

**Date: March 13, 2009**

**From: Department of Biology**  
**To: Liberal Studies Revision Steering Committee**

**Subject: Comments**

This note is in response to your email of February 24 requesting our comments soon after spring break. We wish to register the response of the Department of Biology to the proposed revisions in the Liberal Studies Curriculum. We wish to comment on both pragmatic issues of design and implementation as well as philosophical issues related to our perception of serving students.

Our primary concern relates to the issue of science literacy in the sense that the term is used by the National Science Foundation to describe a society that is "at home with science". In this sense science literacy does not refer to the knowledge or the skills possessed by professional scientists. Instead it refers to a familiarity with the science and technology that affect the day-to-day lives of all citizens. Science literacy is thus about using science as distinct from doing science. In biology for example, science literacy involves a fundamental understanding of how medications work in your own body but not how to design, formulate or prescribe those medications.

Science literacy is a part of a university curriculum because science and technology are defining characteristics of modern society. Both endeavors are high priorities of the federal government, with billions spent each year to promote scientific research, develop new technology and engineer better methods to protect consumer safety. Our democracy's emphasis on new technologies such as "green" technology will increase over the foreseeable future. The United States' reliance on science and technology argues for a high level of scientific literacy among its citizens, but unfortunately many surveys indicate that United States students lag well behind their counterparts in other developed countries in terms of overall science and math literacy. We view the improvement of scientific literacy among non-CNSM students as one of our most important missions.

Although the United States has a low level of science literacy overall, the LS Steering Committee proposes a revised Liberal Studies curriculum for IUP in which the science content will be reduced from 8-10 credit hours to 7 and some science content will be presented outside a science context as Science Literacy Across the Curriculum. We do not feel that these proposed changes "further enhance" the natural sciences component of the curriculum. It appears instead that the proposed changes reduce and dilute the science content of the curriculum. We are especially concerned that an approach that separates content from context will not effectively model science as a way of knowing. We feel that the proposed Liberal Studies Natural Sciences requirements do not serve the needs of students as well as those of the existing curriculum.

We question whether the approach that reduces science content overall and removes it from a science context will adequately prepare students to make informed decisions about important scientific issues in their own lives. For example, Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

collectively expend enormous amounts on health care each year but 21<sup>st</sup> Century Americans overall are not particularly healthy compared to citizens of other developed countries. This is partly an unanticipated result of decisions made by individuals with little or no working knowledge of medical science and related critical thinking skills situated in a scientific context. In short, the disconnect between medical expenditures and medical reality illustrates the consequences of making health care (i.e. scientific) decisions with inadequate science literacy.

We question whether the Steering Committee's approach will adequately prepare students to make informed decisions about important scientific issues that affect society as a whole. In Pennsylvania, stewardship of the environment provides an appropriate example of such an issue. Almost all citizens of the Commonwealth have some level of appreciation for the natural world and its beauty, but the largely rural environment of Pennsylvania is increasingly threatened with degradation resulting from development activities and will require more active and intense management to ensure its adequate protection and preservation for the future. Society in general, not just scientists, must make decisions on public issues such as stewardship of the environment. For these citizenship decisions to be effective they must be informed by some level of knowledge of basic scientific principles and by critical thinking applied within a scientific context.

In addition, we question whether the Steering Committee's approach will adequately prepare students to understand the nature of science in a society that is increasingly dependent on science and technology. The concept of Darwinian evolution and the teaching of this concept in public schools together provide a useful example. Here, the fundamental problem is not so much the involvement of science in the realm of public policy but the fact that many citizens do not understand the aims, limits and fundamental structure of science. Although study in the sciences is motivated by the same human nature that motivates study in religion, science uses different types of methods, asks different types of questions and generates different types of answers. Attempts to use science to answer spiritual questions, or religious values to answer mechanistic questions are ultimately futile and serve to underscore the need to improve scientific literacy in the general public.

The problem of science literacy in the United States is that, in general, citizens who are non-scientists know too little about science to use it well in their own lives or to make fully-informed decisions as members of a science and technology society. In the proposed revisions, with SLAC courses situated outside scientific disciplines, these non-scientists would be teaching Science Literacy courses. We do not see how this arrangement will lead to an outcome of improved science literacy among IUP students.

In addition to our concerns about science literacy, we have concerns that relate to the design and implementation of the proposed curriculum. First, we do not think that the Steering Committee has made a convincing case for changing the current Liberal Studies Natural Sciences requirement. The committee presents no evidence or assessment data to show that the current does not meet student learning goals. Instead, the committee cites advisor confusion with written guidelines as the main reason for de-emphasizing and diluting the Natural Sciences requirement. These simple advising issues ought to be corrected with appropriate catalog language rather than reduction and dilution of science content. If IUP advisors cannot

understand the current Liberal Studies options, then how will they understand the multiply-permuted revisions that are now being proposed?

Our second concern relates to the need for course content in SLAC courses to be situated, reviewed and appropriately managed by the content domain departments. Under the proposed revisions, SLAC courses will be generated in a non-science department and reviewed by the Liberal Studies Committee before going on to the Senate for final review. This plan might produce an SLAC course that is more than 50% in biology content, for example, but never subject to review by the Biology Department or its faculty. Furthermore, who will define science content and how will it be defined? Will it be only the originating non-science Department and the Liberal Studies Committee or will the content Department have a role? We feel that any courses that are defined as primarily (>50%) content courses, such as the proposed SLAC courses, should be courses housed in the content Department. They should originate from the content Department, be reviewed by professionals in the content discipline and be taught in the Department of origin. This is the model that has worked well with Liberal Studies Non-Lab courses for a number of years and we see no reason to change.

