Academics (Undergraduate)

The Liberal Arts

A liberal arts education is more than the broad skills and knowledge acquired from studying such areas as literature, history, philosophy and the arts. On a deeper level, a liberal arts education refers to the integration of knowledge across the disciplines, the development of critical thinking and communication skills, and the ability (and desire) to question, examine and understand issues and ideas with increasing clarity and depth.

At Bridgewater College, excellence in education is a commitment that unites the entire campus. It implies breadth, depth, distinction and discovery. We build breadth through the liberal arts foundation; depth through the student's academic major; and distinction through elective courses that are tailored to individual interests. The last of these, discovery, cannot be packaged, for it describes the spirit in which students and faculty come together.

That intangible mix of attitude and information can reshape the way students see themselves and the world around them. What happens in the classroom is basic to this transformative process, and at Bridgewater, the liberal arts curriculum is the beginning point.

At Bridgewater College, we emphasize these things not only for the love of learning, but to prepare students to positively shape the organizations and communities in which they live and work.

As part of their transformative liberal arts education at Bridgewater College, students will:

- demonstrate the skills of academic citizenship, including open listening, responsible perspective taking, public reasoning, and self-authorship;
- examine fundamental ethical choices;
- understand the impact of one's actions on the community and exercise civic responsibility as local, national and global citizens;
- learn the knowledge and skills essential for collegiate success in a first-year experience;
- develop and demonstrate an identity as learners and integrate their learning across disciplines and in residential, co-curricular, service, community and social experiences;
- develop a personalized educational program and analyze and document their experiences;
- be actively engaged in their learning through information technologies and learn information literacy and how to apply technology effectively in their respective disciplines and careers;
- connect their academic work to the wider world through community-based learning experiences such as internships, practical, fieldwork, student teaching, study abroad and multicultural programming experiences;
- read and write the English language with clarity, effectiveness and discernment;
- demonstrate effective oral communication skills;
- demonstrate competence in critical reading and critical reasoning;
- understand the diverse cultures that have composed the global community in both past and present and be able to excel in multicultural and international situations;
- learn and practice activities that promote healthy lives; and
- develop in-depth knowledge in a particular field.