

Civilization Sequence Program (CVSP)

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The Civilization Sequence Program (CVSP) at the American University of Beirut is a unique, interdisciplinary space for critical inquiry into ideas that inform civilization.

The mission of the Civilization Sequence Program is to provide undergraduate courses in the humanities that support the American University of Beirut's goals in general education and the advancement of knowledge. CVSP is committed to engaging students from all the faculties of the University in the study of primary texts. The three major goals of the program are to develop critical skills and creative, flexible thinking; to promote an awareness of different civilizations; and to uphold dialogue as an essential skill of life.

Requirements

Old Program

Students who joined their **major** prior to October 2001 must take CVSP 201, 202, 203, and 204, sequentially. (That is, 201 is a prerequisite for 202, 202 for 203, and 203 for 204.)

New Program

All students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences are required to take a total of **twelve credits** in the humanities.

A **minimum of six credits** of those twelve must be taken from CVSP courses 201–208, that is, one course from each of the following two sequences. That is, one course from sequence I followed by one course from sequence II.

Sequence I:

CVSP 201 (each semester): Ancient Near East and Classical Civilizations (3 hrs)

CVSP 202 (each semester): Medieval, Islamic, and Renaissance Civilizations (3 hrs)

CVSP 205 (annually): Ancient, Medieval, Islamic, and Renaissance Civilizations (3 hrs)

CVSP 207 (annually): Ancient, Medieval, Islamic, and Renaissance Civilizations (Thematic) (3 hrs)

Sequence II:

CVSP 203 (each semester): Enlightenment and Modernity (3 hrs)

CVSP 204 (each semester): Contemporary Studies (3 hrs)

CVSP 206 (annually): Modern and Contemporary Studies (3 hrs)

CVSP 208 (annually): Modern and Contemporary Studies (Thematic) (3 hrs)

The **remaining six credits** may be taken by choosing **any two** courses from the following table of offerings in FAS humanities departments/programs:

Civilization Sequence Program: 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 215, 216, 230, 250, 251, 295

American Studies: 215, 220, 230, 275/276, 299

Arabic: 229 through 241; 243 through 247; 249

English: all courses other than communication skills courses and ENGL 231, 237, 238, 294

Fine Arts and Arts History: FAAH 221 through FAAH 229C, FAAH 235, FAAH/Theater 265, FAAH/Theater 270.

History: 200 through 279

Archaeology: 201 through 231, 235 and 236

Philosophy: 201, 205, 206, 209, 210; 213 through 219; 221, 222, 223, 224, 230, 231, 232, 249

Sociology-Anthropology: SOAN 215, 217, 225, 250

Summary

In order to complete their CVSP requirement, students must take **two** CVSP courses, **one from Sequence I** and **one from Sequence II**. Students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences may complete the other humanities requirement with any two courses from the approved list of courses above, either from CVSP or from other humanities departments.

Requirements

1. Since the critical skills built into the Sequence I courses significantly help the student succeed in Sequence II, students are **required** to take a Sequence I course **before** taking a Sequence II course.
2. It is **recommended** that students take a Sequence I course in the **sophomore** year, and a Sequence II course in the **junior** or **senior** year.
3. Students **must** have sophomore status or above to take a Sequence I course, and junior status or above to take a Sequence II course.

Restrictions

- CVSP 205 overlaps with 201 and 202. Thus, CVSP 205 cannot be taken if the student has taken either 201 or 202, and vice versa.
- CVSP 206 overlaps with 203 and 204. Thus, CVSP 206 cannot be taken if the student has taken either 203 or 204, and vice versa.

The above restrictions do not apply to CVSP 207 and 208, as they do not overlap with any other core courses (201-206).

Prerequisites

- ENGL 102 or its equivalent is a prerequisite for all CVSP courses 200 and above.
- Freshman students who have not completed two semesters may not enroll in CVSP courses numbered 201–208. They will not receive credit for these courses. For all other CVSP courses numbered 200 and above, freshman students may enroll only with prior consent of the instructor.

Sequence I and Sequence II Course Offerings

CVSP 201 **Ancient Near East and Classical Civilizations** **3.0; 3 cr.**
An introduction to fundamental elements of Ancient Mesopotamian, Greek, and Roman world views that continue to influence us today. Starting with the Epic of Gilgamesh, the course moves on to explore the Greek and Roman worlds through epic, drama, history, and philosophy, in some of the most influential texts from that period of human history. *Each semester.*

CVSP 202 **Medieval, Islamic, and Renaissance Civilizations** **3.0; 3 cr.**
An introduction to fundamental elements of late Classical, Medieval, Islamic, and Renaissance worldviews that continue to influence us today. This course focuses particularly on Christian and Islamic thought as presented in texts such as those of Augustine, Al Ghazali, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd, Aquinas, Dante, Ibn Khaldun, and Luther. Selected texts from the Renaissance period round off the course. *Each semester.*

CVSP 203 Enlightenment and Modernity 3.0; 3 cr.