Third, the proposed Liberal Studies revisions are problematic in the current landscape of resource insufficiency. If adopted, the revisions will unfairly penalize some departments and colleges by setting up these unlucky academic units as targets of opportunity in budget-cutting exercises. In the current environment the proposed changes will also encourage colleges and departments to capture their own majors in dedicated courses as a strategy to maintain enrollments and therefore resources. This in turn will result in students spending more time and taking more classes within their home college—surely the exact antithesis of a liberal education.

Finally, we realize that academic assessment doctrines insist that resources must be closely tied to consensus learning goals. However, these doctrines do not anticipate the current national economic climate, the academic landscape of the PASSHE system or the absence of a campus-wide consensus on the proposed Liberal Studies curriculum revisions. Under these conditions the proposed Liberal Studies revisions will foster competition among disciplines and academic units. We encourage the Steering Committee to think outside the box of orthodoxy to find imaginative ways to achieve learning goals in a way that will foster cooperation rather than competition. A more creative approach might better help the entire institution get through the rough times that lie ahead.

We feel that biology is a core discipline for scientific literacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and that the Biology Department will continue to make a significant contribution to the science literacy mission of IUP under either the existing curriculum or the proposed curriculum. Nevertheless, we have strong reservations about the proposed revisions and therefore **DO NOT SUPPORT** their adoption or implementation.

February 2, 2009

To: Dr. Mary Sadler

From: John Woolcock, Chair, IUP Chemistry Department

Subject: LS Revision

The Chemistry Department discussed the revision to the Liberal Studies program at a faculty meeting on 01/27/2009 but did not make any formal recommendations. So, the following items listed below are my own comments or based on my experience as Chair of Chemistry.

The Chemistry Department will likely create a First-Year Seminar course for our majors. The development of this type of course was part of the action plan in our 2006 Program Review report. I am also confident that the Chemistry Department will also want to create a senior capstone course for our majors using CHEM 301 and CHEM 498. But, I would like to know if combinations of majors courses can be used to accumulate an across-the-curriculum designation. For example, material in CHEM 301 allows CHEM 498 to be designated W (and presumably CHEM 498 on its own is not sufficient). Can we add individual "O" requirements to a number of different required courses for our majors so that when the final course is taken, the O requirements have been met? This seems more in keeping with the idea of "across-the-curriculum", and prevents a single chemistry course from having to devote (say) 50% of its activities to the across-the-curriculum requirement.

I am also confident that the Chemistry Department will make whatever revisions are needed to CHEM 101-102, CHEM 111-112, SCI 102 and SCI 106 so that they will continue to fulfill the Natural Science lab science requirement. We will also make whatever revisions are needed to CHEM 343 and CHEM 301/498 so that they can continue to be used as writing intensive courses for our majors.

Due to the high demand for our courses by other Departments and programs, we will not be able to add any additional sections of liberal studies courses under the new Liberal Studies Curriculum, such as those that might meet the scientific literacy CAC. We will also not be able to add more seats in our current LS lab science courses. The only course that might be able to be converted to meet the CAC requirement for Scientific Literacy is SCI 106. If so, we would not be able to offer more seats than are currently scheduled and to do this the number of seats needed for a scientific literacy CAC course would be taken from the pool of current SCI 106 seats.

The Chemistry Department has not been involved recently in other aspects of the Liberal Studies program except for the creation of CHEM 105: The Forensic Chemistry of CSI as a non-lab science course. I served on the First Year Seminar Subcommittee and asked that group if my CHEM 105 course would fit the criteria of this course and all agreed that it would. I also attended two presentations at the Biennial Conference on Chemical Education this past summer where forensic science courses were used as First Year Seminar courses. So, I believe I could convert the CHEM 105 course into a First Year Seminar. However, I would not be able to offer both types of courses.

Finally, before I can endorse the Liberal Studies revision I would like to know what the general criteria for the courses that meet the CAC categories. The current LS Revision defines each of the competencies and indicates that CAC courses must be taken in addition to the other LS requirements. However, the general characteristics of these courses are not described. For example, the current writing-intensive courses are in that category and these require 50% of the course grade to be assigned to writing. Also a draft paper must be produced and commented on by the instructor before a final version is submitted. Will other CAC courses require 50% of the course grade to address the CAC? Will these courses have special requirements such as the draft in the writing CAC? Without some general guidelines about how these courses must be constructed, it is impossible for me to judge whether any of our current CHEM or SCI courses, either for the major or for non-majors, can be adapted to any of the CAC's except for writing.

**Mary Sadler Williams**

---

**From:** "kurt dudt" <kdudt@iup.edu>  
**To:** "Mary Sadler" <MSADLER@iup.edu>  
**Cc:** <BGWILSON@IUP.EDU>; "Mary Ann Rafoth" <mrafoth@iup.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2009 2:49 PM  
**Subject:** Re: REMINDER for response by February 2nd

Hello Mary,

I want to thank you for your effort in the revision of the Liberal Studies Package. There are a variety of thoughts that I could add and I will list them below point by point.

First:

[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->I like the addition of a speech / interpersonal course to liberal studies.

[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->I like the drop from four to three credits for English 101.

However, I have serious reservations on the following matters:

[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->There is too little in the liberal studies package to encourage more advanced "world language" study.

[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->At a time in American history where science study should be encouraged, the liberal studies component in science has been weakened.

[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->The major concern, however, is the increased "competency across the curriculum requirements" with very little understanding of how these competencies will be met in the curriculum. These competencies may put additional requirements on students and departments. This undercuts students' ability to select courses of interest. Many students have almost no choice of courses at this moment. The Liberal Studies Package should not contribute to this situation or further escalate this unfortunate situation.

[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->Unfortunately, the proposal plan reflects too much compromise. My feeling is that the package does not reflect enough advantages for students and too many advantages for the specialized interests of the faculty and departments involved in the core of the Liberal Studies Package.

In general, I do not support the new proposed package. Further, I believe the old Liberal Studies Package is stronger than the one proposed.

Sincerely,

Kurt P. Dudt, chair

Communications Media

Mary Sadler wrote:

Good morning Chairpersons and Happy New Year.

Just in case you missed this request that was sent near the end of the fall semester, I am sending it again and kindly ask for your response by February 2nd. I am happy to meet with individuals or with the Council of Chairs if you wish to discuss any of the details of the proposal. Thanks, Mary

---

Dr. Mary E. Williams Sadler  
Director Liberal Studies  
Professor, Nursing & Allied Health Professions  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
103 Stabley  
429 S. 11th Street  
Indiana, PA 15705  
724 357-5715  
msadler@iup.edu

**Mary Sadler**

---

**From:** "Charles Shubra" <cjshubra@iup.edu>  
**To:** "Mary Sadler" <MSADLER@iup.edu>; "William Oblitey" <oblitey@iup.edu>; "Therese D O'Neil" <toneil@iup.edu>; "Sanwar Ali" <sanwar@iup.edu>; "Rose Shumba" <shumba@iup.edu>; "Soundararajan Ezekiel" <sezekiel@iup.edu>; "David Smith" <DTSMITH@iup.edu>; "Waleed Farag" <farag@iup.edu>; "Michael Everett" <H.M.EVERETT@IUP.EDU>; "Andrea D Morman" <a.d.morman@iup.edu>; "Daniel P Frederick" <dan.fred@iup.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 28, 2009 9:45 AM  
**Subject:** Re: REMINDER for response by February 2nd

Mary Sadler wrote:

Good morning Chairpersons and Happy New Year.  
 Just in case you missed this request that was sent near the end of the fall semester, I am sending it again and kindly ask for your response by February 2nd. I am happy to meet with individuals or with the Council of Chairs if you wish to discuss any of the details of the proposal. Thanks, Mary

---

Dr. Mary E. Williams Sadler  
 Director Liberal Studies  
 Professor, Nursing & Allied Health Professions  
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
 103 Stabley  
 429 S. 11th Street  
 Indiana, PA 15705  
 724 357-5715  
[msadler@iup.edu](mailto:msadler@iup.edu)

Hi Mary,

The computer science faculty are interested in proposing courses for the revised Liberal Studies package. Here are our intentions:

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->COSC 380(2 credits), COSC 480(1 credit). These are required senior seminars which have long concentrated on how to make professional presentations with students being required to make several presentations. I am hoping that one or a combination of both will meet the criteria for our majors. I will investigate the possibility of having non-majors in these courses.
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->Dr. Shumba is planning an offering in the category of Empowered Learners Outcome 2.
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->Ms. O'Neil is planning offerings of COSC103 Geeks Bearing Gifts, COSC101 Computer Literacy, and COSC201 Internet and Multimedia to fit in the Technical Communications Learning Skills area.
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->Ms. O'Neil also thinks that COSC201 Internet and Multimedia will fit into the Competencies-across-the-Curriculum area of Information Literacy.



Is this the type of response you were interested in receiving? If you need more information, please contact me.

Charley Shubra

RE: Proposed Liberal Studies Curriculum Revision

Mary,

I want to commend you and the various committees on the vision and scope of the proposed Liberal Studies curriculum revision. I have read the proposal and discussed its essence with our department's Undergraduate Committee.

As for the Criminology Department, we see a variety of options for contributing should the revision go forward. Some of our existing courses (such as CRIM 101 Crime and Justice Systems – currently a Social Science elective) could meet the revised Social Science objectives. In addition, we can envision a variety of courses that could be developed. Our program seems particularly well suited to meet the social justice and civic engagement objectives contained in the “responsible learner” outcome. Similarly, I have no doubt that CRIM courses can be revised or fashioned to reflect Cultural Studies requirements.

The latter requirement – Cultural Studies – does raise some concerns for us. As written, it appears that a language course is the most direct way to meet the requirement. Our department moved from a college with a foreign language requirement to one without such a requirement and we are very satisfied with the result. We would expect only a tiny minority of our majors to choose to satisfy this requirement via a language course. Instead, we would either develop our own courses or when appropriate, direct our students towards other non-language courses that meet this requirement. Because the standards for approving alternatives are not presented, I can't say much more. However, I see some calculations regarding faculty lines for languages (at page 19); you should be aware that it is our assessment that a large number of majors in the Criminology department would choose not to take the language requirement.

We support the ideas of a First Year Seminar and a Capstone course. Our only concern is with resources, and this is a very real concern. We offered a one-credit freshman success course on an experimental basis some years ago; while we were confident of its value, we were unable to continue it because of resource constraints. Similarly, we wonder if a within-major capstone course would be possible for us. We have never had the faculty time to devote to a LBST 499 course. These limitations existed before the current fiscal crisis.

We also see the value of oral communications as an across-the-curriculum requirement. The need for a separate oral/technical communication course (listed under the learning skills) is less clear. Is this a course that can be offered in a variety of departments or is this an English class?

Finally, we are concerned because the plans for funding course development and revision seem inadequate, and the timeline appears ambitious. Our reading of the proposal is that it will be a challenge to get this revision up and running particularly given the current resource restrictions and attendant university-wide overload on faculty members.

I would be happy to discuss any of these issues with you, or to arrange a meeting with the department Undergraduate Committee (Kate Hanrahan, chair, Erika Frenzel, John Lewis, and Jamie Martin).

