



The Shimer Great Books School



GREAT BOOKS BUILD GREAT MINDS

NORTH
CENTRAL
COLLEGE
NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS
Founded 1861





A mind of your own



Those who agree great minds think alike neither knew a great mind, nor possessed one. Take yours for example: a mind that invites new ideas and embraces challenges; that recognizes brilliance forging a unique path; that's eager to address the problems of the present by drawing upon the wisdom of the past.

The journey to further develop your mind starts here. At the Shimer Great Books School at North Central College, you will immerse yourself in the works of the world's greatest minds. You will seek understanding in the pages of ancient and modern texts and ask difficult questions alongside other individuals who have chosen to pull up a seat to the table — craving conversation, reading and a life full of meaning.

No two great minds think alike. However, all great minds hold these in common: the courage to question, to reimagine and to contribute, and the boldness to think differently.



In the company of giants

Draw upon the brilliance of a diverse array of thinkers as you pursue understanding at the Shimer Great Books School at North Central College. Find it in the words of the authors of enduring works — from Plato to Curie to Shakespeare. In the faculty who will guide you into deeper thinking, and in the peers who will challenge and inspire you to explore new perspectives.



PURSUE WISDOM

Here you will study the thoughts and findings of the world's first scientists, composers, and philosophers, and gain a more holistic view of the world through their many lenses.

By studying original sources — not textbook interpretations — you will learn not only from the conclusions of these great authors, but from their journey of discovery. Let their victories, failures and insights lead to your epiphanies and their wisdom fuel your thinking now and in the future.



FIND GUIDANCE

At Shimer, every class is a conversation. The entire curriculum follows the Socratic Method; because we know that active learning thrives in small-class discussions. Professors do not lecture from a podium. Instead, they act as facilitators, encouraging discussion and posing thought-provoking questions, recognizing that some of the greatest teachers you could ever learn from are the authors of books that have proven valuable to countless generations of thinkers.

Your professors will sit at the table with you and wrestle with the same concepts and questions each text explores. The faculty help guide the conversation — to support you as you grapple with big ideas and to make sure everyone around the table is heard.



GAIN PERSPECTIVE

Here you will find a community of those who question and seek deeper understanding — people who are not intimidated by controversy but invigorated by fresh perspectives; who see each other as fellow learners and teachers, each equipped with valuable insights and unique opinions.

Within this community, you will complete a curriculum that covers both broad and specialized knowledge. Take a core set of courses and electives that span disciplines, as well as a foreign language, to familiarize yourself with all areas of knowledge. Then, as you discover your passions, choose to major in one of three specialized areas — humanities, social sciences or natural sciences — or continue to explore the breadth of human thought and creation through the liberal studies major.



“YOU WILL PROBABLY NEVER READ ANYTHING
THE SAME WAY AGAIN AND YOU WILL BE BETTER FOR IT ...
YOU WILL LEARN MORE ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR WORLD
THAN YOU EVER EXPECTED.”

~ **SOPHIE**, *Shimer Student*

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HUMANITIES



The humanities awaken our senses to the world around us and give us a greater understanding of what it means to be human — teaching us to see the meaning, story and beauty behind all expressions of life and self.

Through Shimer’s Bachelor of Arts in Humanities, you will encounter some of the most awe-inspiring figures in intellectual and artistic history — the authors and artists whose works have opened us up to a deeper understanding of ourselves, our communities and our contributions to the world.

The humanities are found at the intersections of philosophy, literature, theology, fine arts and aesthetics. They teach us how to think creatively and critically, to analyze all aspects of the human experience. The humanities have been at the foundation of liberal arts education since the beginning and they connect us both to those who came before us and to our contemporaries.



“I’M LEARNING HOW TO ENGAGE WITH THE WORLD
AND I’M LEARNING THINGS ABOUT MYSELF.
REGARDLESS OF WHAT SITUATION I’M PUT IN,
THESE EXPERIENCES I’M GARNERING CAN’T BE TAKEN AWAY.”

