Minor Proposal Revised

Liberty Studies:
A Minor in the Liberal Studies Major.

- **Institution:** University of Illinois, Springfield
- **Responsible Administrative Unit:** Liberal and Integrative Studies
- **Title of Proposed Minor:** Liberty Studies
- **Previous Program Title (if any):** NA
- **CIPS Classification:** (not required by IBHE for minors)
- **Date of Implementation:** Fall 2013
- **Description of Proposed Minor**

  General Description of Liberty Studies

  The Liberty Studies minor is a course of study focusing on the foundations, meanings, and implications of what it is to be free. It poses the fundamental question of "What can I do with my life?" It questions the power of institutions and the legitimacy of the constraints they impose. It explores freedom and liberty from multiple perspectives, including minorities and women in our own culture, and indigenous peoples of other times and places. Liberty Studies examines the costs and benefits of free human interaction, the need of naturally social animals to be left alone, and ultimately wrestles with the questions of what freedom and liberty are and should be.

  Catalog Copy

  Students in the Liberty Studies minor will understand how different theories of liberty address economics, authority, and culture. To this end, the Liberty Studies minor will approach the study of liberty in relation to three discernible spheres commonly addressed in the literature: cultural influences, economic activity, and formal authority. The study of these three areas is integrated both in how individual courses relate to each other individually and as tied together by the required courses. This minor can be taken on campus or online.

  Coursework

  **Required Courses & Formats:**

  LIS 211 Liberty Studies (Online, Lecture) 3 hrs.  (Gen ed.)

  PHI 440 Ethics or
  PHI 441 Moral Theory (Online, Lecture) 2hrs.
Choose 1 from each of the following groups:

I Liberty and Commerce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>PHI 447 Rationality and Moral Choice (online, lecture)</td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIS 419 Philosophy of Business (online, lecture)</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
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II Liberty and Authority

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<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>LIS 411 Liberty Struggles (online, lecture)</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
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<td>PHI 485 Social Philosophy (online, lecture)</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
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III Liberty and Culture

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<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOA 222 American Society (online, lecture)</td>
<td>3 hrs. (Gen ed.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG 335 Early American Literature (online, lecture)</td>
<td>4 hrs. (Gen ed.)</td>
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Total: 15 – 17 credit hours

- **Rationale for Proposed Minor**

The UIS Strategic Plan lists six strategic goals of the university. The first three goals are primary and the minor in Liberty Studies addresses two of the three primary goals: Enriching Individual Lives and Making a Difference in the World. By providing a new opportunity for a coherent plan of study, we believe the Liberty Studies minor provides for an intellectually rich campus (strategic thrust #1) and is a good example of how units can collaborate across disciplines (action step #1). In making a difference in the world, the Liberty Studies minor “foster(s) the awareness and understanding necessary for action on public policy and civic culture” (strategic thrust #1) by “Develop(ing) new courses that have public policy, civic culture, and engagement themes” (action step #2).

**GOAL #2: ENRICHING INDIVIDUAL LIVES**

The University of Illinois at Springfield’s community is characterized by students, faculty, staff, alumni, and outside partners and constituents as providing an atmosphere that is vibrant and actively engaged with comprehensive and integrated initiatives that contribute to the intellectual, cultural, social, and personal enrichment of all its participants.

- **Strategic Thrust #1: Providing an Intellectually Rich Campus Environment**

  Students, faculty, staff, alumni, and outside partners and constituents will be stimulated and engaged intellectually through their interactions with UIS and each other.

- **Action Step #1: Develop an incentive mechanism that rewards units that collaborate across disciplines when designing and implementing intellectual learning opportunities and/or events. Develop forums for the sharing of research and scholarship across programs and colleges.**
GOAL #3: MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD - LOCAL, STATE, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL

With its location in the state capital, UIS has always had a special emphasis on public affairs, citizen engagement, and effecting societal change.

■ **Strategic Thrust #1: Reflection**

Making a Difference in the World will be achieved through REFLECTION on public policy, civic culture, and engagement. Reflection is a learning process of fostering awareness and understanding of issues, mastering skills, and acquiring the experiences that facilitate effective engagement. We will foster the awareness and understanding necessary for action on public policy and civic culture. Students and faculty will be the ones primarily involved in the development of and participation in reflection activities.

■ **Action Step #2: Develop new courses that have public policy, civic culture, and engagement themes.**

- **Expected Impact of Proposed Minor on Existing Campus Programs**

  - We expect that this will enrich the education of students in the Liberal Studies major by giving students an opportunity to concentrate in an interdisciplinary area of scholarship. In our capstone course, LIS 451, students must highlight the primary and secondary themes of their degree plan. The Liberal Studies minor will give an opportunity for some students to use this as either a primary or secondary theme within their degree plan.

  - We expect that the addition of a minor in LIS will attract and retain some students to the major. This includes attracting first and second year UIS students to our program and expanded recruitment of currently non UIS students, both freshman and transfers, interested in the topic.

  - The required courses will be offered each year. All other courses in the minor are offered every other year. Offerings within each group are staggered so that students will have at least one option within each group every year.

- **Expected Curricular Changes Including New Courses**

  Every course in the proposed minor, except one, is already being taught at UIS and is in the Catalog. Of these course LIS 419 Philosophy of Business, and LIS 411 Liberty Struggles were specifically designed with this minor in mind. LIS 211 Liberty Studies, is also designed precisely for this major and has been approved by the CLAS Curriculum Committee.

LIS 211 Liberty Studies

This course had been previously developed and is currently authorized to be taught as a LIS 460 Topics courses. This course had solid enrollment (21) when it was taught as a topics course and will be taught regardless of the status of the minor. In order to provide for the educational needs of the student population, LIS 211 has been reworked and has been approved as an
interdisciplinary general education course that would satisfy either the social science or the humanities requirement.

The required Liberty Studies course serves two integrative functions. First, it examines different theoretical conceptions of liberty and how these theories differently address each of the three topic areas. Second, it incorporates ideas from all the classes in the minor in order to provide an integrated mosaic of how courses in the minor relate to each other and to different theories of liberty. For instance, the concepts of constitutions, voluntary associations, rights, and current issues are discussed in different courses. Liberty Studies 211 also addresses these issues, in part, as it addresses the different theories of liberty and their varying policy implications. Thus, Liberty Studies 211 provides foundational knowledge about theories of liberty used in every course as well as showing the overlap and divergence of these theories by utilizing concepts covered in more depth in other courses.

- **Anticipated Demand**

Courses in the proposed minor enroll well, but do not necessarily cap. We anticipate a marginal increase in demand for these courses. The exception to this would be the required course LIS 211. Given this course’s interdisciplinary nature and placement within general education, we expect the course to cap each year. However, it is precisely this strong enrollment that will allow the course to be offered yearly.

Conversations with students indicate there is an interest in such a minor. We believe that in the minor’s third year the census will yield approximately 20 students concentrating or minoring in Liberty Studies.

- **Anticipated Staffing Arrangements/Funding Needs**

As all of these courses are already approved and taught independent of any decisions about the minor, no further staffing will be needed.