Statement of the St. John's College Program

ST JOHN'S College

ANNAPOLIS • SANTA FE

Annapolis, Maryland
Santa Fe, New Mexico

sjc.edu

Founded as King William's School in 1696 and chartered as St. John's College in 1784, the college is co-educational and has no religious affiliation. St. John's College does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, or other legally protected classification in the administration of any of its programs and activities or with respect to admission or employment. Academic facilities and most residence halls are accessible to persons with physical disabilities.

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INTRODUCTION

St. John's College is a community dedicated to liberal education. Liberally educated persons, the college believes, acquire a lifelong commitment to the pursuit of fundamental knowledge and to the search for unifying ideas. They are intelligently and critically appreciative of their common heritage and conscious of their social and moral obligations. They are well-equipped to master the specific skills of any calling, and they possess the means and the will to become free and responsible citizens.

St. John's College is persuaded that a genuine liberal education requires the study of great books—texts of words, symbols, notes, and pictures—because they are both timeless and timely. These books are the most important teachers. They illuminate the persisting questions of human existence and they bear directly on the problems we face today. They express most originally, and often most perfectly, the ideas by which contemporary life is knowingly or unknowingly governed. Their authors can speak to us almost as freshly as when they spoke for the first time, for what they have to tell us is not of merely academic concern, nor is it remote from our true interests. They change our minds, move our hearts, and touch our spirits.

The books speak to us in more than one way. In raising the persisting human questions, they lend themselves to different interpretations that reveal a variety of independent and yet complementary meanings. And while seeking the truth, they please us as works of art with a clarity and a beauty that reflect their intrinsic intelligibility. They are, therefore, properly called great, whether they are epic poems or political treatises, and whether their subject matter is scientific, historical, or philosophical. They are also linked together, for each of them is introduced, supported, or criticized by the others. In that sense they converse with each other, and they draw the readers to take part, within the limits of their abilities, in a large and continuing conversation.

This conversation, however, is unavoidably one-sided. The books can only repeat what they have to say, without furnishing the clarifications that we desire. To overcome this limitation is the goal of the St. John's seminar. Here a number of students of varied backgrounds, faced with a text that may present unfamiliar thoughts, attempt to discuss it reasonably. It is presupposed that the students are willing to submit their opinions to one another's questions. The demands of the individual and those of the group are in continuous interplay, setting limits within which the discussion moves with the utmost possible freedom. The discussion may concern itself primarily with trying to establish the meaning of a poem or the validity of an argument. It may concern itself with more general or with very contemporary questions that thrust themselves forward. The students bring to the seminar the assumptions they have derived from their experience in the contemporary world. Through discussion they acquire a new perspective, which enables them to recognize both the sameness of a recurrent problem and the variety of its historical manifestations.

Principally, however, the aim is to ascertain not how things were, but how things are—to help students gain understanding and make reasonable decisions in whatever circumstances

they face. And it is the ultimate aim of the Program that the habits of thought and discussion thus begun by the students should continue with them throughout their lives.

Most of the teaching at St. John's takes the form of a discussion. The conversational methods of the seminar are carried over into other classes. As much as possible, the actual instruction in all seminars, tutorials, and laboratories is made to depend on the activity and initiative of the students. The tutors function as guides, more intent on listening to the students and working with them than imposing upon them their own understandings.

St. John's seeks to restore the true meaning of liberal education. The primary function of the liberal arts has always been to bring about an awareness of the forms that are embodied in combinations of words and in numbers so that they become means of understanding. Traditionally, the liberal arts were seven in number: grammar, rhetoric, logic—the arts of language; and arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy—the arts of mathematics. In more contemporary terms, the liberal arts bring to light what is involved in the use of words and numbers in all kinds of discursive thought, in analyzing, speaking, and writing; and also in measuring, deducing, and demonstrating.

There are many ways to develop these arts. The curriculum emphasizes six of them: discussion, translation, writing, experimentation, mathematical demonstration, and musical analysis. They all serve the same end: to invite the students to think freely and critically for themselves. By these means, students will be able to envisage actual situations, to deliberate by articulating clear alternatives with the hope of arriving at a proper choice. The acquisition of these intellectual skills will serve the students who have learned them throughout their lives.

Knowledge advances and the fundamental outlook of humanity may change over the centuries, but these arts of understanding remain in one form or another indispensable. These arts enable all human beings to know the world around them and to know themselves in this world, and to use that knowledge with wisdom. Under the guidance of these arts, they can free themselves from the constraint of prejudice and the narrowness of beaten paths. Under their discipline, they can acquire the habit of listening to reason. A genuinely conceived liberal arts curriculum cannot avoid aiming at these most far-reaching of all human goals.

The aim of the education offered by St. John's College is the liberation of the human intellect. This is an education for all, regardless of a person's race, sex, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression. By reading great books and struggling together with the fundamental questions that they raise, students and their teachers learn from their differences and discover more deeply their shared humanity. In this and other ways, a diversity of background and experience enriches our community of learning. Because it offers an education for all, St. John's College has sought and continues to seek to make its program of study known and available to people of diverse backgrounds.

THE CURRICULUM

The Seminar

The heart of the curriculum is the seminar—a discussion of assigned readings from the books of the Program. In each seminar, 17 to 21 students work with two members of the faculty who serve as leaders. The group meets twice a week, on Monday and Thursday evenings, for two hours—sometimes longer if the topic under discussion has aroused a sustained and lively conversation. The assignment for each seminar amounts, on average, to around 80 pages of reading, but may be much shorter if the text happens to be particularly difficult.

The seminar begins with a question asked by one of the leaders. Thereafter the seminar consists mostly of student discussion. Students talk with one another, not just to the leaders. They do not raise their hands for permission to be heard, but enter the discussion or withdraw from it at will. The resulting informality is tempered by the use of formal modes of address.

Once underway, the seminar may take many forms. It may range from the most particular to the most general. The reading of Thucydides, for example, is almost certain to elicit a discussion of war and aggression and to bring to the surface the students' opinions and fears about the wisdom or error of national policies. Homer and Dante prompt reflections on human virtues and vices and on humanity's ultimate fate. Sometimes a seminar will devote all its time to an interpretation of the assigned reading, staying close to the text; at other times the talk may range widely over topics suggested by the reading, but bear only indirectly on the text itself in the minds of the participants. After seminar, students from different groups compare the points made in their discussions.

Except for the requirements of common courtesy, there are only two rules: First, all opinions must be heard and explored, however sharply they may clash; second, every opinion must be supported by argument—an unsupported opinion does not count. In a freshman seminar, the students may tend to express their opinions with little regard for their relevance to the question or their relation to the opinions of others. Gradually, in their interplay with one another, the students learn to proceed with care, keeping to the topic and trying to uncover the meanings of the terms they use. They learn that to some extent the procedure of the seminar varies with the kind of reading under study; poetry is not philosophy, and it can require a different approach. Such progress in learning together may be crowned by sudden insights on the part of a few of the seminar members, or by occasions when the seminar as a whole achieves illumination.

The course of the discussion cannot be fixed in advance; it is determined rather by the necessity of following the argument, of facing the crucial issues, or of seeking foundations upon which a train of reasoning can be pursued. The argument does not necessarily lead to the answer to a question. More often than not, the question remains open but with certain alternatives clearly outlined. The progress of the seminar is not particularly smooth; the discussion may sometimes branch off and entangle itself in irrelevant difficulties. Only gradually can the logical rigor of an ar-

gument emerge within the sequence of analogies and other imaginative devices by which the discussion is kept alive. A seminar may also degenerate into rather empty talk, without being able for some time to extricate itself from such a course. At its best, the seminar may reach insights far beyond the initial views held by any of its members.