~ **MARK**, *Shimer Student*

Shimer Great Books School

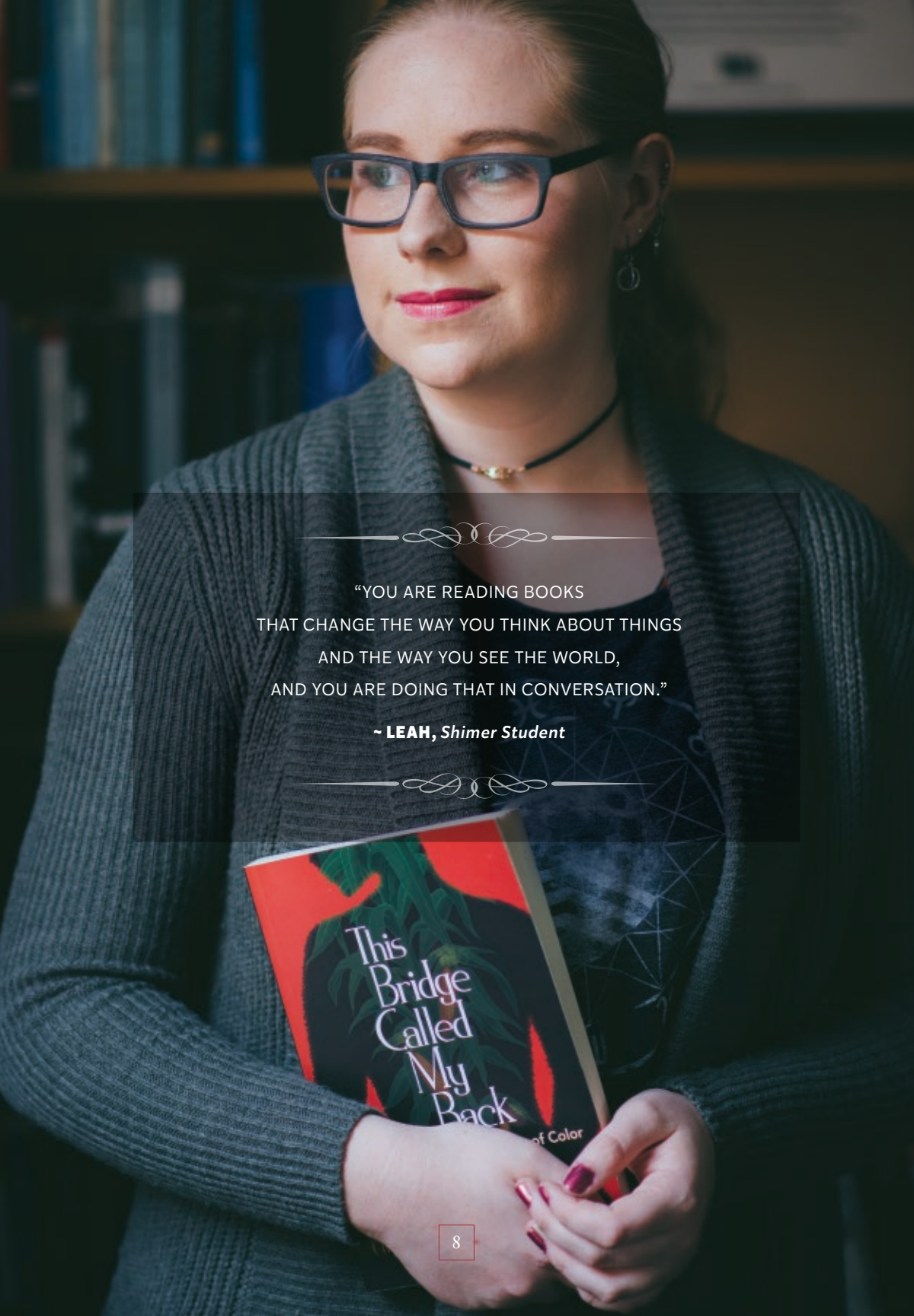
SOCIAL SCIENCES



Through a scientific look at society and the relationships between individuals, you will gain a deeper understanding of how humankind has developed over time and where we are headed.

Shimer’s Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences is based on the principle that the value of specialized knowledge is limited without broader understanding of the world. The social sciences major encompasses a wide range of thought on society, culture and the individual.

