

Calvin Core (2023): Advising Guide

The Calvin Core is intended to equip students for lives of significance and service. It introduces students to the Reformed Christian theological tradition and helps them to develop basic competences and skills. It incorporates a broad range of courses from the arts, humanities, and natural and social sciences and culminates in a cross-disciplinary exploration of a contemporary challenge or enduring question.

Foundations

Community and Commitments welcomes students into the university community and explores how a Reformed Christian intellectual heritage informs Calvin's commitments to justice, reconciliation, and renewal. Students typically complete the *Community and Commitments* requirement during their first semester at Calvin. Depending on how many semester hours a student wants to take during the first semester, they might need to find a 2-SH course pairing for CORE-100. The Registrar will provide guidance.

As a complement to *Community and Commitments*, students should plan to complete the *Foundations of Christianity I* requirement during their first or second year of study. Note that at least one of the two *Foundations of Christianity* requirements must be completed at Calvin (i.e., not transferred from another institution).

Competencies and Skills

Students should plan to complete the *Foundational Writing* requirement during their first year of study, if possible. *Health and Movement* requirements may be completed subsequently (exemptions allowed, see table).

World Languages I is the first of two World Languages categories in the Core. All students must satisfy the *World Languages I* requirement. Students may satisfy this requirement by:

- demonstrating fluency in a second language,
- completing three years of high school study of a second language with a grade of B or higher,
- passing an examination in a second language,
- completing WL-102 in a second language, or
- completing two years of high school study of a second language plus two semesters of university-level study of a third language in the *World Languages II* category (see below).

Knowledge and Understanding

In selecting Knowledge and Understanding courses, students should consider their interests, passions, and curiosity as well as program requirements or cognates. Students are encouraged to complete 4-SH courses whenever possible and should not assume that 2-SH courses will be widely available in all categories or offered during all terms. Students are not required to complete all courses in this section of the Core, and AP and transfer credit may satisfy some requirements (see table).

The *World Languages II* category helps students to develop knowledge and understanding of other cultures and their languages. Students may complete this category by:

- demonstrating fluency in a second language,
- passing an examination in a second language,
- completing WL-201 (or higher) in a second language, or
- completing two years of high school study of a second language plus two semesters of university-level study of a third language (to satisfy both *World Languages I* and *World Languages II* categories).

To complete the *Natural Sciences* category, students must complete at least one laboratory course.

Cross-Disciplinary Integration

Coursework satisfying *Engaged Citizenship Commitments* requirements may also satisfy Knowledge and Understanding requirements. Students typically complete the *Contemporary Challenges and Enduring Questions* requirement during their third or fourth year of study.