Regards,

Randy

Date: January 14, 2009

Subject: Department Support for Revised LS Program

To: Dr. Mary Sadler,  
Director of Liberal Studies

From: Dr. Carmy Carranza,  
Chairperson/Director,  
Developmental Studies/LEC/Act 101

The Department of Developmental Studies looks forward to participating in the development and delivery of courses for the proposed Liberal Studies Curriculum.

In particular, we expect to submit proposals for courses that support the proposed First Year Experience plans. As a department that has offered a comprehensive First Year Experience model for the past 30 years, we are eager to translate our experience and expertise in this area of first year college success and engagement into specific courses designed for liberal studies approval under the proposed criteria. In addition, we look forward to sharing our experience with linked courses and clustered courses by increasing collaboration with other departments interested in arranging such models.

In conclusion, the Department of Developmental Studies strongly supports the approval of the revised Liberal Studies Curriculum.

February 2, 2009

Dear Dr. Sadler:

As Interim Chair of the Department of Economics, it is my understanding that you are seeking departmental responses to the latest draft of the Liberal Studies proposal. There has been much discussion of the proposal among colleagues. What follows is not an endorsement of the Liberal Studies proposal. What follows is a summary of the extensive discussion and analysis conducted by my colleagues that breaks into two parts. The first 5 items relate to how the Department of Economics might support the articulated goals of the proposal you have sent, if and when it passes. The items beyond the first 5 relate to some of the deficiencies and shortcomings noted in the document that is presented.

- 1) Economic and financial literacy is not given a role commensurate with its 21<sup>st</sup> Century importance. The LS proposal suggests that financial literacy will be wrapped into "Wellness" courses to be taught by "wellness" professors from the fields of Nursing, Food and Nutrition, and Physical Education, ignoring the fact that there are disciplines in the university whose primary expertise is in the areas of economic and financial literacy. A January 14, 2009, email from Robert Duvall, Chair of the President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy, states that "college students should be required to take a course in financial literacy in order to receive federal student loans." In a report from Mr. Duvall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Summit on Economic and Financial Literacy convened by the National Council on Economic Education, he stated that "our ability to be competitive in the global economy" is dependent on "the ways and means for developing the economic and financial understanding of all Americans through education." Patrick R. Gaston, President of the Verizon Foundation, noted that "American high school seniors only got 52% of the answers right on the last national financial survey conducted by the Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Finance in 2006." Mr. Gaston further notes that "we have all come to the sobering realization that a huge and growing portion of the population is untrained and uneducated in practical and applied Economics .... Economic and financial literacy is fundamental not only to success, but to survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."
- 2) I know assessment is a key element in the Liberal Studies reform proposed. The economics profession already has in place assessment measures at all levels for economic and financial literacy. At the national level there is "The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)" test in economics which became the basis for the "The Nation's Report Card: Economics 2006." The next national assessment will be done in 2012. The National Council on Economic Education makes available assessment tests on all levels: Test of Economic Literacy (secondary); Test of Economic Knowledge (Middle School); Basic Economics Test (elementary); Test of Understanding of College-level Economics (university and adult).
- 3) IUP's Department of Economics has four faculty members whose specialty is economic education including two who are members and participants in the National Council on Economic Education. Existing "wellness" teachers are not going to have sufficient expertise to fully

prepare students in all aspects of economic and financial literacy. Moreover, the “wellness” teachers who would be instructing in subject matter outside their field would not have the direct connections to national assessment tools already in place that are familiar to economics faculty members.

- 4) If the Liberal Studies Proposal passes, the Department of Economics would expect to consider revising the Economics 101 course, to explicitly document economic and financial literacy development that already takes place in the course.
- 5) To meet the standards of national commissions that emphasize the importance of economic and financial understanding in core general education requirements, we would expect that there will be such a requirement in the Liberal Studies Proposal that passes. Then you could expect that the Department of Economics would develop a new course in “Personal Economics” that could be offered in the First Year Experience or as a comprehensive course taken by all students in their second or third years.
- 6) On the cost side, savings are claimed from a 3% increase in retention tied to comprehensive First-year Seminars with enrollment capped at 25. How much of the greater retention claimed for Freshman seminar students is due to high grade distributions in those sections? If there is a difference in the grade distributions from other courses that would be taken by first-year students, has the effect of grade inflation in Freshmen experience courses been statistically separated from any higher retention rate claimed?
- 7) The Liberal Studies Curriculum Revision specifically acknowledges the importance of economic literacy, but there is no corresponding provision in the proposal to address it. For example, the Global Citizenship item under the Competencies-across-the-Curriculum (CAC) heading emphasizes that “global citizens” are supposed to possess an understanding of how the world works economically. Plus, when answering the question, “Why do we need to revise the current Liberal Studies curriculum?” the impact of global changes in the economic sphere of life of students is identified. If the purpose of the Liberal Studies revision is to prepare 21<sup>st</sup> Century students, how can it be considered complete without a requirement for an economics course?
- 8) By designating and requiring specific oral communication courses, we may trigger an unintended consequence of reducing the amount of oral communication done by undergraduates in all of their classes. Identifying classes that emphasize oral communications (a time consuming and difficult endeavor) will result in those classes receiving special consideration, such as smaller class sizes. While it will increase the incentive professors have to offer classes which satisfy the oral communications requirement, it will also discourage professors of classes that don’t satisfy the oral communications requirement from expecting or developing oral communications skills. This happens for at least two reasons. The special limits on class sizes in the officially designated classes will have the effect of increasing class sizes in

those classes not officially designated to the point that the oral communication component will be unsustainable. Also some students will complain that they shouldn't be graded on their oral communications skills in a class that doesn't satisfy the oral communications requirement.

