

First-year mathematics is an empowering foundation for everyday problem-solving, critical thinking, and informed citizenship; it should fundamentally transform the way students see and experience the world around them. Beyond formulas and abstract calculations, the curriculum should cultivate quantitative fluency—giving students the number sense, analytical tools, and data literacy needed to interpret real-world claims and communicate complex ideas with precision.

To achieve this, the curriculum must treat math as an interdisciplinary reading and critical thinking practice, equipping students to decode and translate complex, word-based scenarios into structured logical solutions. Furthermore, it must actively confront math anxiety, build the emotional self-efficacy and belonging needed to sit with ambiguity, embrace productive struggle, and push back against the fixed mindset belief of "not being a math person" by viewing failure as an informative step.

As the only math course many students will take, the experience should not only nurture intellectual resilience and proactive help-seeking behaviors, but also permanently broaden their perspective—leaving them with the lasting realization that mathematical thinking is a universal lens that belongs to everyone.

First-year composition is a transformative practice of inquiry and reflection, shaping how students organize their thoughts, think critically, and understand their place in the world. Far from being about producing a static, finished artifact, the curriculum must center on the messy, generative nature of the writing process itself.

To achieve this, the classroom must be valued as a vital "thinking space" where learners are encouraged to slow down, read deeply and critically, engage with complex questions, and use the writing process to think through ideas and evidence to reach a reasoned conclusion. Crucially, close and critical reading serves as the foundational partner to this process, training students to untangle complex ideas on the page and sit with ambiguity.

By approaching writing as an ongoing act of meaning-making, the experience of First-Year Writing should empower students to develop their authentic voice, communicate ideas purposefully and persuasively, and claim their agency as active participants in broader academic, professional, civic, and global conversations.

IMPACTS Core, the General Education curriculum, is not a set of isolated requirements, but a unified foundation for critical inquiry, sense-making, and self-discovery. Together, these courses frame learning not as the pursuit of static answers, but as an ongoing, iterative process.

As a unified experience, these courses represent a crucial bridge for students as they transition to college life, guiding students to self-advocate, expand upon the learning foundations they built in high school, and cultivate proactive academic behaviors. This foundation grounds not only the development of course-specific skills but also the ability to transfer them appropriately to different disciplines and contexts, steadily elevating students' sophistication in thinking, reasoning, and communication.

By merging the quantitative lens of mathematics with the reflective space of composition, this unified foundation does not merely teach students to solve problems, but to see, interpret, and inhabit the world differently. It equips them with the intellectual agency to claim their place within academic, civic, and global communities alike.