNIA

SEARCH is the name of Alvernia University's General Education program. The SEARCH program is grounded in the liberal arts tradition of rigorous, open inquiry into the Enduring Questions that shape the human experience. So that students are exposed to the nature of this inquiry from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, the first-year experience and the mid-level explorations draw heavily upon the liberal arts traditions. Knowledge gained from multiple disciplinary perspectives, integrated with a chosen major at Alvernia, prepares graduates to navigate change in the twenty-first century. SEARCH requirements span the undergraduate experience at Alvernia, incorporating curricular and co-curricular elements.

SEARCH reflects the values of exploration and discovery integral to education and aims to launch students on their academic journey by exploring central Enduring Questions within the courses that comprise the General Education curriculum. These perennial questions explore the human condition and the relationship of humans with self, other, different species, environment, and God. By focusing on these Enduring Questions, the SEARCH program aims to develop well-educated citizens while providing the conditions for the flourishing of the human spirit. In the Faith & Reason part of the curriculum, students are exposed to questions that are essential to the human experience: Who am I? What is my purpose? What is the meaning of life? What does it mean to learn or to understand? Through the Liberal Arts Exploration part of the curriculum, students also begin to see questions that are central concerns in different disciplines: What is the nature of the universe? What impact do humans have on the environment? How do we relate to foreign cultures? What is the role of literature in our lives? What is the importance of creativity? How do societies shape individuals? In the Ethical Leaders and Followers part of the curriculum, students are asked to think about their roles in society: What is my vocation? How can I make a difference? What are my responsibilities to others? SEARCH encourages students to embark on the path of inquiry and is structured to provide students multiple opportunities to deepen their understanding and responses to these questions. Only by studying a variety of disciplines can students begin to form a clear image of the entirety of these questions; only by studying a variety of questions can one begin to form a clear image of the entirety of the human experience.

Course Number System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Course Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 level courses</td>
<td>Designed for freshmen or qualified students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 level courses</td>
<td>Designed for sophomores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 level courses</td>
<td>Designed for juniors</td>
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<tr>
<td>400 level courses</td>
<td>Designed for seniors</td>
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FIRST-YEAR CORE CURRICULUM: ENDURING QUESTIONS 12 CREDITS

FYS 101 First-Year Seminar: Enduring Questions or HNR 160 Honors Seminar – 3 credits
Designed specifically for new college students, FYS promotes academic success, personal growth and community engagement by emphasizing the expectations and values of Alvernia’s academic community. All students entering with fewer than 15 credits of transferable college work must meet the First Year Seminar requirement.

COM 101 Composition and Research – 3 credits
This foundational course develops writing and research skills. Students must achieve a "C" or better to fulfill general education requirements (certain majors may require a higher minimum grade). Prerequisite: COM 100 ("C" or better) or placement by departmental faculty.

THE 105 Foundations of Theology – 3 credits
Students examine the nature of religion and its relation to other areas of human experience.

PHI 105 Introduction to Philosophy – 3 credits
A historical introduction to the fundamental problems and methods of philosophy based on readings in ancient, medieval and modern literature.
**MID-LEVEL LIBERAL ARTS EXPLORATION**

**Exploring the Natural World**

28/29 CREDITS

Lab Science – 3-4 credits
Students practice scientific inquiry as a means for learning about life by completing 3-4 credits of lab science in Biology, Chemistry or Physics.

Mathematics – 3 credits
To develop mathematical proficiency and applications in contemporary life, students complete 3 credits in mathematics other than MAT 100.

**Culture and Language**

World Languages – 6 credits
Six credits in sequence in one world language (other than English) promote an appreciation of language and culture in a diverse world.

Human Diversity – one course
Students complete one Human Diversity (D) designate course to develop sensitivity towards the richness of cultures in the United States and worldwide in our increasingly interdependent global community.

Communication – 3 credits
Students practice the art of effective communication in all forms by completing 3 credits in a communication course other than COM 100 and COM 101.