- 9) There is a contradiction between the waiver of first-year experience for students who transfer in with 15 or more credits and the benefits touted for the first-year experience classes. If it is so beneficial, then students with less than 46 credits should not be exempted.
- 10) (p. 15) How does the student skill set in the Pascarella & Terenzini research compare to the average IUP student? (If not comparable, then we can't evaluate the conclusions of the study.) Also, what was standard deviation, sample size and control group in the study? The retention rate increases claimed in LSCRП range all over the map from 3% to 17%. That suggests a high degree of uncertainty that is not reflected in the policy recommendations.
- 11) (pp. 16 & 17) Many of the references do not appear to be published and do not appear to be peer-reviewed. Are these genuine peer-reviewed academic articles?
- 12) (p. 18) Among the things attributed to Middle States mandates is oral communication. How is it that technical communication is getting wrapped into that standard? Or is oral communication not really something mandated by Middle States?
- 13) FYE costs are grossly underestimated. First year students are now in cost effective large sections as they would be at any other public university. We are going to shift those students into FYE classes capped at 25. If that results in higher retention, a larger proportion of our credit hour production will be in upper-level classes with lower enrollments.
- 14) No provision has been made for transition costs. For 4 years we will be running both the new FYE and the LS 499s. That means that any complement shift to finance the extraordinary expense of FYE will have to come from somewhere other than LS 499. There is nowhere in the current budget for the Academic Division for those costs to be financed.
- 15) (pp. 26 & 27) The Wellness category is way overloaded and includes the range from physical, nutritional to emotional to financial literacy as all choice among the 3 credit requirement so students appear to get only one of these.
- 16) Economic literacy is at least as important as geographic literacy in today's world, but in LSCRП economic literacy is given short shrift despite its appearance as a core requirement in almost every 21<sup>st</sup> Century recommendation for curricular reform.
- 17) Economic literacy encompasses financial literacy, but it includes much more in the areas of global citizenship and providing the basis for intelligent civic engagement. And despite its crucial importance, the phrase "economic literacy" only appears once in LSCRП.

18) (p. 28) How is opening up “cultural studies” to other departments but then restricting them to courses that carry no prerequisites at what is supposed to be the 300 level, not watering-down?

19) LSCRIP implies that courses that satisfy the social science requirement will be multiplied. That is movement in the direction of watering-down the curriculum. While every economics course is within the realm of social science, the purpose of social science requirement is to give students exposure to core social science at the entry level to make higher level social science accessible. A hodge-podge of classes from social science departments will insure that students gain a firm grounding in any social science.

I hope you will find these comments useful as you prepare the proposal for final consideration.

Will

(Willard Radell, Interim Chairperson, Department of Economics)



**Mary Sadler**

---

**From:** "Edward M Levinson" <emlevins@iup.edu>  
**To:** <mary.sadler@iup.edu>  
**Cc:** <mrafoth@iup.edu>; <emlevins@iup.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2009 10:17 AM  
**Subject:** LS Revision

Hi Mary,

I write to express our concerns relative to the liberal studies revision. Our concerns span three areas: flexibility or lack thereof, impact on majors, and social science requirements.

First, we believe there is a need for more flexibility. We believe that if a course can demonstrate that particular competencies can be met, we believe it should be deemed an acceptable substitute for other courses listed as meeting those competencies. We understand that this might require the establishment and maintenance of a procedure for reviewing and approving/denying courses as acceptable LS substitutes, but we think such a process would be well worth the increased flexibility it would provide.

Second, we have concerns that LS requirements may not have the capability of being met within the existing requirements for majors - thus necessitating substitution of courses currently required within a department for a major with courses outside of the department/major.

Lastly, and at the risk of appearing self serving (and I know you have had your fill of suggestions that have been just that), we believe that EDSP 102 - Educational Psychology should be acceptable as a social science requirement. This is a general, introductory psychology course that we believe would have more value for many students in our college than other courses listed as fulfilling the social science requirement.

I would be happy to talk with your further about these issues. In the meantime, thank you for all of your work on our behalf and for your consideration of our ideas.

Ed

Dr. Edward M. Levinson, Professor and Chair  
Department of Educational and School Psychology  
246 Stouffer Hall  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Indiana, PA 15705

"Individual commitment to a team effort - that is what makes a team work" - Vince Lombardi

To: Mary Sadler and the LS Revision Committee  
From: Gian Pagnucci, Chair of English Dept., and Sue Welsh, Chair of the Liberal Studies English Committee  
Subject: Participation in Liberal Studies Revision: Recommendations and Concerns

At its latest meeting on February 11, the Liberal Studies English Committee (LSE) raised many concerns about moving to a three credit ENGL 101 College Writing course as proposed in the current LS revision plan. LSE took those concerns to the February 18 department meeting. This document gives our most current response and recommendations.

While we *do* support course revision for College Writing (101), Humanities Literature (121) and Research Writing (202), and we *do* see a clear need for a three-credit, required oral communication course, we feel that retention and the teaching and learning of writing are best served by keeping the four-credit model in 101. Our support for LS revision is also deeply constrained by concern about resources and about sustaining resources into the future. We must know what resources will be given to our department. Briefly, these are our recommendations:

- A. Dedicate resources to First Year Studies rather than to a required First Year Seminar.
- B. Strengthen the academic experience for the entire first-year by lowering course caps and PUBLICIZING our dedication to control of enrollment caps in first year courses.
- C. **Maintain College Writing as a four-credit course. If not, the university should expect to see less prepared writers going into the second year.**
- D. Commit to a center for oral and written communication across the curriculum.
- E. Insure that new LS requirements do not jeopardize resources for courses in majors programs.

