Policies & Procedures

Pilot Curriculum
Requirements for Graduation

In order to graduate, College students admitted to the Pilot Curriculum must have fulfilled all of the requirements below.

General Education Requirement

The Pilot Curriculum General Education Requirement consists of a series of four general education courses, one in each of the following four categories:

Category I: Structure and Value In Human Societies
Category II: Science, Culture and Society
Category III: Earth, Space and Life
Category IV: Imagination, Representation and Reality

See the opposite page for a list of courses that fulfill each of the categories.

Academic Skills Requirement

The Academic Skills Requirement was designed to enhance skills in written communication, to promote proficiency in and familiarity with at least one foreign language, and to develop skills in quantitative analysis and reasoning. The Skills Requirements are Writing, Foreign Language and Quantitative Data Analysis.

The Research Requirement

Students in the Pilot Curriculum are required to have a significant undergraduate research experience before they graduate. In most cases, this will be done in the context of the major, since this is normally the field in which the student has the most extensive knowledge, the deepest interest, and the best command of the methods and analytical tools for scholarly research. In some instances, students might take the knowledge and skills developed in their major or in other experiences and apply them to an investigation that takes place outside the major.

Planning research

Students planning a research project should spend some time laying the groundwork:

1. Follow up with faculty or TAs from courses taken. Was there a particular topic of interest? Can they recommend colleagues who might be able to serve as research mentors?

2. Consult with the major advisor and/or undergraduate chair to discuss ideas, research opportunities, and possible faculty who can offer guidance in the specific area of interest.

3. Identify prerequisites that will serve as preparation for doing this research, including methods courses offered in the major or related fields, major seminars, or other experiences that teach relevant skills such as laboratory techniques, statistics, or working with bibliographic materials.

4. Consider the format. Will the work take place in the context of a regular course or an independent study? What will be the end product—a paper or other written report?

Certification of the requirement

Projects are evaluated and approved by the undergraduate chair or program director of the relevant department or program. In exceptional cases involving a project in an area unrelated to the major, the Penn department related to the area in which the research has been done will evaluate and approve the work. The College Office does not evaluate pilot research projects. If the departmental evaluator has questions about the Pilot Curriculum requirement, she or he should be referred to Dr. Niel McDowell, Associate Director of Academic Advising, 215.898.6341.

It is strongly recommended that students working on fulfilling the Pilot Curriculum Research Requirement contact the relevant undergraduate chair or program director at the beginning of the project to ensure that the field’s standards for undergraduate research are being met. This will prevent unpleasant surprises at the end of the process.

Note: In a number of majors in the College, research is built into the undergraduate program. Pilot Curriculum...
I: Structure and Values in Human Societies
- Introduction to Africana Studies
  AFRC 001, HIST 007, RELS 007, SOCI 027
- The Modern World and Its Cultural Background
  ANTH 004
- Globalization and Its Historical Significance
  ANTH 012, HIST 012, SOCI 012
- Gender and Society
  GSWS 002

II: Science, Culture and Society
- Freud
  COML 253, ENGL 240, GRMN 253, GSWS 252, HSOC 253, STSC253
- The Emergence of Modern Science
  HSOC 001, STSC 001
- Health and Societies
  HSOC 010
- Eye, Mind and Image
  VLST 101

III: Earth, Space and Life
- Life in the Universe
  ASTR 006
- Humans and the Environment
  BIOL 140
- Chemistry of the Environment
  CHEM 012
- Introduction to Environmental Earth Science
  ENVS 200
- Natural Disturbances and Disasters
  GEOL 103

IV: Imagination, Representation and Reality
- Architect and History
  ARTH 106
- The Devil's Pact in Literature and Film
  CINE 352, COML 241, GRMN 256, RELS 236
- Scandalous Arts in Ancient and Modern Societies
  CLST 240

General Education Requirement Courses

The following courses are approved for use in the respective categories: