

# Liberal Studies

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Mark Menaldo (Director)

Location: Hall of Languages, Room 224, 903-886-5264

Liberal Studies Advisory Committee: College of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts: Dr. Raymond Green, Dr. Brad Klypchak, Dr. Emily Newman, Dr. Yvonne Villanueva-Russell, Dr. Matt Wood

Liberal Studies Web Site (<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/liberalStudies/default.aspx>)

Liberal Studies is an interdisciplinary undergraduate program that offers both the Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degrees. Pulling from traditional university learning—the humanities, fine arts, the social sciences—Liberal Studies encourages the kind of learning valued today by many educators and employers. The diverse nature of the program prepares students in the areas of communication skills, critical thinking, and the ability to master new subjects, ideas, and skills. Its flexible yet coherent degree program is made up of courses taught through traditional classroom methods as well as through non-traditional instruction, such as distance education and online teaching.

Although not intended to train or encourage proficiency in any narrowly defined academic field, the Liberal Studies program encourages students to learn more about themselves and their world using a variety of disciplinary approaches. As such, it provides an opportunity to explore new modes of thinking, creative ways of asking questions, and unconventional means of problem solving. The program is designed to promote personal and intellectual growth that is not only enriching in its own right, but one that helps ensure success in careers and post-baccalaureate studies. Graduates seeking advanced degrees in such areas as education, law, communications, and business will find that a bachelor's in Liberal Studies lays the groundwork for further educational advancement. What is more, the program's flexibility is ideally suited for students wanting to acquire the broad-based knowledge and skills that are increasingly demanded by today's workplace.

Liberal Studies B.A./B.S (<http://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/liberal-studies/liberal-studies-ba-bs/>)

## **LIBS 200 - Popular Culture as Liberal Study**

Hours: 3

Film, television, music, fashion, video games, sport, museums, cultural heritage, folklore... popular culture surrounds us, and this course invites the chance to explore why. Through readings and discussion, this course will apply an interdisciplinary approach to examining popular culture across its social, historical, political, and global contexts.

## **LIBS 300 - Introduction to Liberal Studies**

Hours: 3

An introduction to interdisciplinary study and the Liberal Studies major. Through readings in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences, students will develop an appreciation and understanding of disciplinary perspectives. Emphasis on learning how to conduct efficient and effective information searches.

## **LIBS 340 - Seminar in Critical Inquiry**

Hours: 3

In-depth exploration of a sustained topic throughout a semester employing content analysis methods, such as textual, visual, or cultural-historical approaches. May be repeated with change of topic.

## **LIBS 350 - Seminar in Global Human Rights and Social Justice**

Hours: 3

A critical examination of instances and mechanisms of injustice, their historical, contextual, and/or sociocultural significances, and the variety of responses that serve to promote advocacy, resistance, and positive social change.

## **LIBS 360 - From Question to Creation: The Practice and Production of Knowledge**

Hours: 3

A cross-disciplinary investigation of a key thematic question. This course introduces students to the breadth of discipline-specific theory, methodology, and their practical applications to such investigation. May be repeated with change of topic.

## **LIBS 397 - Special Topic**

Hours: 1-4

Special Topics. One to four semester hours. Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary

## **LIBS 400 - Liberal Studies Senior Seminar**

Hours: 3

This course provides each student in the Liberal Studies Program with opportunities for making connections among his or her concentration, support fields, other educational experiences, and possible careers. A project reflecting a sound application of research methods, analytical frameworks, or performance criteria and a learning-outcomes learning assessment will also be required. Must be taken in final semester. Prerequisites: LIBS 300 with minimum grade of C.

**LIBS 405 - Gender and Visual Representations**

Hours: 3

This interdisciplinary course examines the embodiment of gender, its performance and representation in visual culture. Aiming to enable students to think critically about historical and contemporary visual representations of gender, the students will apply critical analysis in order to examine how works of art, media productions and texts that accompany them, shape varied meanings and perceptions of gender. The topics examined in this course include but are not limited to the following: visual representations of gender and gender relations, gender and power, the politics of visual representations, gender and religion, and representations of gender in popular media.

**LIBS 415 - Explorations in Visual Culture**

Hours: 3

By its nature, Visual Culture is an interdisciplinary concept that examines civilizations' visual media, which can include art, aesthetics, film, television, performance, installations, architecture, comic books/graphic novels, popular culture and more. Drawing upon new approaches in art history, media studies, gender studies, literary and social theory, and discuss their cultural, political, and aesthetic implications. A focus is placed on cultivating an informed and critically engaged viewer, in order to empower and enrich individual visual experience, and to cultivate visual literacy.

**LIBS 425 - Ways of Seeing & Knowing**

Hours: 3

The sensible world is what we see all around us and is constantly changing. How do people learn about any one thing in the world with certainty if the only thing for sure is change? This course critically examines the ideas of thinkers and writers who pay special attention to this problem in works of philosophy, literature, science, and theology. Topics include but are not limited to justice, love, friendship, death, human excellence, and human dignity.

**LIBS 489 - Independent Study**

Hours: 0-4

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. May be repeated when the topic varies.

**LIBS 490 - Honors Thesis**

Hours: 3

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member resulting in the presentation of a thesis and its defense.

**LIBS 491 - H Ind Honors Readings**

Hours: 3

H Ind Honors Readings Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites: Consent of Honor's College advisor. May be repeated when the topic changes.

**LIBS 497 - Special Topic**

Hours: 0-4

Hours: One to four - Organized class Note May be graded on a satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) basis. May be repeated when topics vary