At the Shimer Great Books School, you will explore the work of the world’s first theorists of society, along with that of modern social scientists, as they create and refine the various branches of social thought and practice, including anthropology, economics, psychology, politics, linguistics and moral development. Through collaborative inquiry you will approach questions regarding the social, psychological, economic and political behaviors and structures that shape differing cultures, how decisions we make today influence future generations, and more.



“YOU ARE READING BOOKS
 THAT CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT THINGS
 AND THE WAY YOU SEE THE WORLD,
 AND YOU ARE DOING THAT IN CONVERSATION.”

~ LEAH, *Shimer Student*

Shimer Great Books School

NATURAL SCIENCES



Here you will cultivate a spirit of discovery and a deep understanding of the natural sciences as a vital human endeavor. Through the Bachelor of Arts in Natural Sciences, you will examine both the historical development and the current practice of the sciences that explore all elements of the universe.

Start by studying the ideas of the first recorded “scientists” — the philosophers of the 6th century B.C. Next, encounter the original sources that introduce and investigate the atomic theory of matter, the origins and evolution of life, the social lives of animals, the paradoxical nature of light, and the role of electricity and magnetism in shaping our world and experience. Explore the fascinating theories of relativity and quantum mechanics and the astounding development of molecular biology, and begin to understand and appreciate scientific thought, its methods and its limitations.

During each natural science course, you will encounter questions that link the sciences with the humanities and social sciences, such as: What is being explained and how is the author explaining it? What does this reveal about the nature of reality? Why do we seek answers?



“IT’S THE KNOWLEDGE YOU GET FROM THE CLASSES –
THE KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS
AND COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE
WHO ARE VERY DIFFERENT FROM YOU IN SO MANY WAYS.”

~ JACK, *Shimer Student*

THE
STORM
BEFORE
THE
STORM
THE BEGINNING OF THE END
OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

Shimer Great Books School

LIBERAL STUDIES



Liberal Studies combines all the best of the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences, and prepares you to live a fully examined life. As the great Roman playwright Terence wrote, “I am human, and I think nothing of which is human is alien to me.”

Through the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies, you will specialize in understanding the connections between ideas that form the core of the Shimer Great Books School curriculum. Examine primary sources written by groundbreaking, original thinkers and use the wisdom of these vastly different minds to refine your own pursuit of understanding.

As a liberal studies major, you will dive deep into the mysteries of science, creativity of the arts and intricacies of human relationships. Here, you will gain broad knowledge of all aspects of human nature, society and the universe. You will have the freedom to explore all subjects, discover your passions and widen your eyes to the world around you.

Your reading list

S himer is composed of voracious readers who use what they read to engage with the world and understand their roles in it. Here, you will gain perspective in each area of the curriculum, reading works from across a wide variety of disciplines and a vast historical and geographical canvas. You will end your study in a yearlong capstone course in “Integrative Studies” that brings you and your peers together in a culminating encounter with some of the most profound works of the human spirit.

The following are among the texts you will read across all majors:

