

The New Paideia: Intentional, Interdisciplinary, Integrative

The New Paideia: What Is It?

In a nutshell, it's a way for students to organize some of their courses around a central *theme* or question: it will enable them to make connections across different classes and departments or programs; to do more interdisciplinary writing, creating, and thinking; and to collaborate with other students, faculty, and staff interested in the same theme. There will also be opportunities to connect civic engagement projects and/or intercultural learning experiences to the theme as well as extracurricular activities (e.g., lectures, salons, reading groups, field trips) related to each theme.

The New Paideia: How Does It Work?

Students enrolled in the new Paideia program will take *three interconnected cluster courses* followed by a *team-taught interdisciplinary Paideia Seminar*.

We're kicking off the program with three themes, each one featuring courses from across the curriculum: Mediterranean Mingling, Representing Gender, & Global Health. (The web has descriptions of each theme and course offerings.) Students choose at least three courses from within a theme to make their *Paideia Cluster*. Cluster courses can also count toward other general education requirements and/or toward one's major or minor.

The upper-level *Paideia Seminars* will be team-taught by two faculty members from different departments. These Paideia Seminars will be interdisciplinary spaces in which students and faculty will collaborate together in approaching the theme; students will also synthesize ideas from their cluster as a whole and reflect on the collective impact of the theme.

Students may be introduced to study abroad opportunities that overlap with the cluster theme or do civic engagement work that links to the theme their cluster courses. Paideia students are eligible to apply for need-based study abroad funds of up to \$2,500 per student.

All students who complete the program will be recognized as "Paideia Scholars" at graduation. Once the program opens to all students, students who maintain a high GPA and fulfill a range of Paideia-related requirements (such as a substantial civic engagement project, for example) will be granted "Paideia Distinction."

The New Paideia: When Does It Start?

Students entering during 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 are eligible for the initial roll-out of the program. Current first-years applied this spring, and we will open applications again in the fall. These students will participate in the three themes named above. Beginning in 2014-2015, all students will participate in the program, and new themes will be developed with each incoming class.

Questions? Please contact Alison Kafer (kafera@southwestern.edu) or Alison Marr (marra@southwestern.edu).

Paideia at a Glance

- Starting in the 2014-2015 academic year, all incoming students will be part of the new Paideia. This interdisciplinary program allows students to connect the dots of their various experiences at SU, making their general education experience more intentional.
- We are doing an optional roll-out program with the first year students in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 classes.

Theme-Based Course Clusters

- Clusters consist of groups of courses from across the curriculum organized around a theme or problem. Students choose at least three courses from their cluster.
- Faculty teaching within a theme meet regularly to share assignments and syllabi and to discuss the theme.
- Clusters feature optional discussion groups, field trips, and lectures based on cluster themes, bringing students and faculty together beyond the classroom.
- Courses may also satisfy distribution requirements, other gen ed requirements, and/or major/minor requirements. Course clusters are a regular part of the teaching load and curriculum.
- Clusters make explicit and intentional the inherent interdisciplinarity of the liberal arts.
- The three cluster themes for the roll-out program are Taking the Pulse of Global Health, Representing Gender: Do We Know It When We See It? and Mediterranean Mingling: Diversity and Cultural Intercourse. New themes will be introduced each year, once the program becomes required of all students (we estimate 3-6 each year).

Theme-Based, Team-Taught Paideia Seminars

- Four-credit Paideia seminars are based on course cluster themes or problems.
- Seminars are taken in the junior or senior year.
- Seminars are taught by two faculty from two different departments; seminar faculty are active participants in the clusters.
- Paideia seminars feature deep inquiry into complex interdisciplinary questions.

Civic Engagement

- The Paideia Endowment funds the Office of Civic Engagement (OCE).
- OCE works closely with departments to infuse civic engagement into selected courses.
- Civic engagement is incorporated into selected course clusters and Paideia seminars.

Intercultural Learning

- Paideia provides a \$100,000 need-based fund to assist student study abroad; priority is given to students in programs integrating study abroad and to students with academic plans incorporating intercultural learning.
- The Office of Intercultural Learning provides pre- and post-travel sessions for students to reflect on their intercultural experiences.

Faculty Development

- Faculty development occurs each semester and introduces key aspects of interdisciplinary teaching and learning and provides program planning time.

Funding

- The Priddy Endowment funds the Paideia Program.
- We have received very positive support from the Mellon Foundation and the Stillwater Foundation to fund faculty development initiatives related to the program.