Under these circumstances, the primary role of the leaders is not to give information, nor is it to produce the "right" opinion or interpretation. It is to guide the discussion, to keep it moving, to raise objections, and to help the students in every way possible to understand the author, the issues, and themselves. The most useful instrument for this purpose is the question. Perhaps the most useful device of all is the question "Why?"—but the leaders may also take a definite and positive stand and enter directly into the argument.

If they do so, however, they can expect no special consideration. Reason is the only recognized authority. Consequently, all opinions must be defended with reason, and any single opinion can prevail only by general consent. The aim is always to develop the students' powers of reason and understanding and to help them arrive at intelligent opinions of their own.

Every freshman, sophomore, and junior submits an essay on some theme suggested by the seminar readings. In Santa Fe, an essay is submitted each semester; in Annapolis, each year. The essay is not a research paper with extensive footnotes and a bibliography, but rather an attempt on the part of the students to set out in writing, as clearly as they can, their own thoughts on some aspect of the liberal arts. The essay in the second semester becomes the center of their final oral examinations. For sophomores, the annual essay holds a position of special importance: It becomes a major part of the process called enabling (see page 27).

The Preceptorial

For seven to eight weeks at the end of the first semester, seminars of the junior and senior classes are replaced by preceptorials. These are small groups of students engaged in the study of one book or in exploration of one subject through several books. Students are usually given a choice of 20 to 25 preceptorials on books or subjects of particular interest to the tutors who offer them. Students may suggest a topic and invite a tutor to study it with them.

Although many preceptorials study one of the books of the seminar list or a theme suggested by the Program, other preceptorials may deal with books and themes the students would not otherwise encounter. There are generally not more than 10 students in a preceptorial. Guided by a tutor, they proceed at a pace more leisurely than that permitted by the seminar. Usually, the students' work is completed by some form of written work, either a formal paper or a presentation to the class.

Listed on the following page are some of the preceptorial subjects offered on the two campuses in recent years.

PRECEPTORIAL SUBJECTS

Homer	*The Odyssey*
Thucydides	*The Peloponnesian War*
Plato	*The Republic*
The Epic of *Gilgamesh* and related Near Eastern Literature	
Jeremiah and Job	
Ovid	*Metamorphosis*
Augustine	*Confessions*
Thomas Aquinas	*Treatise on the Divine Nature*
Ibn Khaldun	*Introduction to History*
Shakespeare	*Measure for Measure* and *The Taming of the Shrew*
Theory of Color	Aristotle, da Vinci, Newton, Goethe, and Edwin Land
Mozart	*The Marriage of Figaro*
Kant	*Critique of Practical Reason*
Austen	*Mansfield Park*
Brontē	*Jane Eyre*
Tolstoy	*Anna Karenina*
Woolf	*Mrs. Dalloway, A Room of One's Own*
Arendt	*The Origins of Totalitarianism*
Neo-Realism	Visconti, Rosellini, De Sica, De Santis, and James Monaco
Levinas	*Totality and Infinity*
Konrad Lorenz	*Studies in Animal and Human Behavior*
Morrison	*Beloved Trilogy: Beloved, Jazz, Paradise*

THE TUTORIALS

The seminar cannot suffice as the only setting for liberal education. By its very nature, the seminar does not give the student an opportunity to cultivate the habits of methodical and careful study and of persistently precise discussion and writing. Other learning experiences must therefore support it; these are the tutorials in language, mathematics, and music. For each of the four years, a student attends one language and one mathematics tutorial three times a week. Sophomores also attend a music tutorial.

In the tutorials, seated around a table, 15 to 16 students study and learn together under the direct guidance and instruction of a tutor. The tutorial provides conditions for a small group (on average 15 to 16 students study) to work together toward a careful analysis, often through translation or demonstration, of an important work. As in the seminar, students talk freely with one another and with the tutor, but the discussion focuses sharply on assigned tasks. There are opportunities for all students to contribute their measure of instruction and insight to one another. Other tutors occasionally attend, seeking to learn about a particular subject that they may later teach.

Writing is assigned regularly in all classes—mathematics, music, and laboratory sections, as well as in language tutorials. The students are thus called upon continually to articulate and organize their thinking in both the written and spoken forms.

The Language Tutorial

Specialization in higher education has led to a profound neglect of language skills. As country is separated from country by the barrier of language, so profession is separated from profession by technical jargon. Primarily, the language tutorial attempts to remedy this condition by training in the means of precise communication. In a broad sense, it may be thought of as a present-day restoration of the traditional studies of grammar, rhetoric, and logic. The tutorial seeks to foster an intelligent and active grasp of the relations between language on the one hand and thought and imagination on the other. To do this, it must direct attention to fundamental ways in which words can be put together; to the modes of signifying things; to the varied connotations and ambiguities of terms; to the role of metaphors, analogies, and images; and to the logical relations that connect propositions.

The study of foreign languages (Greek in the first and second years; French in the third and fourth years) provides an effective means to these ends. By studying these languages, by translating from them into English, and by comparing them with each other and with English, the students learn something of the nature of languages in general and of their own in particular. During the four years, then, they study language as the discourse of reason, as the articulation of experience, and as the medium of the art of poetry; and both directly and indirectly, through the intermediary of foreign tongues, they study their own language. They discover the resources of articulate speech and learn the rules that must govern it if it is to be clear, consistent, and effective—if it is to be adequate and persuasive.

In the beginning, the emphasis is on the forms of words, the grammatical constructions, and the vocabulary of each language being studied. Thus the rapid reading for the seminar, with its attention to the large outlines and to the general trend and development of the central idea, is supplemented and corrected by a more precise and analytical study, one that is concerned with particular details and shades of meaning and with the abstract logical structure and rhetorical pattern of a given work. Those are matters that do not come directly into seminar discussions. The students' concern with them in the language tutorial improves all their reading, deepens and enriches their understanding, and increases their ability to think clearly and to speak well.

A secondary purpose of the language tutorial is support of the seminar. Some of the works read for seminar are also studied in the tutorial, free from the veil of ready-made translation. Issues are brought to the fore that might otherwise have been neglected, and they can be discussed with greater precision than the seminar usually permits. This habit of precision, in its turn, can then become more common in seminar.

The language tutorial cannot and should not aim at mastery of the foreign language, but the students can reasonably expect to obtain a knowledge of grammatical forms and a grasp of the peculiar qualities of the languages that they study. To experience the individuality of another language is to extend the boundaries of one's sensibility.

The choice of foreign languages is in part dictated by the seminar reading schedule and is in part arbitrary. Latin

and German might be used without changing the pattern and aims of the tutorial. The first year of Greek, however, goes well with the freshman seminar and mathematics tutorial, and the continuance of Greek into the second year advances the work of the first. The first year concludes with the study in Greek of Plato's *Meno*, a dialogue that prompts us to think about the nature of learning. In the second year, a play of Sophocles is translated—for example, *Antigone*—or a book from the *Odyssey* or *Iliad*. The second year ends with analysis and discussion of works by Shakespeare, Donne, and other English poets.

The third year begins with a brief, intensive study of French grammar followed by the reading of a French text. The aim here is economical progress toward facility in the reading of simple French. Then follows examination of the form and content of French prose selections. Discussions of both form and content are related to appropriate writing assignments, including exercises in translation in which the students attempt to match in their own tongue the excellence of their models. In the second semester a play is read—usually Racine's *Phèdre*.

