



LIBERAL STUDIES, B.A.

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* Faculty members from all UIS colleges participate in the liberal studies program as mentors and resource persons.

Degrees offered: Bachelor of Arts, available on campus or online

The liberal studies program structure emphasizes the integration of key learning categories with a variety of instructional methods to form a well-rounded and individualized academic experience. Through customized learning activities, the liberal studies program assists students to deepen their understandings of the values, meaning, concerns, choices, and commitments that are basic to the quality of life.

Liberal studies (LIS) learners design individualized degree plans consistent with the principles of a liberal education. There are many coursework alternatives that may be part of this plan – self-assessment, independent study, multidisciplinary courses/ studies, and credit for prior learning assessment. Although degree plans must be broad enough to meet the interdisciplinary goals of the program, students may choose a thematic focus for their programs. Examples are international studies, women’s studies, African-Ameri-

can studies, or human resource development. In addition, students may focus their studies in distinct areas such as health and human services, education and training, workforce development, business and management, or science and technology. Students should be aware that not all of the areas available to students taking classes on campus are available online.

Learners have a good chance for success in the liberal studies program if they are self-directed, able to plan ahead and meet deadlines, disciplined enough to organize individualized plans of study, and able to work independently setting and meeting goals.

Students can complete the curriculum in the classroom, entirely online via the Internet, or in combination. All learning formats offer individualized instruction, advising, and support. Liberal Studies Online enables learners to complete course work using the latest computer-assisted technology for increased access to educational resources, advisers, and materials. Students who choose to participate in Liberal Studies Online should be comfortable using networked

information technologies, navigating the Internet, using e-mail, and learning from a distance.

Contact: Information about the liberal studies program is available at (217) 206-6962; call toll free (800) 323-9243. Information can also be requested at lis@uis.edu, or visit <http://lis.uis.edu>.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

To apply for admission to the liberal studies program, students must have earned a minimum of 45 credit hours at the lower-division level, have a grade-point average of 2.00 or higher (on a 4.00 scale) from an accredited college or university, and have completed three semester hours of English composition (as the minimum requirement for general admission to UIS). Students who have earned associate of arts or science degrees have met all these requirements. In addition, students may transfer up to 60 semester hours of lower-division credit from a community college, take courses from other regionally accredited colleges/uni-

versities, and qualify to earn credit through the credit for prior learning assessment process.

Liberal Studies Online Students wishing to participate in the Liberal Studies Online program must successfully complete the online program application process. Online students must have some experience using a personal computer and navigating the Internet. For students who encounter problems accessing the courseware, materials, or other course components, UIS' Office of Technology Enhanced Learning provides ongoing technical support. A complete description of program and technology requirements are available on the Liberal Studies Online website at <http://lis.uis.edu>.

Students without access to a computer and who live in one of the participating Illinois community college districts can obtain information about accessing computers and technical support at their local community colleges through a state-wide program called Illinois Virtual Campus (<http://www.ivc.illinois.edu>).

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Required

LIS 301 Self-Directed Learning 4 Hrs.

LIS 451 Senior Seminar 2 Hrs.
Total required 6 Hrs.

LIS electives

*LIS 380 Exploration of Learning Resources 2-8 Hrs.
LIS 342 Conducting Liberal Studies Research 2 Hrs.
*LIS 499 Independent Study: Tutorial 2-6 Hrs.
*LIS 471 Honors Thesis 2 Hrs.
Total electives 4 Hrs.

* There are no classroom meetings for these courses. Students sign independent study contracts with faculty sponsors.

UIS Requirements 12 Hrs.
Campus Electives 38 Hrs.

Students choose electives that address the following eight broad subject categories, also referred to as subject area courses:

- Identity, the search for meaning
- Work, the value of vocation
- Nature, ecology of the planet
- Institutions, the social web
- Language, the crucial connection

Heritage, the living past
Art, the esthetic dimension
Tools, those skills and abilities critical to completing a customized learning program, as well as navigating life, career, etc.


Total 60 Hrs.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

All competencies necessary to attain the student's goals, including communication skills, are addressed in the degree plan. Assessment of written communication skills occurs when the student conducts a self-assessment in preparing the plan and the LIS 301 instructor assesses his/her written communication skills as documented by the plan. The student plans appropriate learning experiences to acquire any needed skills in consultation with the LIS 301 instructor. These learning experiences are included as part of the degree plan. Completion of the degree plan constitutes certification of communication skills as required by UIS.


GRADING POLICY

Campus policy allows students to choose a traditional



grading scale or a credit/no credit option for each course. The liberal studies program conforms to this policy in all courses except LIS 301 and LIS 451, which are offered only on a credit/no credit basis.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

 *Course available online; may also be available on campus. Refer to the current course schedule for further information.*

LIS 301 Self-Directed Learning (4 Hrs.)

Introduction to the liberal studies program. Focuses on the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to become a self-directed, autonomous learner. Topics include an examination of collegiate education philosophy, theory, and practice; dynamics of power; self-assessment; goal-setting; designing effective learning experiences; documenting and evaluating independent learning; organizing learning resources; and designing a liberal studies curriculum. To be taken as the first course after declaring the LIS major. Note: LIS 301 must be completed before enrolling in additional course work towards the major.

LIS 342 Conducting Liberal Studies Research (2 Hrs.)

Introduction to undergraduate research from a liberal studies perspective. Students choose a topic for study and define it to effectively explore their research. The production of a major product during the course is facilitated through the use of a learning journal and the creation of an extensive resources inventory. Prerequisite: LIS 301.

LIS 380 Exploration of Learning Resources (2 to 8 Hrs.)

Independent study through exploration of a topic within liberal studies or directly related to the student's degree plan. A journal of the exploration process, a comprehensive resources inventory, and demonstration of learning (a major product) are required. May be repeated for a maximum of 8 hours. To be taken as described in individual degree plans. Prerequisite: LIS 301.

LIS 451 Senior Seminar (2 Hrs.)

Includes a symposium on applying principles of integration and autonomy explored in LIS 301 to the learning experiences of the degree program. Students prepare a paper integrating their learning experiences. Students

who choose to do an honors thesis may prepare a proposal for LIS 471. Prerequisite: LIS 301. Should be taken as the final course prior to graduation.

LIS 471 Honors Thesis (2 Hrs.)

Design, development, and completion of a thesis, which must be completed during the term in which the student expects to graduate. To be taken as described in individual degree plans.

LIS 499 Independent Study: Tutorial (2 to 6 Hrs.)

Focus on readings or research on trends and current issues in the student's area of study. In consultation with faculty, students define topics integral to satisfying their self-assessed learning needs. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours. To be taken as described in individual degree plans.