### **A. Dedicate resources to First Year Studies rather than to a required First Year Seminar.**

We are divided about committing to First Year Seminars. Why?

1. Some faculty wonder about the academic value of First Year Seminars.
2. Some departments are reluctant to put resources into additional pre-disciplinary courses because they are already stretched thin to meet LS and disciplinary course needs.
3. Some of us wonder why retention has not been addressed by admitting fewer under prepared students or by reducing course caps across the first year as SATs decline.
4. The decline in average SAT scores over five years (from 1025 to 985) has been significant ("IUP Academic Affairs Environmental Scan," Division of Academic Affairs, Jan. 2009), and it has put pressure on faculty to maintain learning outcomes with more intensive teaching and more exhaustion OR to combine more intensive teaching with somewhat lower expectations by reducing reading and writing demands.
5. We feel that neither retention nor the five-year SAT decline are thoughtfully addressed by raising course caps in first-year courses as has happened in ENGL 101 (25 to 27), ENGL 121(40-45), ENGL 202 (27-29), and, outside the department, HIST 195 and PLSC 101. We urge the LS revision committee to do a simple study: look, department by department, at course cap increases over the past decade for LS first-year courses and consider their relation to retention, DFW rates, probationary rates, and the depth of faculty/student contact.

**B. Strengthen the academic experience for the entire first-year by lowering course caps and PUBLICIZING university dedication to control of enrollment caps in first year courses.**

Using resources for FYSS eliminates the option of attending to classroom size across the first year as an alternative way to improve retention *and* learning. Again, we are thinking not only of caps in our writing courses, but of caps in the history course, for example, and in other first-year LS courses (See NCTE, “More Than a Number: Why Class Size Matters,” *NCTE Guideline*. 2009. Accessed 4 Feb. 2009. [www.ncte.org/positions/statements/whyclasssizematters](http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/whyclasssizematters)).

**Lowering enrollment caps in the required writing sequence (ENGL 101 and 202), the proposed oral communication course and other first-year LS courses should take precedence over funding the first-year seminars.** We are skeptical about the claim that FYSS *significantly* increase retention or that they increase retention *beyond the second year* any more significantly than lowered course caps in first year courses would increase retention. Supporting smaller class sizes by controlling caps and by PUBLICIZING that control as a feature of the first year may well have as much effect on retention as FYSS.

**C. Maintain College Writing as a four-credit course. If not, expect to see less prepared writers going into the second year.**

The English department is already demoralized by increases in course caps in 101, 121, and 202; by the fact that assessment results for writing have had no effect on planning for the writing requirement; and by the fact that DFW rates in CHSS LS courses—which for five years have been lowest in ENGL 101—have not been addressed by looking at the relation between increases in enrollment caps in LS courses and the DFW rates.

**Assessment Results for Undergraduate Writing:** Dr. Susan Boser’s summer’08 direct assessment of LS learning outcomes found that the “highest scores on the local assessment were in the area of written communications. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) also indicated that IUP freshmen rated their experience with learning ‘writing clearly and effectively’ and ‘speaking clearly and effectively’ higher than did freshmen at selected peer institutions” (LS Framework, Jan. 2009, 14).<sup>1</sup> Both the English Liberal Studies Sequence (101, 121, and 202) and the Writing Intensive courses are responsible for that success. You can imagine, then, why the LS revision mandate to move the foundational 101 College Writing course to three credits has felt like a penalty for dedicated and successful teaching.

---

<sup>1</sup> One concern--that students do not encounter synthesis writing in the first year at IUP as frequently as their national cohort—results from freshman responses on the indirect assessment instrument, the NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement). The university must remember that our second writing requirement, 202 Research Writing, is **not taken until the sophomore year**, and synthesis is its focus. Note that, student feedback beyond the first year points to particular strengths at IUP when compared with other universities, and one of the strengths is “synthesizing ideas from various sources, including across disciplines and sources” (LS Framework, Jan. 2009, 14).

**DFW Rates in 101:** From 2001 through 2006 the DFW rate in the four-credit 101 College Writing was the lowest of any other first year LS requirement. We attribute this to close and careful work with individual students in small classrooms and in one-on-one conferencing. We are good at this kind of work, the teaching of writing demands it, it has been our contribution to retention, and we want to maintain it. However, our course caps increased in fall '08, time spent in the classroom decreased university wide in fall '07, and SAT scores continue to fall (a pattern we had independently noticed and had begun to address by calling for more intentional integration of critical reading into the 101 course).

You can, perhaps, see why it is difficult to create consensus about the proposed LS revision. It would further reduce our contact with students by removing the required conference hour in 101. If anything, we see a need for *more* time with 101 students.

1. **We therefore continue to recommend a First Year Composition course of four credits, capped at 24.** We know what the delivery of instruction in writing entails, and we cannot deliver significant improvement and understanding in a three credit version of the course.
2. **In the proposed three-credit 101 course capped at 20 we cannot sustain the amount of writing and conferencing that we now see in the 101 course. The university and faculty in all departments must understand that they will see less prepared writers coming out of the first year if we move to a three credit 101.**
3. **We recommend that ENGL 202 be capped at 24. NCTE Guidelines for work load in writing programs state that no faculty member should have more than 60 writing students per semester.** The current cap on the 202 course is 29 (raised in fall '08 from 27). We staff 108 sections of 101 and 90 sections of 202 between September and May. Instructors who teach writing primarily will carry 80+ writing students in one semester.

