

# Aquinas Program

Designed for first-year students, the Aquinas Program is an innovative approach to learning that combines three academic disciplines in a small-class setting where seminars, team teaching, and interdisciplinary approaches foster a high level of literacy and critical thinking. While providing required first-year credits, Aquinas thoroughly introduces academic disciplines and opens areas for exploration and discovery.

First-year students typically take five courses in five academic subjects. In Aquinas, three of these courses are organized into one section with a common theme and the same group of students and professors. Enrolment is purposely limited to create a close-knit community of learners.

*First-year students register for the Aquinas Program as part of the first-year registration process.*

## Aquinas Sections

### Great Books

Do you believe that university is about examining life's great questions? By reading classic works of the western world, you will explore life's great themes of love, friendship, freedom, and ethics as seen by authors across cultures and throughout the ages. You'll be encouraged to read and think critically about contrasting perspectives. You'll be challenged to examine your own ideas. Through the study of novels, plays, poetry, philosophical texts and contemporary films, you will wrestle with diverse and conflicting arguments, and debate the ideas which shape our world.

Small classes bring an intimate atmosphere as you actively engage in discussions and work collaboratively to understand such books as Homer's *Iliad*, Dante's *Inferno*, Plato's *Republic*, and Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Each of the themes covered includes texts and instruction from the perspective of Political Science, Philosophy, and English.

*Courses:*

- Political Science 1006      Introduction to Political Science
- Philosophy 1013/1023      Introduction to Western Philosophy I/II
- English 1006              Introduction to Literature

### Great Books and Human Rights

Great Books and Human Rights is designed for first year students engaged in questions of social justice and human rights. Students in this section of Aquinas will learn how to critically assess different accounts of justice, seeking to understand the philosophic foundations of human rights and their importance in the contemporary order. Reading texts such as Aristotle's *Ethics*, Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Martin Luther King's Letter from Birmingham Jail, and Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, students will be engaged in answering questions such as: What is a just law? What is the basis of human equality? What is the nature of human freedom?

*Courses:*

- English 1006              Introduction to Literature
- Human Rights 1006      Introduction to Human Rights
- Political Science 1006      Introduction to Political Science

### **Great Books For Journalists**

Do you believe a liberal arts education should give you the tools to reflect on some of the perennial questions of human life? In this section, you will tackle questions such as What is good? What is evil? Does power corrupt? You will reflect on the media's role in society. Is media based on reason and deliberation? Is it used to advance personal passions and interests? Is it used to exercise power through manipulation and propaganda?

The section draws from Journalism, Political Science, and Philosophy. The Journalism aspect of the section offers students a modern/contemporary historical component and allows students to see how the ideas of the older texts they read can shed light on world events.

#### *Courses:*

- Journalism 1013/1023      The Messenger: Journalism and Storytelling/The Message: Great Stories of Journalism
- Political Science 1006      Introduction to Political Science
- Philosophy 1006            Introduction to Western Philosophy