The principal activity of the fourth year is the reading of French prose and poetry, including a number of poems from Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*. Its immediate object is the understanding and enjoyment of each poem in its parts and as a whole. It also provides a substantial basis for discussion of the art of poetry and clarification of the relation of that art to the traditional liberal arts of language. Writing assignments include exercises in translation more ambitious than those attempted in the third year. The year ends with analysis and discussion of modern poets and fiction writers in English, such as Emily Dickinson, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, Elizabeth Bishop, Wallace Stevens, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, and Virginia Woolf.

The Mathematics Tutorial

Mathematics is a vital part of education; that this is true or ought to be is suggested by the word itself, for it is derived from a Greek word meaning "to learn." It is regrettable, then, that students should come to dislike mathematics or to think of themselves as unmathematical. It is equally regrettable that competent mathematicians are often unaware of the philosophical assumptions upon which mathematical equations and formulas are based. Mathematics at St. John's is studied as a liberal art, not artificially separated from what have come to be called the humanities. When mathematics is taught at an unhurried pace, in an atmosphere of reflective inquiry, and from treatises chosen not only for their matter but also for their elegance and imagination, as it is at St. John's, mathematics becomes not only the most readily learnable liberal art but also one that provides ready access to others and significant analogies with them.

There are two main reasons for studying mathematics. First, it pervades our modern world, perhaps even defines it. Therefore, anyone who means to criticize or reform, to resist or cooperate, with this world not only must have some familiarity with the mathematical methods by which it is managed, but also must have thought about the assumptions that underlie their application. It is the task of the mathematics tutorial and the laboratory together to help students to think about what it means to count and measure things in the universe.

The second main reason for studying mathematics concerns the mathematics tutorial more specifically. Since mathematics has, as its name implies, a particularly close connection with the human capacity for learning, its study is especially useful in helping students to think about what it means to come to know something.

To prepare themselves for such reflection, students study artfully composed mathematical treatises, demonstrate propositions at the blackboard, and solve problems. By doing this over four years, they learn a good deal of mathematics and they gain noticeably in rigor of thought, nimbleness of imagination, and elegance of expression. But while they are practicing the art of mathematics in all its rigor, they are continually encouraged to reflect on their own activity. Scores of questions, of which the following are examples, are raised during the four years:

Why and how do mathematical proofs carry such conviction? What is a mathematical system and what are its proper beginnings and ends? What is the relation of logic to mathematics? What do "better" and "worse," "ugly" and "beautiful" signify in mathematics? Do mathematical symbols constitute a language? Are there "mathematical objects"? How might the discoverer of a particular theorem have come to see it?

By means of such questions, which grow out of the daily work and which excite the intellect and the imagination at the same time, a discussion is initiated in the mathematics tutorial that is easily and often carried over into the larger sphere of the seminar.

The students begin with the *Elements* of Euclid. Using Euclid's organization of the mathematical discoveries of his predecessors, the students gain a notion of deductive science and of a mathematical system in general; they become acquainted with one view of mathematical objects—its central expression found in the theory of ratios—which is buried under the foundations of modern mathematics. After Euclid, they begin the study of Ptolemy's *Almagest*, centering their attention on the problem of "hypotheses" constructed to "save the appearances" in the heavens. That the tutorial reads Ptolemy indicates the difference between the mathematics tutorial at St. John's and the ordinary course in mathematics. Ptolemy presents a mathematical theory of the heavenly motions, but he gives more than that: His work is both an example of mathematics applied to phenomena and a companion to the philosophical, poetic, and religious readings that are taken up in the first and second years.

In the second year, the students continue the study of Ptolemy, with emphasis upon those difficulties and complexities of the geocentric system that are brilliantly transformed by the Copernican revolution. They study Copernicus' transformation of the Ptolemaic theory into heliocentric form. They next take up the *Conics* of Apollonius to learn a synthetic presentation of the very objects whose analytical treatment by Descartes marks the beginning of modern mathematics. After this, they study analytic geometry, which presents the conic sections in algebraic form. They thus gain an understanding of algebra as the "analytic art" in general.

In the third year, students study calculus analytically in its modern form, originally in Leibniz's work, and geometrically as Newton presented it in his *Principia Mathematica*. In the second semester, students take up Newton's treatment of astronomy in the *Principia*, in which he brings heavenly and earthly motions under one law and replaces a purely geometric astronomy with a "dynamic" theory in which orbits are determined by laws of force. The year concludes with an examination of Dedekind's theory of real numbers, the endeavor to provide a rigorous arithmetical foundation for the calculus. The mathematics tutorial is both an introduction to physics and a foundation for the study of the philosophical outlook of the modern world.

In the fourth year, the reading of Lobachevski's approach to non-Euclidean geometry invites reflection on the postulates of geometry, as well as on the nature of the geometric art, its connection to experience, and its demonstrative character. More than in other years, students invent their own demonstrations. Comparison of the Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometries leads to consideration of the consistency of mathematical systems generally, and finally to a study of Gödel's incompleteness theorem. Seniors also study Einstein's special theory of relativity. Beginning from Maxwell's account of light as an electromagnetic wave (studied in the laboratory), Einstein shows that each observer has his own time and space, subject to definite mathematical relations. This demonstration brings into question our conventional understanding of time and space.

The Music Tutorial

One of the aims of the St. John's Program has been to restore music as part of the liberal arts curriculum. The study of music at St. John's is not directed toward performance, but toward an understanding of the phenomena of music. The ancients accorded music a place among the liberal arts because they understood it as one of the essential functions of the mind, associated with the mind's power to grasp number and measure. The liberal art of music was based, for them, on the ratios among whole numbers.

In particular, the music program at St. John's aims at the understanding of music through close study of musical theory and analysis of works of musical literature. In the freshman year, students meet once a week to study the fundamentals of melody and its notation. Demonstration takes place primarily by singing, and by the second semester the students perform some of the great choral works. In the sophomore year, a tutorial meets three times a week. Besides continuing the singing, the music tutorial reflects two different but complementary aspects of music. On the one hand, music is intimately related to language, rhetoric, and poetry. On the other, it is a unique and self-sufficient art that has its roots deep in nature.

The work of the tutorial includes an investigation of rhythm in words as well as in notes, a thorough investigation of the diatonic system, a study of the ratios of musical intervals, and a consideration of melody, counterpoint, and harmony. None of these are done apart from the sounding reality of good music. The inventions of Bach, the songs of

Schubert, the masses of Palestrina, the *St. Matthew Passion* of Bach, the operas of Mozart, and the instrumental works of Beethoven are the real teachers. In the second semester, at least one major work is analyzed closely.

Seminars on great works of music are included as part of the regular seminar schedule. Instead of reading a text, students listen to recordings of a composition and familiarize themselves with its score before the seminar meets. Group discussion of a work of music, as of a book, facilitates and enriches the understanding of it.

THE LABORATORY

Three hundred years ago, algebra and the arts of analytic geometry were introduced into European thought, mainly by René Descartes. This was one of the great intellectual revolutions in recorded history, paralleling and in part determining the other great revolutions in industry, politics, morals, and religion. It has redefined and transformed our whole natural and cultural world. It is a focal point of the St. John's Program and one that the college takes special care to emphasize. There is scarcely an item in the curriculum that does not bear upon it. The last two years of the Program exhibit the far-reaching changes that flow from it, and these could not be appreciated without the first two years, which cover the period from Homer to Descartes.

Modern mathematics has made possible the exploration of natural phenomena on an immense scale and has provided the basis for what is known to us as the laboratory. The intellectual tools of the laboratory are the consequence of the vast project of study conceived by the great thinkers of the 17th century. They are based on a mathematical interpretation of the universe, which transforms the universe into a great book written in mathematical characters.

