

BAYLOR INTERDISCIPLINARY CORE (BIC)

Since the fall of 1995, Baylor University has offered an option for the general education requirements of all undergraduate degree programs. The Baylor Interdisciplinary Core (BIC) seeks to integrate the various academic disciplines with a set of comprehensive interdisciplinary courses that provide a coherent approach to knowledge and learning. It is structured so that individuals see and appreciate relationships and connections among issues, disciplines, and thinkers, so that they are encouraged to synthesize material and to develop a comprehensive perspective. The curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, active learning, connected learning (among disciplines), the close reading of primary sources, writing and speaking skills, and the development of a global perspective. Central to the curriculum is a common core of thirty-nine hours of coursework designed for every degree program in each of the University's undergraduate schools. The curriculum is organized around five sequences of courses designated as The Examined Life, World Cultures, The World of Rhetoric, The Natural World, and The Social World.

Admission to the Program

All regularly admitted students to Baylor University are eligible to apply for the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core program. Enrollment is limited to 200 incoming freshmen each academic year, and admission will be determined by the BIC Admissions Committee. For more information contact

Baylor Interdisciplinary Core
One Bear Place #97350
Waco, TX 76798-7350
Telephone: 254-710-3981
website: <http://www.baylor.edu/BIC/>
FAX: 254-710-4713

For additional information about Baylor University, call 1-800-BAYLOR-U (1-800-229-5678).

Degree requirements for the various degrees offered through the BIC program are listed on the following pages.

- College of Arts and Sciences (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/college-arts-sciences/>)
- Robbins College of Health and Human Sciences (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/robbins-college-health-human-sciences/>)
- School of Social Work (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/school-social-work/>)
- Hankamer School of Business (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/hankamer-school-business/>)
- School of Education (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/school-education/>)
- School of Engineering and Computer Science (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/school-engineering-computer-science/>)
- School of Music (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/school-music/>)

- School of Nursing (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/baylor-interdisciplinary-core-bic/school-nursing/>)

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 chronologically 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 *Policraticus*, 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 mediation 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.