

FOUNDATIONS LEARNING GOALS

Arts Foundation

The arts epitomize the creative impulse and are part of what makes us human. Art both shapes our understanding of the world and imagines what that world can be. In creating out of human experience, artists work in dialogue with nature, culture, and history. Artistic thinking is rooted in a keen aesthetic attentiveness and a dynamic interplay of sensibilities and skills, including memory, imagination, intuition, invention, empathy, feeling, and embodied practice. Study in the arts is valuable not only for the aspiring artist, but for all who strive to become inventive problem-solvers and innovative thinkers.

Students who complete the Arts Foundations requirement will explore the arts through both creative participation and analysis, demonstrating preliminary understandings of artistic practice, creative thought, and cultural or critical contexts.

By exploring the arts through analysis and engagement in the processes of creative writing, visual arts, or performing arts, students who complete the Arts Foundations requirement will be able to:

1. Engage in creative practice through the manipulation of an artistic medium.
2. Articulate understandings of the methods, forms, and ideas associated with a discipline within the Arts.

Humanities Foundation

A Knox student is meant to develop a free intellect, to cultivate a mind capable of responding with thoughtfulness and with a sense of context and balance to events in the world. With this as goal in mind, courses in the Humanities bring students into contact with the range of human possibilities, especially those not formerly known to them. In part, study in the Humanities fosters an understanding about human experience, thought, and emotion over many centuries and across many areas of the world. Particular attention is often paid to how ideas of the individual and the personal are involved in the course of human history. Humanistic disciplines also bring students into a dialogue (real or virtual) with others and help them to explore tensions between notions of “self” and “other.” Students of the Humanities at Knox learn to pull apart ideas, writings, and works of art in order to study them and to ask pertinent questions of them with the additional goal of formulating responses—even if tentative responses—to such questions. Also essential to this study is communicating thoughtful, often analytical responses to such questions, and such communication (whether oral or written) is increasingly refined as levels of thinking, writing, and speaking are refined in a given course of study.

At the completion of a Foundations course in the Humanities students will be able to:

1. Articulate questions of ongoing human significance that arise from the study of art, culture, literature, events, or ideas;
2. Recognize the relationship between the individual and cultural, historical, or theoretical frameworks;
3. Construct and defend an interpretation using evidence and argument in written or oral communication.

Social Sciences Foundation

The social sciences analyze patterns of individual and social behavior and how they are shaped by, and in turn shape, social structures, cultures, institutions, and ideas. These subjects are pursued through the diverse methods characteristic of social science disciplines.

At the completion of a Foundations course in social science, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the patterns within and the significance of individual and social behavior
2. Identify fundamental components of a methodology from at least one of the social sciences
3. Give a social explanation for human behaviors, practices, events, meanings, or ideas, using conventions from a social science discipline.

Natural and Physical Sciences Foundation (effective September, 2014)

- Courses in this area lie in the physical or biological sciences that include an experimental component.

The goals of an NPS foundation course are:

1. Students will be able to identify key concepts used in understanding the physical or biological world using a scientific discipline or framework.
2. Students will be able to describe important theories in the physical or biological sciences and the empirical evidence upon which they are based.
3. Students will be able to describe the application of the scientific method to questions using the following concepts: formulate and test a hypothesis, analyze data, draw conclusions.

Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Foundation (effective, September, 2014)

Courses in this area focus on methods of abstract or symbolic reasoning including mathematics, logic, algorithmic or statistical reasoning.

The goals of a QSR foundation course are:

1. Students will be able to translate between real world concepts and quantitative or symbolic abstract structures.
2. Students will be able to perform and interpret quantitative or symbolic manipulations in an abstract structure;
3. Students will be able to construct carefully reasoned logical arguments.
4. Students will be able to use abstract methods to analyze patterns and formulate conjectures with the goal of verifying them rigorously.