#### **D. SUPPORT WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

The English Liberal Studies courses currently integrate opportunities for public speaking, but our feeling is that by the end of the 202 Research Writing course students are still struggling with public speaking basics. We agree that they need a full 3-credit course in oral or technical communication. Our understanding is that different departments would offer those courses (Theater, English, Communications Media, Business, Foreign Languages), and that they will share this requirement, just as they now share responsibility for writing intensive offerings. If that is the picture, these cross departmental offerings for the oral competency need to be coordinated, developed and cared for with clear university support. We recommend:

1. An office and a director for written and oral communication across the curriculum should be established. Faculty designing the oral communication courses need to develop shared goals, outcomes, and assessment. They need to establish commonality as teacher-researchers: to explore professional literature in the field, develop comparable syllabi and maintain professional resources. There are such resources at other universities:

- NC State Campus Writing and Speaking, [www2.chass.ncsu.edu/CWSP](http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/CWSP)
  - Oswego State, Communication across the Curriculum
  - See others at [www.mhhe.com/socscience/english/tc/Dannels/additionalresources](http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/english/tc/Dannels/additionalresources)
2. Assured resources: If a department agrees to develop and sustain sections of oral communication courses, it should be given resources to make a new hire in the specialty of oral or technical communication.
  3. A 100-level course: We recommend that the oral communication courses be offered during the first year, and, if required, be intentionally designed by a cross-disciplinary committee. They can be designed to take up topics or themes that might, in fact, dovetail with FYS-like topics or themes but with a clear focus on oral presentation.
  4. An enrollment cap of 20: Department experience with our 300-level public speaking course leads us to recommend that the oral communication courses be capped at 20 and not 25. With 25 students, there is not enough time in fourteen weeks to accommodate enough oral presentation to secure skill growth.

**E. ENSURE THAT NEW LS REQUIREMENTS (for example, Oral Communication) DO NOT JEOPARDIZE OFFERINGS IN MAJORS PROGRAMS**

Will departments that offer oral communication courses have faculty resources to meet the obligation of, say, 5 sections of oral comm. per semester? Will participating departments receive resources for at least one faculty hire dedicated to teaching and developing an oral communication requirement? We suggest close consideration of the concerns of the sub-committee that worked on the oral competency a year ago.

We need “whole pictures,” department by department, of the impact on resources so that offerings in the major curriculum, department by department, are protected. The FTE savings picture presented at the fall 08 town meeting does not address, department by department, anxieties about a resource crunch that will jeopardize offerings in majors programs.

February 25, 2009

Mary Sadler, Director  
Liberal Studies  
103 Stabley  
IUP  
Indiana, PA 15705

Dear Committee:

After reviewing the proposed revisions for the Liberal Studies Program, the Department of Food and Nutrition faculty believe that we will be able to adapt our course offerings to fit the program as follows:

- FDNT 143 Nutrition and Wellness to fit the Dimensions of Wellness category;
- FDNT 110 Careers in FDNT (1 cr) to provide 1 credit of First Year Seminar to our majors and undecided students considering careers in nutrition;
- FDNT 470 Human Food Consumption Patterns (currently co-listed as LBST 499 Food and Culture) to fit the Cultural Studies category as a requirement for our majors and an option for other students;
- FDNT 430 Professional Topics to fulfill Capstone for our majors;
- LBST 499 Food in Film and LBST 499 Battle for Perfection to fulfill Interdisciplinary Capstone for all majors;
- FDNT 145 Introduction to Nutrition and/or FDNT 212 Nutrition to fulfill the CAC for Scientific Literacy.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this proposal, please contact my office at 7-4440.

Susan Dahlheimer, PhD, RD, LDN, FADA  
Chairperson, Food & Nutrition



# Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Department of Geography and Regional Planning 724-357-2250  
Leonard Hall, Room 9 Fax: 724-357-6479  
421 North Walk Internet: [www.iup.edu/geography](http://www.iup.edu/geography)  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1015

Date: February 11, 2009  
To: Mary Sadler  
CC: Geography & Regional Planning Curriculum Committee  
From: John Benhart, Jr.  
Re: Liberal Studies Revision Proposal

Dr. Sadler

I am writing to provide a response on behalf of the Department of Geography & Regional Planning to the proposal put forward by your committee regarding revision of the liberal studies program at IUP. This memo will speak to the Department's overall perspective on the revision, as well as some specifics regarding particular aspects of the proposal.

With respect to proposal itself, the dominant sentiment in our department is that we have not been convinced that it is necessary to completely overhaul the University's entire liberal studies curriculum. We do feel that there are definitely some aspects of the present curriculum that need to be changed – for example, the LS synthesis course requirement and the laundry list of liberal studies elective courses – however, we really have not seen valid data suggesting that most other aspects of the curriculum need to be changed.

Having expressed the above sentiment, Geography & Regional Planning faculty have discussed the present proposal, and have expressed some ideas regarding the Department's contributions should it be approved in some form.

In terms of Learning Skills, we feel strongly that we will have highly relevant courses that will meet the *Cultural Studies* requirement, as a major component of human geography is an understanding of cultural characteristics in various regions of the world. With respect to another cited Learning Skill - *Technical Communication* – we feel that cartographic design and planning design skills would fit very nicely as technology-based techniques that facilitate “organization, communication, research and problem solving.” Geography & Regional Planning also unanimously agreed that they did not feel that a 3-credit course needed to be devoted exclusively to Oral Communication – we propose that two Oral Communication across-the-curriculum courses (O courses) be substituted for the proposed required course (with those 3 credits being utilized more effectively elsewhere in the curriculum).

In terms of Knowledge Areas, the Department would like to contribute both laboratory and non-laboratory courses in the *Natural Science* area of the proposed curriculum, as the nature of physical geography requires knowledge of natural earth processes and

concomitant spatial results. Certainly, Geography & Regional Planning anticipates participating heavily in the *Social Science* knowledge area, as many of our courses focus on the spatial results of human societies, human-environment interaction, and development and settlement patterns.

