BAYLOR INTERDISCIPLINARY CORE (BIC)

BIC 1112 Examined Life (1)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 1313, BIC 1314
Pre-requisite(s): Students must be accepted into the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core Program to enroll in BIC 1112
New Student Experience course explores interconnected aspects of human flourishing and invites first-year students to reflect critically upon their lives as a part of a global community of which the university is a microcosm. Students engage theories of human development and wellness to encourage greater intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual awareness. The course will introduce students to the goals, structure, and rational of the BIC, as well to the academic life of the university. Students will be encouraged to reflect on the enduring value of a liberal arts education and how best to pursue one.

BIC 1313 World of Rhetoric I (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 1112, BIC 1314
Pre-requisite(s): Students must be accepted into the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core Program to enroll in BIC 1313
Emphasizes those principles essential to the production of clear and effective informative and persuasive/argumentative communication. Assignments will include communication exercises designed to engage students in activities that develop critical thinking, logical reasoning, and effective communication skills. Course work will include the writing of informative, persuasive, and critical essays and the presentation of informative and persuasive speeches. Thematically linked with the other first semester courses in the BIC, the course units are designed to provide students with the written and oral communication skills necessary to function effectively in university courses both within and outside of the Interdisciplinary Core.

BIC 1314 World Cultures I: Roots of Culture (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 1112, BIC 1313
Pre-requisite(s): Students must be accepted into the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core Program to enroll
Embraces the period from the dawn of civilizations to 500 A.D. The course is arranged thematically and seeks to widen views of our own culture by studying selected early civilizations and their values. Original sources will be selected from such cultures as the prehistoric, Mesopotamian, Chinese, Hebrew, Greek, early Christian, and Roman. By reading and studying original texts and objects from these cultures, students will be exposed to widely differing views of what it means to be human. They will also have the opportunity to refine critical writing and speaking skills. The course will provide students with the broad cultural and historical context in which they may examine their own identities.

BIC 1323 World of Rhetoric II: Rhetoric in Context (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 1324
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 1313
Focuses on the continued development of critical reading, thinking, and writing skills by building on the instruction and content of BIC 1313, The World of Rhetoric I: Writing and Speaking. Throughout the course students will engage in the reciprocal process of reading, responding to, and analyzing the rhetorical strategies and arguments presented by a variety of significant authors from different time periods. Major assignments will require increasingly complex writing tasks, from presenting a factual summary of a single essay through preparing a multiple-source research project.

BIC 1324 World Cultures II: Religion and Culture (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 1323
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 1314
A study organized around several major themes including the medieval world and its ideals, both in the West and East, and the new technological, scientific, and social forces that emerged to challenge these ideals. The first theme explores the medieval unity and its expressions in selected works of art, music, and literature. The second relates to the rise of mercantilism and urbanism, and especially to key discoveries in science. World geography will provide a key component of the course. The development or refinement of critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills will be fundamental goals.

BIC 2330 Social World I: The City and the Soul (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 2334
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 1324
This course studies classic works from the ancient and medieval traditions of social and political thought up to the modern rejection of those traditions inaugurated by Machiavelli. Ancient and medieval thinkers typically conceived of civic life as involving an ordering of the soul as well as an arrangement of physical conditions and resources, while early moderns like Machiavelli promote a realism dominated by the concepts of material self-interest and bodily security. With this course, we thus seek to put in place a framework to facilitate our own reconsideration of the famous "quarrel between the ancients and the moderns" on perennial questions of social and political organization. Representative texts include Aristotle’s Politics and Ethics, Cicero’s de Republica, Augustine’s City of God, Aquinas’ On Kingship, and John of Salisbury’s Politicarius, in addition to Machiavelli’s Prince and Discourses on Livy.

BIC 2334 World Cultures III: The Modern World (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 2330
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 1324
Focuses on the scientific revolution and continuing advances in the sciences, and on revolutionary ideas in other areas of human experience—political, religious, social, artistic, and economic. The course will explore efforts of the modern mind to respond creatively to the tensions created by these changes, including the tension between religious and naturalistic world views, the tension between the vast extension of knowledge and the increasing recognition of its limits, the tension between individuality and community, and the tension between the experience of fragmentation and the quest for wholeness.

BIC 2340 Social World II: The Conditions and Possibilities of Human Fulfillment (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 2344
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 2330
This course studies classic modern works of western social and political thought that have played a formative role in the rise of modern political life and contemporary social conscience. In works by Hobbes and Locke, for example, we explore the origins of contemporary liberal democracy and consider the initial efforts to formulate a social science on the model of modern natural science. In works by Rousseau and Marx, we encounter the first great critical assessment of modern liberalism and examine its impact on the political landscape of modernity as well as on the study of social and political life. Utilizing the framework erected in the previous semester (Social World I), we also continue our meditation of the famous "quarrel between the ancients and the moderns" on certain perennial questions of human existence. Representative texts include Hobbes’ Leviathan, Locke’s Letter Concerning Toleration and Second Treatise, Rousseau’s Social Contract, Smith’s Wealth of Nations, Marx’s German Ideology, and Weber’s The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.
BIC 2344  World Cultures IV: The United States in the World  (3)
Co-requisite(s): BIC 2340
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 2334
Concentrates on the United States and on its experience within the
broader global framework. The focus will be the historical development
of the nation, including its origins, its regional traditions, its spread
westward, its movement into global markets in the twentieth century, and
its cultural pluralism. Emphasis will also be placed upon the elements
that have made for community in the United States and upon the linkages
of United States historical and cultural development with the broader
global themes portrayed in World Cultures III.

BIC 2437  The Natural World I: Primary Ideas in Science  (4)
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 1323 and 1324
The first course of a two-semester sequence encompassing lecture
and laboratory experiences that emphasize the foundations of natural
science, science as a way of knowing, and the uses of science. Historical
influences on the development of science and the interrelationship
between science and culture will be explored. Lecture and laboratory
material in The Natural World will be integrated. Laboratories will involve
hands-on, discovery-based learning which will lead the student to
make connections between observation and interpretation of natural
phenomena through critical thinking and will seek to provide students
with an understanding of the scientific method, hypothesis formulation
and testing, collection of data, analysis of data, and interpretation of data
in the context of hypotheses.

BIC 2447  The Natural World II: Global Science Issues  (4)
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 2437
A continuation of The Natural World I.

BIC 3358  Examined Life II: Biblical Heritage and Contemporary Ethical
Issues  (3)
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 2340 and 2344
In-depth study of selected texts from the Old and New Testaments and
examination of the approaches and resources used today and throughout
Christian history in such study. Biblical perspectives on such ethical
issues as human rights, environmental concerns and resource allocation
will be examined to provide a bridge between the literary/cultural settings
of the Bible and contemporary human experience and decision making.

BIC 4374  World Cultures V: Differing Visions and Realities  (3)
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 3358
Explores differing visions and realities in a selected sample of non-
Western cultures. The initial interdisciplinary study will reveal themes
that transcend cultural differences. Students will then investigate the
expression of these themes in a culture fundamentally different from their
own.

BIC 4389  Examined Life III Capstone: Special Topics  (3)
Pre-requisite(s): BIC 3358
Synthesizes learning in two or more disciplines, or in some way connects
modes or areas of learning not normally connected. This capstone
course represents the culmination both of the Baylor Interdisciplinary
Core experience and of the undergraduate experience. By integrating
learning, and application, this course will bridge the gap between
undergraduate life and life after graduation, leading students to form
connections between their lives in the university and their lives in the
wider community. The course will include significant written and oral
projects. Religion majors and minors must repeat course once under a
different topic.