Calvin Core (2023): Summary Table

<p>FOUNDATIONS</p>	<p><i>The Foundations section of the core program invites students into a holistic vision of Christian thought and engagement at the heart of Calvin’s mission.</i> One Foundation of Christianity course may be transferred in if it includes content reflective of a Reformed Christian orientation. At least one Foundations of Christianity course must be taken at Calvin.</p>
<p>Community and Commitments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course, at least 2 SH 	<p><i>A course that serves as invitation to Calvin’s Reformed Christian theological heritage and its commitments to justice, reconciliation, and renewal and an introduction to Reformed Christian liberal arts education as equipping students for vocation and citizenship.</i> This course normally will be taken in the first semester of students’ first year.</p>
<p>Foundations of Christianity I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course, 4 SH 	<p><i>Courses that introduce the content and theological teachings of the Bible as the standard of Christian faith and life, or to the content and development of basic Christian theology as the teachings of the church, with particular attention to the Reformed tradition.</i> This course normally will be taken in students’ first two years.</p>
<p>Foundations of Christianity II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course, at least 2 SH 	<p><i>Courses that examine the basis, development, or elements of Christian thought within its philosophical, historical, biblical, theological, or literary dimensions, to deepen students’ understanding of the context and meaning of Christian and Reformed theology.</i></p>
<p>COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS</p>	<p><i>The Competencies and Skills section of the core program ensures that students demonstrate at least minimal proficiencies in three key areas.</i> Transfer credit, AP credit, and exemption allowed.</p>
<p>Foundational Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one course, 4 SH 	<p><i>Courses that provide a foundation for subsequent coursework by teaching students to evaluate information sources and knowledge claims, to think critically, and to communicate clearly and persuasively in writing.</i></p>
<p>Health and Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two courses, 1 SH each 	<p><i>Courses that introduce knowledge and enhance physical skills requisite for living healthy lives.</i> Students must complete one credit hour focused on fitness and wellness (which may be fulfilled via two years of participation in a Calvin varsity athletic program or ACHA hockey) and one credit hour focused on recreation, sport, and skill.</p>
<p>World Languages I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three years of HS-FL or fluency → exempt • Two years of HS-FL → one accelerated course or two courses in a third language to satisfy World Languages II • One year of HS-FL → one or two courses • No HS-FL → two courses 	<p><i>Courses that teach students to communicate at the “novice high” level (i.e., WL 102) in a natural language other than English and to understand the linguistic privilege afforded native speakers of English.</i> This category also may be fulfilled by native or near-native fluency, examination, completion of three years of high school world language study with a grade of B or higher, or completion of two years of high school world language study and two semesters of university-level study of another language in the World Languages II category.</p>
<p>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</p>	<p><i>The Knowledge and Understanding section of the core program includes courses that establish a breadth of knowledge and understanding.</i> Complete coursework totaling at least 26 SH across at least five Knowledge and Understanding categories, including at least 2 SH in each of the following categories: Arts, Oral Rhetoric, Visual Rhetoric; Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences. Students are encouraged to take 4 SH courses when possible.</p>
<p>World Languages II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course, WL 201 or higher, in a second language or • Two courses in a third language 	<p><i>Courses that help students to explore cultural identities and the relationships between products, practices, and perspectives through the lens of another culture, their experiences, and their language.</i> Students must complete coursework in a world language at the “intermediate low” level (i.e., FL-201) or higher or in another world language at the “novice high” level (i.e., FL-102) or higher.</p>
<p>Arts, Oral Rhetoric, Visual Rhetoric</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two courses, at least 6 SH 	<p><i>Courses that introduce students to visual, performing, and rhetorical arts, attending to their productive, communicative, and receptive aspects.</i> Courses in this category must be taken in different disciplines.</p>
<p>Humanities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two courses, at least 6 SH 	<p><i>Courses that introduce students to historical, philosophical, religious, and literary texts and methods.</i> Courses in this category must be taken in different disciplines.</p>
<p>Mathematical Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course, 4 SH 	<p><i>Courses that develop knowledge of algorithmic, analytical, computational, data-driven, statistical, or quantitative methods, and apply those methods to solve problems.</i></p>
<p>Natural Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two courses, at least 6 SH 	<p><i>Courses that examine fundamental entities, structures, and systems of the natural world and the methods of the sciences that study them.</i> Courses in this category must be taken in different disciplines; at least one course must include a laboratory.</p>
<p>Social and Behavioral Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two courses, at least 6 SH 	<p><i>Courses that examine social systems and/or interactions between human persons and their communities and environments using social scientific concepts, theories, and methods.</i> Courses in this category must be taken in different disciplines.</p>
<p>CROSS-DISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION</p>	<p><i>The Cross-Disciplinary Integration section of the core program includes courses that develop an integrative context derived from different fields of study.</i></p>
<p>Engaged Citizenship Commitments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Diversity and Difference ➢ Environmental Sustainability ➢ Global Regions and Cultures 	<p><i>Courses intended to facilitate the development of civic competencies and habits of engagement, which underpin Christian citizenship.</i> Students must complete at least one tagged course in all three areas. A tag can be attached to a course in the core, in an academic program, or an elective course in which at least one semester hour of the course content is dedicated to the category’s objectives and a dedicated assignment to the category’s objectives is included.</p>
<p>Contemporary Challenges and Enduring Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course, 4 SH 	<p><i>Courses that provide a culminating liberal arts experience by applying cross-disciplinary perspectives to examine enduring questions or to address contemporary challenges and inviting students to begin living out their vocation in Christian witness to the world.</i></p>