

The Augsburg Paideia Program Advancing the Mission of Augsburg College

The Augsburg Paideia Program's commitment to the liberal arts, core values, diversity, and community connections is grounded in the College's mission:

To nurture future leaders in service to the world by providing high quality educational opportunities, which are based in the liberal arts and shaped by the faith and values of the Christian church, by the context of a vital metropolitan setting, and by an intentionally diverse campus community.

The Paideia Program contributes toward advancing the mission of Augsburg College in many ways; the following specifically pertain to the mission statement.

Based in the liberal arts...

The Augsburg Paideia Program through Socratic seminars utilizes multiple genres in all majors and content areas. Using classical as well as multicultural textual pieces, students are asked to grapple with Great Ideas, engage in perspective taking, communicate their ideas with logic and support. The purpose of Paideia is to foster intellectual curiosity in their search for Truth and Meaning in their lives. The goals of Paideia are to prepare students to:

- earn a living
- be citizens of this community and the world
- be lifelong learners

Shaped by the faith and values of the Christian church...

The Augsburg Paideia Program through Socratic seminars explores such Great Ideas as: Those that we judge by:

- TRUTH
- BEAUTY
- GOODNESS

and those that we live by:

- LIBERTY
- JUSTICE
- EQUALITY

Paideia seminars by their very nature are dialectic in nature by the art or practice of examining opinions or ideas logically through the use of questioning and civil discourse. Seminars are inclusive and divergent perspectives are respected. On the Augsburg campus, seminars on topics pertaining to the faith and values of the Christian church are welcomed.

In the context of a vital metropolitan setting...

The Augsburg Paideia Program seeks partnerships within the metropolitan area. The Paideia Program has conducted a summer Paideia Institute since 1989 training area

teachers in seminar pedagogy. On-site classes and training is also available to area teachers in their schools. Since 2003, Augsburg has partnered with the Minneapolis Public School District in a MN Higher Education Improving Teacher Quality grant to assist teachers with implementation of seminars in their classrooms. A long-standing relationship also existed with Monroe Community School in St. Paul. Augsburg provided in-service training, and the teachers provided students and classroom settings for Augsburg faculty and student observers. In this way, the Augsburg Paideia Program aligns with the College Mission Statement by engaging citizens of the city as partners in education and utilizing the city as a practical laboratory.

With an intentionally diverse campus community...

The Augsburg Paideia Program is committed to educating any or all students, faculty and staff. INS 225: Paideia Seminars is open to students regardless of major or rank. It fulfills the critical thinking skills component. Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend CTL training sessions and the summer Paideia Institute. Many faculty seminars and book discussions have utilized the Paideia approach.

An essential element in Socratic seminars is civil discourse. Not only is civil discourse promoted, strategies for enabling appropriate conversations in various settings are taught, practiced, and debriefed.

The Paideia Program affirms diversity in both individual differences and by intentional choice of diverse texts. Finally, through an open acceptance of divergent views, the Program applied an ecumenical stance toward faith and values.

Anne Kaufman
Director, Paideia Program