

# PRINCIPLED PROBLEM SOLVING

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Principled Problem Solving (PPS) is a central and unifying aspect of Guilford's practical liberal arts education. First identified and defined by faculty, staff and students as part of a campus-wide, long-range planning process, PPS builds on the knowledge, skills, interests and life experience of the Guilford and local communities and seeks to address a broad range of problems and opportunities. PPS as philosophy and practice emerges from Quaker testimonies and is grounded in Guilford's seven articulated Core Values.

The Center for Principled Problem Solving was established in 2007 to deepen the understanding of PPS at Guilford. This interdisciplinary, College-wide center promotes student, faculty, staff and community participation in PPS projects that put Guilford's Core Values to work in the world. These funded projects help us learn to address problems – and engage significant opportunities – critically and creatively with both courage and conscience.

The Principled Problem Solving Scholars Program was established in the fall of 2008. Twelve to 14 students are selected each year for this program that features a combination of required academic seminars, skills-development programming and PPS placements and internships. PPS Scholars take seven to 11 PPS academic credits extending over two semesters and a six-week summer internship. Students from any discipline may apply for this program but must have at least a 3.0 G.P.A. to be selected for it. Partial-tuition scholarships and summer internship stipends are offered under this program.

PPS at Guilford is organized in three distinctive yet overlapping levels. These levels correspond to classroom and engaged-learning activities beginning in students' first semester and available through their senior capstone experiences. The levels are:

## PPS Foundations

Critical thinking analysis, skills and values. Guilford students are able to generate valuable questions and approach problems and issues by writing well; making use of quantitative data; understanding historical context; possessing ethical sensitivity; learning from cross-cultural experiences; and combining creativity, imagination and discipline.

## PPS Practices

Case studies in the classroom. Problem-solving skills are honed and defined through the examination and analysis of real and hypothetical examples. Invited PPS speakers and conferences supplement this aspect of the PPS curriculum.

## PPS Application

PPS projects and a wide range of other engaged learning and scholarship opportunities at Guilford provide our students with opportunities to put our Core Values to work in the world. These learning opportunities help to shape our world by addressing complex problems and identifying opportunities for advancing human fulfillment in a variety of contexts.