St. John's has a three-year laboratory in the natural sciences. In the laboratory, students pursue characteristic and related topics in physics, biology, and chemistry. The art of measurement involves the analytical study of the instruments of observation and measurement; in practica, students reproduce crucial experiments; and, throughout, the interplay of hypothesis, theory, and fact has to be carefully scrutinized. All of this is supported by the mathematics tutorials, which provide the necessary understanding of mathematical techniques.

The task, however, is not to cover exhaustively the various scientific disciplines, to bring the student up-to-date in them, or to engage in specialized research. It is rather to make the student experience and understand the significance of science as a human enterprise involving fundamental assumptions and a variety of skills. The college does not subscribe to the sharp separation of scientific studies from the humanities, as if they were distinct and autonomous domains of learning. Different fields of exploration require different methods and techniques, but the integrity of scientific pursuits stems from sources common to all intellectual life.

The Organization of the Laboratory Work

The laboratory program is largely determined by three considerations relevant to the liberalization of the study of science: (1) The formally scheduled experimental work must be combined with a full and free discussion of the instruments and principles involved in it. (2) The content of the work should be so chosen as to enable the students to trace a scientific discipline to its roots in principle, assumption, and observation—thus certain integrated wholes of subject matters are selected as problems in which the roles of theory and experimentation can be distinguished through critical study. (3) The schedule of laboratory work should give opportunity for leisurely but intensive experimentation. The students must have time to satisfy themselves as to the degree of accuracy their instruments permit, to analyze procedures for sources of error, to consider alternative methods, and on occasion to repeat an entire experiment. Only thus can they come to a mature understanding of the sciences called "exact."

A laboratory section consists of 15 to 16 students working under the guidance of a tutor, with the help of more advanced students serving as assistants. Sections meet two or three times a week. A laboratory session may be used for exposition and discussion of theory, for experimentation, or for both, as the progress of the work requires. In most cases, the basis for discussion is a classic paper or other text directly related to the topic at hand; writings of Aristotle, Galen, Harvey, Huygens, Newton, Lavoisier, Maxwell, Thomson, Rutherford, and Bohr are among those regularly used in this way. In all the work of the laboratory and in the laboratory manuals written at the college, the purpose is to achieve an intimate mixture of critical discussion and empirical inquiry.

Laboratory Topics

The general topics of study have been chosen from elementary physical and biological sciences. The sequence of study may be outlined as follows:

THE FIRST YEAR

The laboratory begins with 12 weeks devoted to topics in observational biology: classification of types, anatomical structure, cells and their aggregation and differentiation, and embryological development. Close observation by the naked eye or with microscopes is accompanied by constant theoretical interpretation, based on reading important works of biological scientists. Here the student confronts organisms as self-moving entities with properties of wholeness, intimately dependent on, yet distinct from, the surrounding world.

The freshman laboratory next turns to the nonliving in a search for fundamental laws. Archimedes on the lever and on hydrostatics is studied, then the laws of equilibrium of gases, temperature, and calorimetry are taken up, experimentally and in discussion of the relevant theories. These topics lead into an examination of the phenomena, largely chemical, and the arguments that are involved in the theory that matter is composed of discrete particles. The student compares the views of Aristotle and Lavoisier on the nature of substance and substantial change, and goes on to study and discuss important original texts bearing on the development of the atomic-molecular theory. Experiments are performed to help with the understanding of the texts and the

physical and chemical transformation of which they speak. The year's work culminates in the resolution of the problem of determining atomic weights and in an examination of some consequences of this determination.

THE THIRD YEAR

The third-year laboratory deals with topics common to a number of the traditional divisions of physics, such as mechanics, optics, and electromagnetism. Throughout the year, experimentation is accompanied by the reading of important original writings by Galileo, Descartes, Huygens, Newton, Leibniz, Faraday, and Maxwell. The mathematical tools of physics are to be put to work in the laboratory at the same time that their rigorous development is pursued in the mathematics tutorials. As the tools of the calculus become available, the emphasis shifts from a direct, qualitative description of force, acceleration, work, energy, and potential fields to their reformulation in terms of derivative and integral; at the same time, the physical concepts serve to illustrate the mathematical ideas. The concepts of mechanics are to be used to formulate alternative theories of light—corpuscular and wave—and the success of either theory in accounting for optical phenomena is examined. The fundamental phenomena of electricity and magnetism are studied observationally and experimentally, and formulated in mathematical terms. The final and culminating topic of the year is Maxwell's derivation of an electromagnetic theory of light.

THE FOURTH YEAR

In many ways, the work of the senior year is a return to questions the students first confronted as freshmen. During the first semester, the senior laboratory poses the question of the atomic composition of matter anew, but now with the theory of electricity as its guiding thread. Scientists quickly learned that the nature of the electron and its interaction with light could not be satisfactorily accounted for under the assumptions of classical physics. Through a sequence of papers by Bohr, Einstein, Schrödinger, and Heisenberg, with related experiments, students explore in detail the development of the quantum hypothesis—which challenges classical ideas about not only the nature of matter, but also the power and the scope of scientific explanation.

The laboratory program ends as it began—with a study of living organisms. In the spring of the senior year, students finally confront the evidence and arguments for their modern views of evolution and genetics. The semester begins with Darwin and Mendel, proceeds to a synthesis, and then traces developments in cellular and molecular biology that are thought to undergird this synthesis, as presented in seminal papers by 20th century biologists. In addition, this work raises questions about whether there is purpose in nature, whether there are natural kinds, what distinguishes living from non-living, and whether living things have a wholeness—and if so, what is responsible for it.

THE FORMAL LECTURE

The curriculum as described so far calls for student participation at every active stage of the work. On Friday evenings, however, a different form of instruction occurs. The formal lecture is the occasion when the students have an opportunity to listen steadily and attentively. The subject may be closely connected with seminar, tutorial, or laboratory readings, or it may open up a new field of interest and test the

students' readiness to absorb new information and to follow arguments in unfamiliar fields such as anthropology or space science, painting or architecture. The lecturers are often visiting scholars, but not infrequently they are members of the St. John's faculty. Visitors may be from the academic world or from the arena of public affairs; they may be poets or artists. Sometimes a concert replaces a lecture.

The lecture is followed by a discussion. Here the lecturers submit themselves to prolonged questioning by the students, with the faculty participating. Often the discussion turns into a seminar. Thus, the formal lecture serves two purposes: It inculcates in the students the habit of listening and following the exposition of a subject they may not be familiar with, and it also provides them an opportunity, in the discussion period, to exercise their dialectical skills in a setting very different from the classroom. It is here that they can test the degree of their understanding and the applicability of what they have learned.

The lectures range through a variety of subjects. Sometimes the students are confronted with opposing views on a given subject. Some of the lectures have immediate repercussions in the seminars and tutorials.

