# GENERAL EDUCATION: CARDINAL CORE

## Cardinal Core Overview

The Cardinal Core program at the University of Louisville prepares students to do the advanced work needed for their baccalaureate degrees and prepares them to contribute to society throughout their lives through their professional work and civic engagement. The program emphasizes the development of key intellectual skills relevant to any career path: critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, effective communication, and the understanding of historical, social, and cultural diversity.

Students develop skills and acquire knowledge in the content areas of arts and humanities, historical perspectives, oral communication, quantitative reasoning, social and behavioral sciences, natural sciences, written communication, and the competency area of diversity in the United States and globally. Upon completion of the program, students are prepared to analyze complex problems and evaluate possible courses of action in an environment characterized by diversity and the need for sustainable solutions.

Students should demonstrate proficiency (through coursework or external credit) in the three skills areas (written communication, oral communication, and quantitative reasoning) before completing the first 30 degree-applicable credit hours earned at the University of Louisville. Within 60 hours, the student should have completed 21 hours of Cardinal Core courses.

The Cardinal Core program requires a minimum of 31 credit hours from approved course categories as outlined in the table below. Students must complete a minimum of 12 hours in the skills courses, a minimum of 19 hours in the disciplinary perspectives courses, and within the 31 hours, students must accumulate 6 hours in diversity credit.

Academic advisors can guide students in the selection of courses.

## Cardinal Core Content Areas and Required Credit Hours

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<td>Oral Communication (OC)</td>
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<td>Quantitative Reasoning (QR)</td>
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<td><strong>Disciplinary Perspectives</strong></td>
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<td>Natural Sciences/Natural Sciences Lab (S, SL, B)</td>
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<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
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<td>U.S. Diversity (D1), 3 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Diversity (D2), 3 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Diversity requirement does not add hours to the total Cardinal Core Program. Diversity requirements will be met by taking courses in other Cardinal Core categories that also carry the D1 or D2 designation.</td>
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**Total Hours Required**: 31

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1. Students must take at least 2 courses from different disciplines to satisfy the Arts & Humanities (AH) requirement.
2. Students must take at least 2 courses from different disciplines—with a minimum of 3 hours in Historical Perspectives (SBH) coursework—to satisfy the Social & Behavioral Sciences (SB) and Historical Perspectives (SBH) requirement.
3. Students must take a lecture and lab in a single discipline and an additional 3 hours in a second discipline to satisfy the Natural Sciences (S, SL, B) requirement.

For a list of approved Cardinal Core courses, please visit the Cardinal Core website (http://louisville.edu/provost/ger).

## Cardinal Core Content Areas

### Written Communication

**Requirement**: 6 hours (WC). The first 3 hours must be a writing course in or credit approved by the Department of English.

**Requirement**: 3 hours (OC)

### Quantitative Reasoning

**Requirement**: 3 hours in quantitative reasoning (QR)

**Disability Resource Center Assistance with QR Requirement**

A student who believes that his or her inability to complete a course that fulfills the quantitative reasoning Cardinal Core requirement is a result of a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), which will outline the process for documenting such a disability, explain what courses can be substituted if a disability is diagnosed, and will make clear to the student that such a substitution will make it impossible to take classes for which Cardinal Core quantitative reasoning courses are prerequisite, thus greatly limiting the majors the student can elect. All such courses of action must be approved by the provost.

### Arts and Humanities

**Requirement**: 6 hours in the arts and/or humanities (AH), with at least two courses from different disciplines.

### Social and Behavioral Sciences

**Requirement**: 6 hours in the social and behavioral sciences (SB), with at least two courses from different disciplines.

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Historical perspective (SBH) is concerned with understanding change over time. Courses addressing this requirement cover a broad body of historical knowledge and compare different societies and cultures.
Competency in Diversity

Diversity refers to the difference that differences make. All courses in diversity will examine the ways in which components of identity and social and material stratification positively or negatively affect life experiences, opportunities, and sense of belonging in national or global contexts.

Students must take 6 hours in diversity, with 3 hours in U.S. diversity (D1) and 3 hours in global diversity (D2). The diversity requirements will be met by taking courses in other Cardinal Core categories that also carry the D1 or D2 designation. This requirement, therefore, does not add hours to the total Cardinal Core program.

