

## First-Year Gateway Experience

The Gateway Program welcomes Bryant's newest members to the community, sets a foundation for academic and personal success, and cultivates the qualities of character vital for leadership and for the health of a democratic society. The Gateway curriculum is built around fundamental questions about the role of the individual in a fast-paced, ever-changing world. Faculty and staff work with students in the Gateway to foster the development of the habits and skills essential for success at Bryant and beyond. They do this by encouraging students to:

- Draw meaningful connections between learning that takes place inside and outside of the classroom,
- Apply knowledge and skills from multiple perspectives,
- Communicate ideas effectively, and
- Reflect on learning experiences.

The Gateway Curriculum is comprised of five major courses, each designed to cultivate key learning outcomes. These include:

- *Global Foundations of Character and Leadership (GFCL-3 credits)*: The aim of this course is to pose fundamental questions about the place of the individual in society in the context of a swiftly changing global environment. To be effective citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires creative thinkers capable of examining complex contemporary problems in historical perspective with an understanding of diverse world-views and cultures. Students are asked to reexamine values and assumptions, and to develop the character and leadership skills required to make complex ethical decisions.
- *Global Foundations of Organizations and Business (GFOB-3 credits)*: This course poses fundamental questions about the creation and ethical deployment of intellectual capital within the context of global enterprise. The transformation of the world economy has created the need for individuals with sophisticated skills, global perspective, expertise in multiple areas, and the ability to acquire new knowledge and skills needed to meet the challenges of continuously changing business conditions. Successful organizations rely on collaborative efforts to solve problems and implement initiatives. Such processes require individuals with a multi-disciplinary perspective and demonstrated skills in leadership, negotiation, communication, and time management.
- *Writing Workshop (WRT 106-3 credits)*: This course engages students with peers and their instructor as a collaborative of writers. Focusing on the practice of writing as a process, students become familiar with the conventions of specific rhetorical situations. Students develop transferable strategies for effectively accessing, interpreting, evaluating, and presenting information with an awareness of purpose and content. Along with fostering writing competencies and a capacity for inquiry and analysis, students reflect upon experiences as writers and participants in various learning communities. Students come to recognize writing as a value-laden ethical enterprise, a means of self-exploration, self-definition, and self-expression.
- *Introduction to Literary Studies (LCS 121-3 credits)*: Through intensive reading and writing about imaginative literature, students develop the skills necessary for literary

analysis and effective writing. The aim of the course is to aid students in becoming discerning readers, critical thinkers, and thoughtful writers.

- *The Bryant Innovation and Design Experience for All (IDEA) (1credit)*: This intensive, experiential learning component of the Gateway curriculum provides students with a unique opportunity to apply the five learning outcomes, integrate perspectives, and foster team and leadership skills. For 72 hours at the start of the spring semester, students work in teams of five on a design challenge. The IDEA challenges students to demonstrate their learning about the innovation process. Specifically, the IDEA deepens students' understanding of design thinking and teamwork.

### **Academic Outcomes**

All of the Gateway curricular elements and learning experiences are designed to promote student growth and development on a set of core learning outcomes essential for success at Bryant and beyond. These learning outcomes include:

- *Effective written communication*: The development and expression of ideas in writing.
- *Effective oral communication*: Designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.
- *Critical thinking*: The habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.
- *Ethical reasoning*: The ability to assess one's own values and social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas and consider the ramifications of alternative actions.
- *Diversity awareness*: Possessing the cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts.
- *Information literacy*: The ability to know when there is a need for information, and to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and both effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand.

### **Student Success Outcomes**

Student success programming in the First-Year Gateway Experience is designed to transition students into a scholarly community by fostering their intellectual, academic, social, and emotional adjustment. Integrated success instruction and programming enables students to demonstrate:

- An understanding of the self in the scholarly community.
- Engagement in scholarly activities such as group discussion, conducting research, and synthesizing materials, thereby illustrating a growing awareness of the importance of active involvement in the educational process.

- The ability to plan and prioritize academic and student life activities to promote success inside and outside of the classroom.
- Development of cognitive and metacognitive abilities, including those skills involved in the self-regulation of learning and developing a fuller understanding of a range of learning and study strategies.