LECTURES AND CONCERTS

The following list provides some examples of lectures and concerts given on one or the other campus in recent years:

"Reading, Writing, Listening, Talking"
Eva Brann

"Recognizing Odysseus"
Margaret Kirby

"Aristotle and the Politics of Life: Equality and Citizenship in the Aristotelian Polis"
Walter Brogan

"What was the Purpose of Archimedes' 'Floating Bodies'?"
Reviel Netz

"In the Wilderness: Moses as Founder and Lawgiver"
Ronna Burger

"Maimonides's Guide for the Perplexed: its Genre and its Three Great Themes"
Joshua Parens

"The Swine and the Chatterbox: Wittgenstein and Augustine on Talking (and Not Talking) About"
Caleb Thompson

"Augustine on Talking (and Not Talking) About Freedom, Meditation, and (No-) Self-Control in the Pāli Nikāyas"
Karin Meyers

"Deadly Virtue: Shakespeare's Macbeth"
Jan Blits

"Songs of Shakespeare"
Folger Consort

"The Science of Forgetfulness: Philosophy and Tradition in the Essays of Montaigne"
Ann Hartle

"Rousseau's Chemical Apprenticeship"
Christopher J. Kelly

"On The Volunteer"
Salvatore Scibona

"On Some Silences in Beethoven's Piano Sonatas"
Fawn Trigg

"Abraham Lincoln and the Daughters of Dred Scott: A Reflection on the Declaration of Independence"
Diana Schaub

"At the Crossroads of the Cave: Plato and Heidegger on History and Nihilism"
Gregory Fried

"Subjective Sensory Experience and the Fallacy of Neural Codes"
Leslie Kay

August Wilson's King Hedley II: An American Oedipus?
Nicole Jerr

"Brick by Brick: Changing America Through Song"
Dashon Burton, baritone

ST. JOHN'S LIST OF GREAT BOOKS

The list of books that serves as the core of the curriculum had its beginnings at Columbia College, at the University of Chicago, and at the University of Virginia. Since 1937, it has been under continuous review at St. John's College. The distribution of the books over the four years is significant. More than 2,000 years of intellectual history form the background of the first two years; about 300 years of history form the background for almost twice as many authors in the last two years.

The first year is devoted to Greek authors and their pioneering understanding of the liberal arts; the second year ranges from the Hebrew Bible to the 16th century seeds of modernity; the third year has books of the 17th and 18th centuries; the fourth year brings the reading into the 19th and 20th centuries.

The chronological order in which the books are read is primarily a matter of convenience and intelligibility; it does not imply a historical approach to the subject matter. The St. John's curriculum seeks to convey to students an understanding of the fundamental problems that human beings have to face today and at all times. It invites them to reflect both on their continuities and their discontinuities.

The list of books that constitute the core of the St. John's Program is subject to yearly review by the Instruction Committee of the faculty. Those listed here are read at one or both campuses, not always in their entirety.

Freshman Year

*Homer	*Iliad, Odyssey*
*Aeschylus	*Agamemnon, Libation Bearers, Eumenides, Prometheus Bound*
*Sophocles	*Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone, Philoctetes, Ajax*
*Thucydides	*Peloponnesian War*
*Euripides	*Hippolytus, Bacchae*
*Herodotus	*Histories*
*Aristophanes	*Clouds*
Sappho	Selected poems
*Plato	*Meno, Gorgias, Republic, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Symposium, Parmenides, Theaetetus, Sophist, Timaeus, Phaedrus*
*Aristotle	*Poetics, Physics, Metaphysics, Nicomachean Ethics, On Generation and Corruption, Politics, Parts of Animals, Generation of Animals*
Euclid	*Elements*
*Lucretius	*On the Nature of Things*
*Plutarch	*Lycurgus, Solon*
Ptolemy	*Almagest*
Pascal	*Treatise on the Equilibrium of Liquids*
Nicomachus	*Arithmetic*
Lavoisier	*Elements of Chemistry*
Harvey	*Motion of the Heart and Blood*
Essays by	Archimedes, Fahrenheit, Avogadro, Dalton, Cannizzaro, Virchow, Mariotte, Driesch, Gay-Lussac, Spemann, Stears, J.J. Thomson, Mendeleyev, Berthollet, J.L. Proust

Sophomore Year

*Hebrew Bible	
*New Testament	
*Aristotle	*De Anima, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics, Categories*
Apollonius	*Conics*
*Virgil	*Aeneid*
*Plutarch	*Caesar, Cato the Younger, Antony, Brutus*
*Epictetus	*Discourses, Manual*
*Tacitus	*Annals*
Ptolemy	*Almagest*
*Plotinus	*The Enneads*
*Augustine	*Confessions*
*Maimonides	*Guide for the Perplexed*
*Anselm	*Proslogium*
*Aquinas	*Summa Theologiae*
*Dante	*Divine Comedy*
*Chaucer	*Canterbury Tales*
*Machiavelli	*The Prince, Discourses*
Copernicus	*On the Revolutions of the Spheres*
Kepler	*Astronomia Nova*
Livy	*Early History of Rome*
Palestrina	*Missa Papae Marcelli*
*Montaigne	*Essays*
Viète	*Introduction to the Analytical Art*
*Bacon	*Novum Organum*
*Shakespeare	*Richard II, Henry IV, The Tempest, As You Like It, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear,* and Sonnets
Poems by	Marvell, Donne, and other 16th- and 17th-century poets
Descartes	*Geometry, *Discourse on Method*
Pascal	*Generation of Conic Sections*
Bach	*St. Matthew Passion, Inventions*
Haydn	Quartets
Mozart	Operas
Beethoven	*Third Symphony*
Schubert	*Songs*
Monteverdi	*L'Orfeo*
Stravinsky	*Symphony of Psalms*

Junior Year

*Cervantes	*Don Quixote*
Galileo	*Two New Sciences*
*Hobbes	*Leviathan*
*Descartes	*Meditations, Rules for the Direction of the Mind*
*Milton	*Paradise Lost*
La Rochefoucauld	*Maximes*
Madame de Lafayette	*La Princesse de Clèves*
La Fontaine	*Fables*
*Pascal	*Pensées*
Huygens	Treatise on Light, On the Movement of Bodies by Impact
*Eliot	*Middlemarch*
*Spinoza	*Theologico-Political Treatise, Ethics*
*Locke	*Second Treatise of Government*
Racine	*Phèdre*
Newton	*Principia Mathematica*
*Leibniz	*Monadology, Discourse on Metaphysics, Essay on Dynamics, Principles of Nature and Grace*
*Swift	*Gulliver's Travels*
*Hume	*Treatise of Human Nature*
*Rousseau	*Social Contract, The Origin of Inequality*
*Molière	*Le Misanthrope*

*Adam Smith	*Wealth of Nations*
*Kant	*Critique of Pure Reason, Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*
*Mozart	*Don Giovanni*
*Austen	*Pride and Prejudice, Emma*
Hawthorne	*The Scarlett Letter*
Dedekind	*Essays on the Theory of Numbers*
American Founding Documents	**Articles of Confederation, *Declaration of Independence, *Constitution of the United States of America*
*Hamilton, Jay & Madison	The Federalist
*Twain	*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
*Wordsworth	*The Two Part Prelude of 1799*
Essays by	Young, Taylor, Euler, D. Bernoulli, Ørsted, Ampère, Faraday, Maxwell

Senior Year

*Supreme Court Opinions	
*Goethe	*Faust*
Darwin	*Origin of Species*
*Hegel	*Phenomenology of Spirit*
Lobachevsky	*Theory of Parallels*
*Plato	*Phaedrus*
*Tocqueville	*Democracy in America, Documents from American History*
*Lincoln	Selected speeches
*F. Douglass	Selected speeches
*Kierkegaard	*Philosophical Fragments, Fear and Trembling*
*Wagner	*Tristan and Isolde*
*Marx	*Capital, Political and Economic Manuscripts of 1844, The German Ideology*
*Dostoevsky	*Brothers Karamazov*
*Tolstoy	*War and Peace*
*Melville	*Benito Cereno*
*O'Connor	"Good Country People"
*Nietzsche	*Beyond Good and Evil*
*Freud	*Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, Mourning and Melancholia, Beyond the Pleasure Principle*
Baudelaire	*Les Fleurs du Mal*
*Booker T. Washington	Selected writings
*Du Bois	*The Souls of Black Folk*
*Husserl	*Crisis of the European Sciences*
*Heidegger	*The Word of Nietzsche, God is Dead, Introduction to Metaphysics*
*Simone de Beauvoir	*The Second Sex*
Einstein	Selected papers
*Conrad	*Heart of Darkness*
*Faulkner	*Go Down Moses*
Flaubert	*Un Coeur Simple*
*Woolf	*Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse*
*Baldwin	*The Fire Next Time*
Poems by	Emily Dickinson, Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, Valéry, Rimbaud, Elizabeth Bishop
Essays by	Faraday, J. J. Thomson, Millikan, Minkowski, Rutherford, Davisson, Schrödinger, Bohr, de Broglie, Heisenberg, Mendel, Boveri, Sutton, Morgan, Beadle & Tatum, Sussman, Watson & Crick, Jacob & Monod, Hardy

** For these authors, one or more of their books are read in seminar. Other authors are read in the tutorials and laboratory.*

ST. JOHN'S LIST OF AUTHORS AND TEXTS

Classification of authors, according to conventional subject matter, through the four years.

	LITERATURE		PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY
Freshman Year	Homer Aeschylus Sophocles Euripides Aristophanes		Plato Aristotle Lucretius
Sophomore Year	Virgil Dante Chaucer Shakespeare Donne Marvell		Aristotle Epictetus Plotinus Hebrew Bible Augustine Anselm Aquinas Luther Montaigne Bacon Maimonides
Junior Year	Cervantes Milton Swift Racine La Fontaine J. Austen La Rochefoucauld G. Eliot Molière Wordsworth Twain		Descartes Pascal Hobbes Spinoza Locke Leibniz Hume Kant
Senior Year	Tolstoy Dostoevsky Goethe Flaubert Baudelaire Rimbaud Valéry Melville Dickinson Yeats Conrad Kafka Woolf	Woolf O'Connor E. Bishop Faulkner W. Stevens T. S. Eliot	Hegel Kierkegaard Nietzsche Heidegger Husserl Wittgenstein de Beauvoir Plato

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE	MATHEMATICS AND NATURAL SCIENCE		MUSIC
Herodotus Thucydides Plutarch	Euclid Nicomachus Ptolemy Lavoisier Dalton Archimedes Pascal Fahrenheit Avogadro Virchow	Mariotte Gay-Lussac Proust Cannizzaro Berthollet Mendeleyev J. J. Thomson Harvey Driesch Spemann	
Plutarch Tacitus Livy Machiavelli Viète	Ptolemy Apollonius Copernicus Descartes Pascal Kepler	 Stravinsky	Palestrina Bach Mozart Beethoven Schubert Haydn Des Prez Monteverdi
Locke Rousseau Adam Smith Hamilton, Jay, Madison	Galileo Young Euler Taylor Newton Leibniz Huygens	Dedekind D. Bernoulli Faraday Maxwell Ørsted Ampère	Mozart
Hegel Marx Documents from American political history Tocqueville Lincoln F. Douglass B. Washington Du Bois Hamilton, Jay, Madison	Faraday Lobachevsky Rutherford Minkowski Davisson de Broglie Beadle & Tatum Boveri Sutton Morgan Sussman Hardy	Mendel J. J. Thomson Bohr Millikan Schrödinger Darwin Freud Einstein Heisenberg Dirac Watson & Crick Jacob & Monod	Wagner

THE TUTORS

At St. John's, the teaching members of the faculty are called tutors. The title "professor" is avoided to signify that it is not the chief role of the tutors to expound doctrines in their field of expertise. Instead, learning is a cooperative enterprise carried out in small groups with persons at different stages of learning working together. All participants in a class are expected to prepare for their discussion by studying the text that is the principal teacher of the class—it might be Plato or Newton or Jane Austen or one of the other authors who wrote from the high point of their learning.

What then is the role of the reading and talking teachers, the tutors? First of all, they should be good questioners, able to raise important issues that will engage the intellectual and imaginative powers of their students. Next, they must be good listeners, able to determine the difficulties of their students and to help them to reformulate their observations and examine their opinions. The tutors should be ready to supply helpful examples and to encourage students to examine the implications of their first attempts at understanding. In summary, the role of the tutors is to question, to listen, and to help. The help might take the form of translation, experimentation, demonstration, or explanation, but first of all the tutor will call on the students to try to help themselves.

In order that conversations at St. John's will not be limited to what fits neatly inside a single discipline, it is essential that St. John's tutors re-educate themselves to acquire increased understanding in those parts of the Program that are outside their field of post-graduate training. For example, tutors with advanced degrees in mathematics would prepare themselves to lead language tutorials requiring translations from Sophocles or Racine. The advantage of this for students is that they are under the guidance of active learners who will not avert their far-ranging questions with the reply that these matters are handled in another department. The advantage of this for tutors is that they are involved with a variety of works of such richness that they are continually tempted to strive for greater comprehension of them. Some tutors do find time to write articles and books, but their first duty is to prepare themselves to teach the St. John's Program. This preparation is necessarily demanding because no full-time tutor is confined to a single part of the Program. They are, and have to be, teaching members of a seminar and of either two tutorials or of one tutorial and a laboratory section, and they are continually teaching their colleagues and learning from them.

It is important that tutors have time to probe more deeply into the foundations and wider contexts of what is studied at St. John's than the preparation for classes usually allows. In order to avoid staleness and the ever-present danger of succumbing to routine performance, they are granted sabbatical leaves to allow for leisure and serious study. Between sabbatical leaves, faculty study groups are set up. Leaders of such groups are sometimes relieved of part of their ordinary teaching duties. The groups engage in a thorough study and exploration of a subject. The subject may not be directly related to the St. John's curriculum, as the work of the study groups opens new perspectives for teaching and learning at St. John's.

A committee of tutors, the Instruction

Committee, is responsible for advising the deans on all matters of instruction and advising the presidents on appointments to the faculty. The committee consists of the deans and 12 tutors, six elected by the tutors on each campus of the college; the presidents sit with the Instruction Committee ex officio. The members of the committee on each campus constitute the Instruction Committee for that campus and meet regularly throughout the year. The full committee meets annually.

SCHEDULES

Perhaps the most distinctive mark of St. John's College is the fact that all the students of the same year are reading the same books at the same time with the same immediate preparation. This may be the week when all freshmen are learning the Greek alphabet; or the weeks when they are meeting the highest type of Greek mathematics in the fifth book of Euclid's *Elements*; or the time of the first assignment in Thucydides, when students and seminar leaders are thinking about the implications for liberty in Pericles' funeral oration. Thus all students, having a common program of study, have a common ground for conversation.

The general schedule is the same for all students. The language, mathematics, and music tutorials each meet for three-and-one-half hours to four-and-one-half hours per week. Freshmen, juniors, and seniors spend up to six hours each week in the laboratory. Each week there are two evening seminars, lasting two hours or more. A formal lecture or concert is given once a week. Sixteen to 19 hours per week are spent in regular classes. The year is divided into two semesters of 16 weeks each.

A Sample Freshman Schedule, Annapolis

HOUR	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9-10:10 a.m.	Language		Language	Music	Language
10:20-11:30 a.m.		Mathematics	Mathematics		Mathematics
1-3:40 p.m.	Laboratory			Laboratory	
8-10 p.m.	Seminar			Seminar	Formal Lecture

A Sample Freshman Schedule, Santa Fe

HOUR	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9-10:30 a.m.	Mathematics		Mathematics	Mathematics	
10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.	Music	Language	Language	Language	
1:30-4:30 p.m.		Laboratory		Laboratory	
7:30-9:30 p.m.	Seminar			Seminar	Formal Lecture

ESSAYS AND EXAMINATIONS

Annually in Annapolis and each semester in Santa Fe, all freshmen, sophomores, and juniors submit essays to their seminar leaders on some aspect of the liberal arts. These essays are based directly upon books in the Program.