- **U.S. Diversity**
  
  Courses in U.S. diversity (D1) will broaden students’ understanding of how the experiences and opportunities of individuals and groups in the United States are shaped by the various historical, cultural and social structures and processes of stratification. These courses will center on race, socio-economic status, and gender, and/or their interactions with other social demographics.

  **Requirement:** 3 hours

- **Global Diversity**
  
  Courses in global diversity (D2) will broaden students’ understanding of how the experiences and opportunities of individuals and/or groups in non-U.S. societies are shaped by the various historical, cultural and social structures and processes of stratification locally or globally.

  **Requirement:** 3 hours

Petitions for Diversity (D) Credit

Students may receive one diversity credit by petitioning the Cardinal Core Curriculum Committee under the following claims.

- **Diversity (D) Credit for Study Abroad Courses**

  Students may petition for diversity (D) credit for coursework undertaken as part of a study-abroad program prior to participation. Courses not previously approved for Cardinal Core credit will not be accepted for diversity (D) credit even if they are part of a university-approved study-abroad program. Petitions must be submitted to the committee through the Cardinal Core website.

  Detailed instructions are available on the Cardinal Core website (http://louisville.edu/provost/ger/diversity).

- **Diversity (D) Credit for Transfer Courses**

  A student may petition the Cardinal Core Curriculum Committee to evaluate transfer courses identified by the Admissions Office as not equivalent to any existing approved diversity (D) course. The student requesting the evaluation must provide a catalog course description and a syllabus of the course.

  Information on submitting a petition for transfer credit is available on the Cardinal Core website (http://louisville.edu/provost/ger/diversity).

Diversity (D) Credit for Military Experience

A student may petition for diversity (D) credit based on military experience. The petition must include an essay identifying which form of diversity (D) credit is requested, describing and explaining how the experience met the learning outcomes of the diversity (D) competency.

Petitions must be submitted to the committee. Detailed instructions (including specifications of the essay, criteria for assessment of the essay, submission deadlines, and limits on the petition period) are available on the Cardinal Core website (http://louisville.edu/provost/ger/diversity).

Only one diversity credit (D1 or D2) may be earned by petition.
will still be required to complete 6 hours in courses designated diversity (D), with 3 hours in U.S. diversity (D1) and 3 hours in global diversity (D2).

General Education Fully Certified

Students who have completed a general education program, with a minimum of 30 unduplicated semester credit hours or the equivalent (may include an approved SACS justification for fewer hours) which includes the core component and all additional institutional-specific general education courses, will be “General Education Fully Certified” for purposes of transfer. If the receiving institution’s general education program requires a sum of hours that is less than the total the student has taken at the sending institution, the excess hours will be accepted for transfer by the receiving institution and evaluated for application toward degree requirements. There may be graduation requirements beyond general education requirements that a student will need to complete (e.g., senior year capstone experiences).

AA/AS Credit for General Education

Students who graduate from Kentucky public institutions with AA or AS degrees will be deemed to be General Education Fully Certified. Other students who present the transcript for an AA (Associate of Arts) and/or an AS (Associate of Science) degree from a regionally-accredited institution (not included in the Kentucky Public Transfer Policy) will be considered for General Education Core Certification. Transcripts for such consideration must show completion of at least one transferable course in each of the Cardinal Core content areas at the University of Louisville: Written Communication, Oral Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences (including Historical Perspective), and Natural Sciences.

General Education Requirements for Second-degree Students

For students already holding a baccalaureate degree but in residence to complete a second baccalaureate, the Cardinal Core requirements shall be considered fulfilled by the first baccalaureate degree.

Cardinal Core Assessment

Assessment of student learning outcomes is a national expectation in higher education and the expectations are calls for increased accountability. The Cardinal Core Curriculum Committee (CCCC) will conduct a systematic assessment of the Cardinal Core program for achievement of the student learning outcomes. In particular, the university-wide general education assessment program evaluates student performance in the key intellectual skills of the Cardinal Core program: critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, effective communication, and the understanding of historical, social, and cultural diversity. This process evaluates the effectiveness of the general education program and recommends changes for its improvement, as required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools’ (SACS) accreditation principles.