

# The Augustine and Culture Seminar

---

## ACS 1000/1001 Foundation Narrative

The Augustine and Culture Seminar (ACS) helps enable the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to fulfill its central role within the University. All students, regardless of college, should emerge from Villanova as thoughtful, intellectually-curious, and spiritually-grounded persons. Our responsibility in the College is to help lay the academic groundwork for this transformation.

ACS lays this groundwork by giving students the chance to read some of the most important texts of world literature and thought – texts that are the enduring touchstones of a liberal-arts education. What distinguishes ACS from other “great book” programs, however, is the specifically Augustinian inquiry that animates our course. ACS teaches students not only *about* Augustine, but *how to be like him* in his passionate engagement with “the higher things”: literature, history, and politics; truth and moral values; the gods and God. Like Augustine, we seek to come to terms with the biblical, Greek, and Roman traditions; also like him, we engage with the best of what has been written and thought, whether it belongs to our tradition or not and whether we agree with it or not, in order to respond creatively to the needs of the present. We ask our students to explore truth and ideas as Augustine did, “with heart and voice and pen.” Finally, and again following Augustine’s lead, ACS seeks to help students develop a richer inner life and an appreciation for community. The seminar is founded on the belief that seeking the truth (*veritas*) with respect and love (*caritas*) toward one another leads to deep and lasting community (*unitas*).