An introduction to fundamental elements of what has come to be termed the epochs of Modernity and the Enlightenment. This course explores the emerging elements of an age of exploration, scientific advancement, and radical new ideas, through selections from authors such as Shakespeare (*The Tempest*), Bacon, Descartes, Diderot, Bentham, Kant, Goethe, Shelley, Hobbes, Locke, Adam Smith, Marx, and Mill. *Each semester.*

CVSP 204 Contemporary Studies 3.0; 3 cr.

An introduction to some of the most seminal influences in thought that have shaped our contemporary world from the late 19th century to the present time. This course typically explores themes and developments such as evolutionary theory, Nietzschean radical critique, depth-psychology, postphysics, philosophy of science, revolution, the absurd, existentialism, gender issues, and postcolonial literature and criticism, from both the Western and the Arab worlds. *Each semester.*

CVSP 205 Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Civilizations 3.0; 3 cr.

A composite of CVSP 201 and 202, covering selected works from the periods described above. *Annually.*

CVSP 206 Modern and Contemporary Studies 3.0; 3 cr.

A composite of CVSP 203 and 204, covering selected works from the periods described above. *Annually.*

CVSP 207 (A, B, C, ...) Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Civilizations (Thematic) 3.0; 3 cr.

Individualized courses designed to explore the periods covered in CVSP 201 and 202, utilizing a thematic approach. Examples of themes: Love: Human and Divine; Religion as Text and Tradition; Utopian Thought; Epics: Text and Context. May be repeated for credit. *Annually.*

CVSP 208 (A, B, C, ...) Modern and Contemporary Studies (Thematic) 3.0; 3 cr.

Individualized courses designed to explore the periods covered in CVSP 203 and 204, utilizing a thematic approach. Examples of themes: Love in the Modern and Contemporary Worlds; Faith, Culture, and Modernity; Utopian Thought; Science and Society; Language, Imagination, and Poetry; Epics: Text and Context. May be repeated for credit for different topics. *Annually.*

Other Course Offerings

CVSP 110 Gods and Creation: East and West 3.0; 3 cr.

A course that examines different literary understandings of the origins of the universe as found in texts from a variety of world cultures. *Annually.*

CVSP 111 Youth and Rebellion in Modern Literature 3.0; 3 cr.

An introduction to the themes and challenges of autonomy and independence as experienced by youth, studied through major literary works of the past centuries. *Annually.*

CVSP 112 Contemporary Arab Identity 3.0; 3 cr.

An examination of literary, historical, and socio-political texts that express contemporary Arab self-awareness. *Annually.*

CVSP 295 Special Topics in Cultural Studies 3.0; 3 cr.

At the discretion of the program. May be repeated for credit for different topics. *Prerequisite: junior level and above, or by consent of instructor.*

Courses Supplementary to the Regular Offerings

- CVSP 215** **A Survey of Nineteenth-Century French Literature in English** **3.0; 3 cr.**
 A survey of the major French poets and novelists of the nineteenth century with selected readings from Hugo, Lamartine, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud to Stendhal, Balzac and Zola.
Prerequisite: Junior status or consent of instructor. Annually.
- CVSP 216** **A Survey of Twentieth-Century French Literature in English** **3.0; 3 cr.**
 A survey of the major French poets and novelists of the twentieth century with an emphasis on the main artistic currents from Proust, Colette, Gide, Sartre, and Camus, to surrealism in poetry and the New Novel by Robe-Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute, and Marguerite Duras.
Prerequisite: Junior status or consent of instructor. Annually.
- CVSP 230** **Introduction to Feminist Theory** **3.0; 3 cr.**
 A course that examines feminism and its historical development through analysis and critique of the different feminist theories that have emerged during the twentieth century. *Annually.*
- CVSP 250** **Introduction to Art Appreciation** **3.0; 3 cr.**
 An introduction to the appreciation of art. This course aims to provide the student with a very general yet comprehensive knowledge of the major aesthetic theories, the various branches of art, techniques, and media. *Annually.*
- CVSP 251** **Civilization Through the Arts** **3.0; 3 cr.**
 A course that seeks to synthesize the fields of art, philosophy, and socio-cultural studies in a panoramic and comprehensive context. This course attempts to bring all forms of human activity into a single focus through the use of spontaneity in the aesthetic experience. *Annually.*
- CVSP/German 201** **Elementary German I** **3.0; 3 cr.**
Annually.
- CVSP/German 202** **Elementary German II** **3.0; 3 cr.**
Prerequisite: CVSP/German 201. Annually.
- CVSP/German 211** **Intermediate German** **3.0; 3 cr.**
Prerequisite: CVSP/German 202. Annually.
- CVSP/French 201** **Elementary French I** **3.0; 3 cr.**
Each semester.
- CVSP/French 202** **Elementary French II** **3.0; 3 cr.**
Prerequisite: CVSP/French 201. Each semester.
- CVSP/French 211** **Intermediate French** **3.0; 3 cr.**
Prerequisite: CVSP/French 202. Annually.