COLLEGE ONE

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A Letter From Vice Provost Viney

It gives me great pleasure to extend a Office of Undergraduate Education welcome to our new students. The Office of Undergraduate Education is both an idea and a place. I encourage you to make an acquaintance with both.

General education is about making connections. As a student at UC Merced, you will earn your bachelor's degree after completing two vital kinds of education. The first is general education: a broad encounter with many realms of knowledge and skill development. The second is the major: deep knowledge in a single field of study. General education will help you grow in two ways:

- You will strengthen your abilities in quantitative reasoning, writing and other methods of communication, equipping you with the advanced skills that are so critical in today's society.
- You will be introduced to the broad domains of knowledge - the humanities and arts, social and cognitive sciences, and natural sciences and engineering - and to the many ways in which they can be integrated.

UC Merced's faculty members are creating educational experiences that will prepare you for the challenges of the 21st century. These are detailed in the Guiding Principles for General Education, which is a document designed to help you develop your abilities in scientific literacy, decision making, communication, self and society, ethics and responsibility, leadership and teamwork, aesthetic understanding and creativity, and personal potential.

THREE KINDS OF GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **University Requirements** include meeting the UC Entry-Level Writing and American History and Institutions requirements. There are several ways to satisfy these before arriving on campus, described in the UC Merced General Catalog and on the Admissions Web site at http://admissions.ucmerced.edu
2. **Campus Requirements** include College Reading and Composition (WRI 10), a quantitative reasoning course, and the CORE Course sequence, described below.
3. **School Requirements** are described in the UC Merced General Catalog or on the Web sites of UC Merced's three schools.

CORE COURSE SEQUENCE

The Office of Undergraduate Education unique way to help you master the skills described in the Guiding Principles is UC Merced's CORE Course sequence, The World at Home: Planning for the Future in a Complex World. All freshmen take CORE 1 and all juniors take CORE 100. The CORE Course sequence introduces students to how the disciplines understand problems and devise tools to grapple with them. As Professor Christopher Viney told freshmen at the very first CORE 1 lecture, "You leave here as a specialist in something, but also as a citizen of the world. You need to be able to communicate with other people who are not in your field."

The CORE Course sequence is unique, in the faculty from all three schools - Natural Sciences, Engineering, and Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts - contribute to the teaching. The 26 faculty members who introduce their fields in CORE 1 challenge freshmen to think about ways that academic disciplines connect - or debate - with one another. In discussion sections, the CORE 1 writing instructors work on writing, critical thinking and quantitative reasoning with small groups of freshman students.

A CORE Friday event rounds out the week's lectures and discussions with a film, documentary, panel discussion, theatrical production or distinguished speaker. CORE Friday programming illuminates ideas presented during the week, as well as alternative views.

As a junior in CORE 100, you will begin to apply what you have learned during your first two years from your general education courses and the introductory work in your chosen major. Every society needs people who can solve problems. Increasingly, problems solving is accomplished by many professions through multidisciplinary team efforts. The goal of this course is to teach students problem-solving skills through the experience of working on a cross-disciplinary team to formulate a solution for a societal problem. The team will be composed of students from several majors to provide the breadth needed for a multidisciplinary approach; and will address the pros and cons of proposed solutions from scientific, cultural, ethical and economic perspectives.

OTHER PROGRAMS TO EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS

The Office of Undergraduate Education also offers undergraduates "one-stop shopping" for information on other programs that will enhance your UC Merced years.

- Freshman Seminars feature intellectual engagement between UC Merced faculty and small freshman groups
- Undergraduate Research Opportunities give students a chance to work with faculty in their laboratories or the library
- University of California Off-campus Programs, including the UC Education Abroad Program, UC in Washington D.C. and UC in Sacramento, expand the horizons of students' educational experiences.

The Office of Undergraduate Education is also a place. You can find us in 167 Kolligian Library. We have more detailed information about general education and we can connect you with the people who can help you with specific questions, such as the advisors at the Student Advising and Learning Center, located just up the hall. Finally, we hope you will join us as College One sponsors special events to help you get to know us better.

Welcome to Undergraduate Education! I wish you success as you begin your educational journey at UC Merced.

Sincerely,

Christopher Viney
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

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