

FOUNDATIONS

Barnard's curriculum, *Foundations*, applies to students entering in or after Fall 2016.¹

With Foundations, students explore disciplines across the arts and sciences and master different Modes of Thinking. Students must satisfy the course requirements listed below.

Some courses are approved to satisfy multiple general education requirements. Students may use such courses to satisfy up to two requirements in separate categories (the categories being Distributional Requirements, Modes of Thinking, and Major or Minor requirements).

All courses satisfying the General Education Requirements must be at **least 3-point courses**. Independent studies are not eligible. AP exams, IB diplomas, and National Exam Credit are not eligible.

I. First-Year Experience

- First-Year Writing
- First-Year Seminar

II. Physical Education (1 Course)

III. Distributional Requirements

- 2 Courses in the Languages (must be in the same language)
- 2 Courses in the Arts/Humanities
- 2 Courses in the Social Sciences
- 2 Courses in the Sciences: one 3-point lecture or lab and one lecture with lab (minimum 4 points)

IV. Modes of Thinking

- 1 Course in *Thinking Locally—New York City*
- 1 Course in *Thinking through Global Inquiry*
- 1 Course in *Thinking about Social Difference*
- 1 Course in *Thinking with Historical Perspective*
- 1 Course in *Thinking Quantitatively and Empirically*
- 1 Course in *Thinking Technologically and Digitally*

Modes of Thinking: Learning Outcome Guidelines

Courses fulfilling these requirements will demonstrate one of the following:

1. A dominant and unifying theme in the course that corresponds to the description of the Mode(s) of Thinking
2. Close matching between the learning objectives for the GER requirement and learning objectives for the course
3. A significant portion of written assignments, projects, or exams focused on the Mode(s) of Thinking
4. A majority of the readings focused on the Mode(s) of Thinking

Thinking Locally—New York City

Requirement: One course that asks students to examine the community and environment in which they find themselves as residents of New York City.

Aim: This requirement encourages students to situate themselves in a local context. In this respect, New York is not just the backdrop of their undergraduate experience, but is equally a rich and diverse object of study in its own right. New York is both a wholly distinctive metropolis

and a microcosm of contemporary world experience. The requirement can be met through the study of many topics, from the literature of the Harlem Renaissance to the ecosystems of the Hudson River, from the history of urban planning to the architecture of the Gilded Age.

Students who complete a course satisfying the *Thinking Locally* requirement should be able to attain at least one of the following outcomes:

- Identify specific cultural, social, political, or economic institutions that have shaped the city over time
- Identify distinctive geological or environmental factors that characterize the region
- Describe the contexts and distinctive features of at least one author, genre, or tradition characteristic of New York City
- Situate art, architecture, literature, urban planning, or performance within the social or historical context of the city
- Explore theories of urban structure or form focusing on New York City as an exemplar

Thinking through Global Inquiry

Requirement: One course that asks students to consider communities, places, and experiences beyond their immediate location.

Aim: This requirement asks students to engage with topics across the disciplines that consider the dynamic global relationships among people, ideas, artifacts, or physical phenomena. The subjects or objects of inquiry will span multiple regions, nations, cultures, ethnicities, races, religions, histories, or art forms. This requirement will encourage students to expand their perspectives on the world and their place in it, while complementing the *Thinking Locally—New York City* mode to highlight the ways in which global engagement involves a consideration of the local, as well as the global.

Students who complete a course satisfying the *Thinking through Global Inquiry* requirement should be able to attain at least one of the following outcomes:

- Identify and analyze the ways in which a cultural, social, political, or economic event may have distinct effects in different locations
- Articulate the distinctions among “local” and “international” and “global” in the context of one or more systems—e.g., economic, judicial, literary, philosophical, scientific
- Identify and compare the value systems displayed in materials from multiple cultures
- Identify and critique personal and/or national cultural assumptions and behaviors in relation to those of others
- Identify and analyze the evidence of transnational, multicultural, or multilingual exchanges in materials from multiple cultures
- Utilize multilingualism to investigate the construction of, and interactions among, multiple cultures

Thinking about Social Difference

Requirement: One course through which students examine how difference is constituted, defined, lived, and challenged in cultural, social, historical, or regional contexts.

