

THE FRESHMAN PROGRAM



The Christ College

Freshman Program is a two-semester sequence of interdisciplinary honors courses titled Texts and Contexts: Traditions of Human Thought, taking approximately half of the student's time each semester. Throughout the course students read selected great works of history, literature, drama, philosophy, and religion and consider closely the ideas that have shaped a range of traditions. Ideas are explored in many ways--through critical reading and close analysis of texts; through careful research and focused expository and persuasive writing; through scholarly lectures, faculty-guided small group discussion among classmates, and formal public debate; and through creative dramatic and musical



expression.

The program fulfills

many of the University requirements in English, history, theology, and the social sciences which must be met by all VU graduates. Therefore, students from all colleges at the University may participate in the Program. The Freshman Program provides for the common exchange of ideas among faculty and students about what they are reading and writing. Once a week the entire group (approximately 80 students and six faculty) meets for a common lecture. In addition, students spend four to five hours a week in discussion groups of 14 or fewer. Weekly student essays are carefully read and critiqued by faculty mentors.



In addition to Texts and Contexts, the student takes two or three other courses elsewhere in the University during the freshman year. For example, most students in the College of Arts and Sciences would be meeting general education requirements in natural sciences, mathematics, or foreign language. Students in the professional colleges take the basic courses in their professional programs. Additional honors courses are offered in Christ College at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels. Students who follow prescribed sequences of honors courses may graduate with Christ College honors distinctions.

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