Oral Examinations

Toward the end of each semester, oral examinations are conducted for each student by the seminar leaders. The students are questioned freely and informally on the texts they have read or the paper they have written and on their critical and interpretive opinions. It is not the principal aim of the examiners to find out how much students remember. Students are encouraged to consider the different parts of their study in relation to each other and to problems that may not have been treated in any of their classes. For freshmen, the first oral examination of the year is given before the winter vacation, and for juniors and seniors, just before preceptorials begin.

The Algebra Examination

Before the second semester of their sophomore year, students must pass an examination in elementary algebra and trigonometry. Review sessions are offered.

The Final Essay and Oral Examination

In the senior year, the student is required to present to the faculty a final essay related to some aspect of the four years' work. It is not intended to be a piece of specialized research, but rather a sustained performance in the liberal arts. Four weeks at the start of the second semester are reserved for essay writing; during this period, seniors are relieved of classes. If the final essay is approved by the faculty committee to which it has been assigned for reading, the student is examined about it by the committee in an hour-long public examination. No degree is awarded unless both the essay and the oral examination are satisfactory. The senior essay is regarded as a culmination of the student's learning.

ACADEMIC STANDING

Because St. John's classes are small and intimate, and because students participate actively, tutors are aware of their students' progress from day to day. The tutors' appraisals of a student are based on the student's total performance as a member of the tutorials and seminar.

It is assumed that each student has the required capacities to pursue this course of study until there is clear evidence to the contrary. The curriculum is varied and rich enough for great diversity of interest, performance, and achievement, and there is ample room within it for a wide range of ability and for individual choice and guidance. Moreover, St. John's is free from the pressures of conventional examinations and competition for grades.

Because student participation is essential to the way in which classes are conducted at St. John's, attendance at all regularly scheduled college exercises is required. A record of absences is kept. This record is taken into consideration whenever there is occasion to determine academic standing.

The Don Rag

Within the college, the most important form of evaluation is the don rag. Once a semester, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors meet with their tutors in the don rag. The tutors report to one of the semi-

nar leaders on the students' work during the semester; the students are then invited to respond to their tutors' reports and comment on their own work. Advice may be requested and given, difficulties may be aired, but grades are not reported or discussed.

In the junior year, conferences replace some of the don rags. In conferences, students report on their own work, and then the tutors comment on that report. By the time students are seniors, it is assumed that they can evaluate their own work, and there is no don rag unless a tutor believes that there is a special need for one.

If a student's work as a whole falls below a satisfactory level, the student may be placed on academic probation, with the stipulation of conditions that must be met if the student is to continue in the college. The normal probationary period is one semester.

Letter Grades

Students are encouraged not to work for grades, but to develop their powers of understanding. Therefore, within the college, grading is not of central importance. Students are told their grades only on request. The tutor's comprehensive judgment of a student is reported to the dean each semester as a conventional letter grade, A, B, C, D or F, where C indicates that the work is at a satisfactory level. Such a grading system is necessary for students who wish to enter graduate or professional school, or to transfer to another college.

Sophomore Enabling

Sophomore enabling is a review by the Instruction Committee—with the advice of all the tutors of sophomores—of the student's learning during the two years spent in the college. The sophomore essay is especially important in the enabling procedure. Consequently, no students are enabled to enter the junior class unless they have written a satisfactory essay, and then only if in the judgment of the Instruction Committee they are sufficiently prepared for the work of the final two years. In particular, the enabling judgment looks to the possibility of the student writing an acceptable senior essay.

THE ST. JOHN'S DEGREE

Bachelor of Arts

The student who completes the four-year curriculum satisfactorily is awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Students who enter in the January session graduate in three and one-half years, and they spend their first summer completing their freshman year, so that they, too, complete a four-year curriculum. On the transcript, St. John's seminars, tutorials, and laboratories are translated into terms of conventional subjects. The curriculum is the equivalent of approximately 136 semester hours.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES AND CREDITS

FRESHMAN

Freshman Laboratory 1 or 2	4 credits
Freshman Language Tutorial 1 or 2	4 credits
Freshman Mathematics Tutorial 1 or 2	4 credits
Freshman Music Tutorial 1 or 2	1 credit
Freshman Seminar 1 or 2	4 credits
Freshman Annual Essay	.50 credit

SOPHOMORE

Sophomore Music Tutorial 1 or 2	5 credits
Sophomore Language Tutorial 1 or 2	4 credits
Sophomore Mathematics Tutorial 1 or 2	4 credits
Sophomore Seminar 1 or 2	4 credits
Sophomore Annual Essay	1 credit

JUNIOR

Junior Laboratory 1 or 2	5 credits
Junior Language Tutorial 1 or 2	4 credits
Junior Mathematics Tutorial 1 or 2	4 credits
Junior Seminar 1	2 credits
Junior Seminar 2	4 credits
Junior Preceptorial	2 credits
Junior Annual Essay	1 credit

SENIOR

Senior Laboratory 1/2	4/3 credits
Senior Language Tutorial 1/2	4/3 credits
Senior Mathematics Tutorial 1/2	4/3 credits
Senior Seminar 1/2	2/3 credits
Senior Preceptorial	2 credits
Senior Essay	3.5 credits

THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE IN LIBERAL EDUCATION

The Graduate Institute at St. John's College offers a Master of Arts in Liberal Arts on both campuses and a Master of Arts in Eastern Classics on the Santa Fe campus. These programs, inspired by that of the undergraduate college, have two distinctive features: The curriculum consists exclusively of classic or great books used as texts, and all classes are conducted as small group discussions. Applications are encouraged from adults with diverse educational and cultural backgrounds and with varied interests and professions.

DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL ARTS

The aim of the program is to help students formulate and respond to fundamental questions about themselves and their world by reading and discussing with others the great books of the Western tradition. The readings are organized into five segments: Literature, Politics and Society, Philosophy and Theology, Mathematics and Natural Science, and History. Students must complete four of these five segments to earn the Master of Arts in Liberal Arts degree (36 semester credit hours). These segments taken together constitute a closely integrated program of study.

Classes are small and based on discussion of classic texts, but differ in significant ways. The heart of the curriculum is the seminar, in which 14 to 19 students engage in a discussion initiated by a tutor's question about the assigned reading. In the tutorial, a slightly smaller group of students focuses more intensively on smaller assignments—either mathematical proofs, short literary texts, or dense arguments of philosophy or political theory. The preceptorial, with an even smaller number of students, engages in the study of a single book or topic and requires that students write a substantial paper. Faculty members, called tutors, lead classes by posing questions and guiding the discussion, rather than by lecturing in their field of expertise.

At least two segments are offered in the 16-week fall and spring terms, and usually two to four are offered in the eight-week summer term. In the fall and spring terms, classes meet only two days a week, in the late afternoons and evenings, making it possible for students who work to participate. During the summer, classes meet five days a week and start earlier in the day. Schedules vary somewhat between the two campuses. Students may matriculate in any of the three terms, and take segments in any order compatible with the sequence of offerings. An optional master's essay may be written by students who have completed at least two terms.