**Individuals and Communities**

History and Political Science – 3 credits
Students complete 3 credits from History or Political Science to cultivate analysis of societies, political systems, and cultures of all eras.

Social and Behavioral Sciences – 3 credits
Students develop problem-solving strategies in analyzing and gaining an understanding of human behavior and social interaction by completing 3 credits in Psychology, History, Political Science, Sociology, Social Sciences or Economics.

Community Service – 40 hours
Service and civic engagement is central to the mission of Alvernia University. Students complete 40 community service hours through credit-bearing service-learning courses, service trips and/or volunteer work. Community Service hours are pro-rated for transfer students based on the credits accepted in transfer.

**Creative Expressions**

Literature – 3 credits
Students complete 3 credits in any ENG or other designated LIT course to gain an appreciation of human expression manifested in literature.

Fine and Performing Arts – 3 credits
Promoting an awareness of creative process and creativity, students complete 3 credits in art, music or theatre courses other than FA 100.
**Ethical Leaders and Followers**  
6 credits

Theology or Philosophy – 3 credits  
Building upon the First-Year Core Curriculum, students advance their studies by completing one Theology or Philosophy course at the 200-400 level. THE 105 or PHI 105 is a prerequisite.

Ethics and Morality – 3 credits  
Advancing the examination of ethical leadership and moral courage, students complete one 200-400 level Philosophy or Theology course designated Ethics (E). THE 105 or PHI 105 is a prerequisite.

**Concentrated Paths of Knowledge**

Students continue their exploration of Enduring Questions and supplement study in their major by choosing from three paths of knowledge designed to integrate learning and promote problem-solving at more advanced levels. This allows students to synthesize disparate knowledge that is gained in individual classes into a richer, more holistic view of the world. Students are called upon to approach Enduring Questions either from the perspective of multiple disciplines guided by a particular theme (*Multidisciplinary Studies - MS*), through an interdisciplinary content area (*Interdisciplinary Studies - IS*), or focusing on one discipline and conducting in-depth disciplinary inquiry (*In-Depth Disciplinary Studies - DS*). Each question poses its own puzzle. In *Multidisciplinary Studies*, each discipline addresses a small piece of that puzzle. By studying a variety of disciplines can students begin to form a clear image of the entirety of the question; In *Interdisciplinary Studies*, the very nature of the questions is developed from the intersection of various disciplines and approaches. In *In-Depth Disciplinary Studies*, students can delve deeper into several questions that pertain to that area. At Alvernia University, the paths allow students to build upon the disciplinary knowledge gained in the core curriculum and their chosen field, incorporating the spirit of the Franciscan mission of the University by fostering collaboration and cooperation.

Path 1: Interdisciplinary Study (IS)  
Three courses, at least two from Liberal Arts disciplines, at the 200-400 level from the interdisciplinary minors of Women & Gender Studies or Community and Environmental Sustainability.

Path 2: Multidisciplinary Study (MS)  
Three courses, at least two from Liberal Arts disciplines, at the 200-400 level employing multiple disciplinary perspectives to explore one of the following themes: Cultural & Global Studies, Imagination & Creativity, Peace & Conflict, Poverty & Wealth or Sustainability, Science & Technology. Thematic courses are listed below.

Path 3: In-depth Disciplinary Study (DS)  
Three courses at the 200-400 level in one Liberal Arts discipline other than one's major, guided by common ideas and methods of inquiry. Students choose from Art, Biology, Chemistry, Communication, Economics, English, History, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Theology, Theatre and World Languages. This path may be used to give students a firm foundation in a discipline supporting their chosen major, or to pursue an interest in one of the Liberal Arts disciplines.

**Senior Capstone – one course**  
One capstone designated course (CAP), typically within the major. Designated Capstone courses will incorporate reflection on a student's academic journey through the SEARCH curriculum.

**Designated Courses searchable in Self-Service**

D – Human Diversity  
Students complete one Human Diversity (D) designate course to develop sensitivity towards the richness of cultures in the United States and worldwide in our increasingly interdependent global community.