Aeschylus <i>The Oresteia</i> <i>Libation Bearers</i>	Bacon <i>The Novum Organum</i>	Chaucer <i>Canterbury Tales</i>	Dante <i>The Divine Comedy</i>	Douglass <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i>	Freire <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>	Homer <i>The Iliad</i> <i>Odyssey</i>	Lorenz <i>On Aggression</i>	New Testament <i>Gospel of John</i> <i>Selected Pauline Epistles</i>	Sen <i>Equality of What?</i>
Alberti <i>On Painting</i>	Beckett <i>Waiting for Godot</i>	Chekhov <i>Three Sisters</i>	Darwin <i>Origin of Species</i> <i>Descent of Man</i>	Freud <i>Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis</i> <i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i>	Galbraith <i>The Inevitability of Planning</i>	Hubble <i>The Realm of the Nebulae</i>	Lucretius <i>On the Nature of the Universe</i>	Nietzsche <i>Genealogy of Morals</i>	Smith <i>Wealth of Nations</i>
Albers <i>Interactions of Color</i>	Bede <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i>	Chopin <i>The Awakening</i>	Davisson <i>Are Electrons Waves?</i>	Galileo <i>The Starry Messenger</i> <i>Concerning the Use of Biblical Quotations in Matters of Science</i> <i>Dialogues Concerning the Two New Sciences</i>	Gandhi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Hurston <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	Machiavelli <i>The Prince</i>	Ovid <i>Metamorphoses</i>	Sophocles <i>Oedipus and Antigone</i>
Anonymous <i>Beowulf</i>	Behn <i>Oroonoko</i>	Catherine of Siena <i>Letters or Dialogue of Divine Providence</i>	DeBroglie <i>The Initial Idea of Wave Mechanics</i>	Gamow <i>Thirty Years that Shook Physics</i>	Gibbon <i>Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</i>	Huxley <i>Brave New World</i>	Mannheim <i>Ideology and Utopia</i>	Pascal <i>Pensées</i> <i>Scientific Treatises</i>	Spinoza <i>Theological-Political Treatise</i>
Aquinas <i>Selected Writings on Politics</i>	Benedict <i>Patterns of Culture</i>	Cervantes <i>Don Quixote</i>	Decartes <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>	Geertz <i>Interpretation of Cultures</i>	Gilligan <i>In a Different Voice</i>	Huygens <i>Treatise On Light</i>	Marshall <i>Selections from Principles of Economics</i>	Piaget <i>Moral Feelings and Judgments</i>	Stahl <i>Excerpts from On Sulfur</i>
Arendt <i>The Human Condition</i>	Berger and Luckmann <i>Social Construction of Reality</i>	Chetverikov <i>On Certain Aspects of the Evolutionary Process...</i>	de Beauvoir <i>The Second Sex</i> <i>Ethics of Ambiguity</i>	Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Goethe <i>Faust, Part I</i>	Inanna <i>Queen of Heaven and Earth</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Pinter <i>The Homecoming</i>	Stehls <i>Cornerstone Speech</i>
Aristotle <i>Poetics</i> <i>Metaphysics</i> <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> <i>The Physics</i> <i>Posterior Analytics</i> <i>On the Heavens</i> <i>On the Soul</i>	Bible <i>David narratives</i>	Clauius <i>On the Nature of the Motion that We Call Heat</i>	de France <i>Lais</i>	Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Goodall <i>The Chimps of Gombe</i>	Jacobs <i>The Death and Life of Great American Cities</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Petrarch <i>Poems</i>	Taylor <i>Learning to Look</i>
Augustine <i>Confessions</i> <i>City of God</i>	Black <i>Lectures on the Elements of Chemistry</i>	Confucius <i>Analects</i>	de Pizan <i>Treasure of the City of Ladies</i>	Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Goethe <i>Faust, Part I</i>	Kant <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Piaget <i>Moral Feelings and Judgments</i>	Tattersall <i>Masters of the Planet</i>
Auerbach <i>Odysseus' Scar</i>	Boccaccio <i>Decameron</i>	Copernicus <i>On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres</i>	de Tocqueville <i>On Democracy in America</i>	Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Gibbon <i>Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</i>	Kant <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Petrarch <i>Poems</i>	Taylor <i>Learning to Look</i>
Austen <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> <i>or Emma</i>	Bohr <i>The Structure of the Atom</i>	Curie <i>1911 Nobel Lecture, On Radioactivity</i>	Dickens <i>Hard Times</i>	Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Gilligan <i>In a Different Voice</i>	Kant <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Petrarch <i>Poems</i>	Taylor <i>Learning to Look</i>
	Boole <i>Laws of Thought</i>	Crick <i>The Structure of the Hereditary Material</i> <i>On Protein Synthesis</i>	Dobzhansky <i>Genetics and the Origin of Species</i>	Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Gibbon <i>Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</i>	Kant <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Petrarch <i>Poems</i>	Taylor <i>Learning to Look</i>
	Calvin <i>Selected Writings</i>			Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Gibbon <i>Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</i>	Kant <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Petrarch <i>Poems</i>	Taylor <i>Learning to Look</i>
	Césaire <i>A Tempest</i>			Ghandi <i>Selected Writings</i>	Gibbon <i>Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</i>	Kant <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	Marx <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> <i>Wage Labor and Capital</i> <i>Grundrisse</i> <i>Capital Selections from Theses on Feuerbach</i> <i>German Ideology</i> <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i>	Petrarch <i>Poems</i>	Taylor <i>Learning to Look</i>
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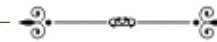
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