THE LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM**

Literature

SEMINAR

Homer	*Iliad, Odyssey*
Aeschylus	*Agamemnon, Libation Bearers, Eumenides*
Sophocles	*Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone*
Euripides	*Hippolytus, Bacchae, Electra*
Aristophanes	*Frogs*

TUTORIAL

Chaucer	*Canterbury Tales in Middle English**
Shakespeare	*King Lear*
Aristotle	*Poetics*
Selected English lyric poetry	

Politics and Society

SEMINAR

Plutarch	*Lycurgus, Solon*
Plato	*Republic*
Aristotle	*Politics**
Machiavelli	*The Prince*
Locke	*Second Treatise of Civil Government*
Rousseau	*On the Origin and Foundations of Inequality*
Marx	*The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844**
Tocqueville	*Democracy in America**

TUTORIAL

Aristotle	*Nicomachean Ethics**
Thomas Aquinas	*Treatise on Law**
Hobbes	*Leviathan**
American Founding Documents	*Declaration of Independence* *Articles of Confederation* *U.S. Constitution*
Hamilton, Jay, and Madison	*The Federalist**
Selected U.S. Supreme Court Decisions	

Mathematics and Natural Science

SEMINAR

Plato	*Timaeus**
Lucretius	*On the Nature of Things*
Aristotle	*Physics**
Ptolemy	*Almagest**
Galileo	*Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems**
Darwin	*The Origin of Species**
Freud	*Selected Works*

TUTORIAL

Euclid	*Elements**
Lobachevski	*The Theory of Parallels**

Philosophy and Theology

SEMINAR

	Genesis
	Exodus
	Job
	Matthew
	Romans
Augustine	*Confessions**
Thomas Aquinas	*Summa Theologica**

Kant	*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*
Kierkegaard	*Philosophical Fragments*

TUTORIAL

Plato	*Meno*
Aristotle	*Metaphysics**
Descartes	*Meditations*
Hume	*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
Kant	*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*
Nietzsche	*Beyond Good and Evil**

History

SEMINAR

Herodotus	*Histories**
Thucydides	*Peloponnesian War**
Livy	*Early History of Rome**
Polybius	*Histories**
Plutarch	*Caesar, Cato the Younger*
Tacitus	*Annals**
Tocqueville	*The Old Regime and the French Revolution**

TUTORIAL

Augustine	*The City of God**
Vico	*The New Science**
Kant	*Idea of a Universal History*
Herder	*Ideas Toward the Philosophy of the History of Mankind**
Hegel	*Philosophy of History**
Marx	*The German Ideology*
Nietzsche	*Uses and Abuses of History for Life*
Dilthey	*Introduction to the Human Sciences**
Collingwood	*The Idea of History**
Strauss	*Political Philosophy and History**

PRECEPTORIAL

(sample offerings)

Aristotle	*On the Soul*
Confucius	*Analects*
Virgil	*Aeneid*
Cervantes	*Don Quixote*
Machiavelli	*The Florentine Histories*
Galileo	*Two New Sciences*
Spinoza	*Ethics*
Montesquieu	*The Spirit of the Laws*
Smith	*The Wealth of Nations*
Theory of Light Aristotle, Descartes, Huygens, and Newton	
Rousseau	*Emile*
Lavoisier	*Elements of Chemistry*
Austen	*Emma*
Hegel	*The Philosophy of Right*
Maxwell	*Theory of Heat*
Eliot	*Middlemarch*
Dostoevski	*The Brothers Karamazov*
Joyce	*Ulysses*
Wittgenstein	*Philosophical Investigations*
Arendt	*The Origins of Totalitarianism*
Selected poems of Emily Dickinson	

***Readings may differ slightly between campuses*

DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN EASTERN CLASSICS

The aim of the Eastern Classics program is to help students seek a deeper understanding of the fundamental and enduring questions that have been raised by thoughtful human beings in the rich traditions of the East. Its course of study consists of 34 semester credit hours, completed in one calendar year, beginning in the fall and concluding in the summer. It is offered only on the Santa Fe campus.

The program includes a series of seminars, preceptorials, and a language tutorial. In the seminar, 14 to 18 students discuss assigned readings from a wide range of Indian, Chinese, and Japanese texts. In the tutorial, students study either Sanskrit or classical Chinese. The goal is not mastery, but rather sufficient familiarity with the elements of the languages to gain some insight into their structure and to translate selected short passages from classical texts. In the preceptorial, students study a single work or theme for an eight-week period. Each student is required to write a substantial paper. As in the other programs, tutors lead classes by posing questions and guiding the discussion, rather than by lecturing in their field of expertise.

Classes meet in late afternoons and evenings to accommodate students who work part-time, but due to the intensive nature of the program, full-time work is not encouraged.

THE EASTERN CLASSICS CURRICULUM

Fall Semester

CHINESE TUTORIAL

(sample offerings)

Pronunciation & grammar	
Confucius	*Analects**
Lao Tzu	*Tao Te Ching**

SANSKRIT TUTORIAL

(sample offerings)

Gonda	*A Concise Elementary Grammar of the Sanskrit Language*
Devanagari script	

SEMINAR

Lao Tzu	*Tao Te Ching*
Confucius	*Analects, The Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean*
Mo Tzu	*Basic Writings of Mo Tzu**
Chuang Tzu	*Basic Writings*
Mencius	*Works**
Hsün Tzu	*Writings of Hsün Tzu**
Han Fei Tzu	*Writings of Han Fei Tzu**
Sima Qian	*The Grand Scribe's Records**
I Ching	
Rig Veda	
Brhadaranyaka Upanishad	
Kena Upanishad	
Mundaka Upanishad	
Katha Upanishad	
Ishvara Krishna	*Sankhya Karika, Tattva-Kaumudi**
Patanjali	*Yoga Sutra*

Jayadeva	*Gitagovinda*

PRECEPTORIAL
(sample offerings)

	Mahabharata (required)
	I Ching (sample offerings)
Confucius	Analects
Chuang Tzu	*Basic Writings*
Lao Tzu	*Basic Writings*

Spring Semester

CHINESE TUTORIAL
(sample offerings)

	T'ang Poetry
Mencius	*Works**

SANSKRIT TUTORIAL
(sample offerings)

	*Bhagavad-Gita**
Nagarjuna:	*Madhyamika-shastra**

SEMINAR

Kalidasa	*Shakuntala, Kumarasambhava and Meghaduta*
Jaimini	*Mimamsa Sutra**
Kumarila Bhatta	*Shlokavartika, Katha Upanishad, Institutes of Manu*
	Kautilya: Artha-Shastra, Kama Sutra, Mahabharata*
	Bhagavad-Gita
Abhinavagupta	*Dhvanyaloka**
Jayarasi Bhatta	*Tattvopaplavasimha**
Ashvaghosha	*Buddhacarita, Majjhima Nikaya*, Vimalakirti Sutra**
Nagarjuna:	*Madhyamika-shastra*
Chandrakirti	*Prasannapada, Lankavatara Sutra**
Guadapada	*The Great Karika on the Mandukya Upanishad*
Shankara	*Commentary on the Vedanta Sutras*
T'ao Ch'ien	*Record of the Peach Blossom Fountainhead*
	Chinese Poetry, Diamond Sutra, Heart Sutra*
Hui-Neng	*Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*
Chu Hsi	*Chu Tzu, ch'uan-shu, Chu Tzu wen-chi*

PRECEPTORIAL
(sample offerings)

	Rig Veda
	Upanishads
Ts'ao Hsüeh-Ch'in	*Story of the Stone*
Sima Qian	*The Grand Scribe's Records*
Neo-Confucian Texts	
Chinese Vernacular Prose of the Ming Dynasty	

Summer Semester

SEMINAR

	The Tale of the Heike, Lotus Sutra
Sei Shonagon	*The Pillow Book**
Kenko	*Essays in Idleness*
Dogen	*Shobogenzo**
Basho	*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*
Chushingura	*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*

PRECEPTORIAL
(sample offerings)

Murasaki Shikibu	*The Tale of Genji (required)*

**selections*

Admissions Offices

60 COLLEGE AVENUE
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401
800-727-9238
ANNAPOLIS.ADMISSIONS@SJC.EDU

1160 CAMINO DE CRUZ BLANCA
SANTA FE, NM 87505
800-331-5232
SANTAFE.ADMISSIONS@SJC.EDU

For information about admissions and financial aid, please visit sjc.edu.

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