Aim: This requirement encourages students to engage with disparities of power and resources in all of their manifestations, including but not limited to access to economic or natural resources, political rights, social status, and cultural expression. Areas of study may include race,

ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, ability, nationality, or religion and their intersections within contemporary and historical experience.

Students who complete a course satisfying the *Thinking about Social Difference* requirement should be able to attain at least one of the following outcomes:

- Identify and critique ways that groups understand themselves to be different and how they mobilize difference in the pursuit of a range of ends
- Identify and analyze the intersectional nature of differences in cultural, social, national, or international contexts
- Identify and critique the modes in which such differences are expressed
- Identify and articulate the relations between categories of difference and the general principles of hierarchy and inequality

Thinking with Historical Perspective

Requirement: One course that enables students to study times and traditions of the past, to learn theories and methods of historical analysis, and to discover how different concepts of history shape our understanding of both past and present.

Aim: This requirement asks students to examine the ways in which historical context shapes and conditions the world in which we live; it also challenges them to see the past on its own terms – as an unfamiliar locus of difference. By fulfilling this requirement, students will have a better understanding of the ways in which human experience is shaped by both temporal change and spatial variation.

Students who complete a course satisfying the *Thinking with Historical Perspective* requirement will be able to attain at least one of the following outcomes:

- Identify and analyze historically specific cultural, social, political, or economic structures, and the dominant actors and ideas relevant to the period, region, or theme of the course
- Articulate significant commonalities and differences between structures and ideas specific to the period, region, or theme under study and those in the present
- Evaluate the methodology and evidence used by scholars to study the period, region, or theme of the course
- Examine literature, art or cultural forms in a historical context

Thinking Quantitatively and Empirically

Requirement: One course that exposes students to analysis with numbers, figures, data, and graphs, and to empirical and mathematical methods for better understanding of quantitative and empirical approaches to thinking and problem solving.

Aim: This requirement asks students to develop basic competence in the use of one or more mathematical, statistical, or deductive methods. These may involve applications to particular problems, as in the case of models or data analysis, but may also simply involve abstract reasoning as in pure mathematics or logic.

Students who complete a course satisfying the *Thinking Quantitatively and Empirically* requirement should be able to attain at least one of the following outcomes:

- Demonstrate an ability to apply at least one method of quantitative or deductive reasoning

- Apply quantitative or empirical conceptual tools and procedures to the analysis of problems
- Complete a project involving organizing, analyzing, and visualizing data

Thinking Technologically and Digitally

Requirement: One course that engages students with contemporary and emerging fields such as computational sciences and coding, digital arts and humanities, geographic information systems, or digital design.

Aim: This requirement emphasizes courses in which students actively engage with digital technologies manipulated with computers and accessed locally or at a distance. The requirement fosters students' abilities to use advanced technologies for creative productions, scholarly projects, scientific analysis or experimentation. The requirement will instill in students the confidence to make decisions about the adoption and use of current and future technologies in a critical and creative manner.

Students who complete a course satisfying the *Thinking Technologically and Digitally* requirement should be able to attain at least one of the following outcomes:

- Demonstrate proficiency in writing computer code or in using technology to construct knowledge or produce creative or scholarly works
- Analyze the development, efficiency, or use of digital resources
- Use digital tools to critically, creatively, innovatively, or effectively gather, access, evaluate, and synthesize relevant materials
- Complete a project that demonstrates an understanding of technology concepts, systems, or operations

1. Students who entered prior to Fall 2016 under the *Nine Ways of Knowing* curriculum should consult the [archived online catalogue](#) for the year they matriculated at the College.