With respect to Competencies Across the Curriculum, Geography and Regional Planning anticipates contributing to *Global Citizenship*, *Information Literacy*, *Quantitative Literacy*, and *Scientific Literacy* competencies through courses focusing on the physical-human geography of different regions of the world, spatial database and mapping technologies, and science-based curriculum focusing on the earth's surface and atmosphere.

If you have any questions relating to any of the information above, please feel free to contact me.



# Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Geoscience Department  
Walsh Hall, Room 114  
302 East Walk  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1087

724-357-2379  
Fax: 724-357-6208  
Internet: <http://www.iup.edu>

January 31, 2009

Dr. Mary Sadler  
Director, Liberal Studies  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Sadler,

The Geoscience Department is prepared to help IUP students fulfill the new Liberal Studies requirements as follows:

**Natural Science: Option I: Two-semester Laboratory Course Sequence**

Our current suite of introductory lecture/laboratory courses (GEOS 101/102, GEOS 103/104 or GEOS 105/106) may be taken in any order without pre-requisite and would thus fulfill this option.

**Natural Science: Option II: One Laboratory plus One Non-laboratory Courses**

Our current introductory lecture courses (GEOS 101, GEOS 103 and GEOS 105) may be taken without the lab and would thus fulfill this option. In addition, we currently offer several introductory non-laboratory courses (GEOS 141, GEOS 150, GEOS 151, GEOS 221, GEOS 226 and GEOS 254) that could be used to fulfill this option.

**Competency-Across-the-Curriculum Requirements: Scientific Literacy**

Many of our current non-laboratory courses (GEOS 151, GEOS 221, GEOS 226 and GEOS 254) delve deeply into a single topic of geoscience and investigate how the scientific method is used to answer questions and make new discoveries. We anticipate these courses could meet this new competency requirement. In addition, the department plans to create additional non-major courses on socially significant themes such as Global Climate Change and Natural Hazards which could also be used to fulfill this competency.

Course descriptions for current classes are provided on the attached page.

Sincerely,



Karen Rose Cercone  
Interim Chair, Geoscience

**GEOS 101 The Dynamic Earth 3c-0l-3cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

Examines the constant changes that affect the rocky surface of our planet. From volcanic eruptions and catastrophic earthquakes to the slow drift of continents and passage of ice ages, earth processes have shaped the history of life and altered the development of human civilization.

**GEOS 102 The Dynamic Earth Lab 0c-2l-1cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

**Corequisite:** GEOS 101

Introduces the techniques geologists use to study the earth and reconstruct its past. Labs cover minerals, rocks, map interpretation, fossil identification. Includes field trips during the scheduled lab period.

**GEOS 103 Oceans and Atmospheres 3c-0l-3cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

The earth's oceans and atmosphere play a crucial role in determining the pace and extent of changes occurring to our global environment. Examines the composition and character of these components and their interaction with other major components of the earth system.

**GEOS 104 Oceans and Atmospheres Lab 0c-2l-1cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

**Corequisite:** GEOS 103

Introduces the techniques oceanographers and meteorologists use to study the earth's oceans and atmospheres and reconstruct their evolution. Labs cover seawater processes, oceanic circulation, marine life, atmospheric structure, and weather.

**GEOS 105 Exploring the Universe 3c-0l-3cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

Examines the history of time, the reasons for the seasons, the characteristics of the planets, moons, stars, and galaxies, and the history and future of space exploration.

**GEOS 106 Exploring the Universe Lab 0c-2l-1cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

**Corequisite:** GEOS 105

Introduces the techniques astronomers use to study the celestial sphere. Constellations, seasons, motions of Sun, Moon, planets, and stars, characteristics of stars and galaxies. Includes two observations which are held at night.

**GEOS 141 Introduction to Ocean Science 3c-0l-3cr**

Introduces physical, chemical, biological, and geological processes in oceanography and the interactions among them. Impact of exploitation of the oceans, coastal areas, marine, physical, and living resources on the environment and on humankind. Includes field trips which may involve a fee and may occur on weekends.

**GEOS 150 Geology of National Parks 3c-0l-3cr**

Studies geological processes and earth history as documented by the classical geological features of U.S. and Canadian national parks. Includes Badlands, Glacier, Grand Canyon, Great Smokies, Gros Morne, Mammoth Cave, Yellowstone, Yosemite, and others. Not open to Geoscience majors or minors.

**GEOS 151 The Age of Dinosaurs 3c-0l-3cr**

A thorough introduction to dinosaurs and the world they inhabited. Topics include the most current theories regarding dinosaurian biology (behavior, metabolism, evolution), ecology (greenhouse climate, associated plants and animals), and extinction (asteroid impact, volcanism, climate change). Not open to Geoscience majors and minors.

**GEOS 221 Physical Resources of the Earth 3c-0l-3cr**

An introduction to mineral, energy, and water resources of the earth; genesis of ore depositions; exploration, exploitation, and utilization of resources; impact of exploitation of resources on the environment and on humankind. Includes field trips which may occur on weekends.

**GEOS 226 Forensic Geology 3c-0l-3cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

An introduction to the use of geological information in criminal investigation. Emphasizes the use of geochemistry, geochronology, geophysics, and soil characteristics in tracing the origins and history of criminal evidence as well as the development of new techniques for authenticating artifacts and art.

**GEOS 254 Exploration of Space 3c-0-3cr**

**Prerequisite:** No Geoscience majors/minors

Covers the history, technical considerations, and scientific and social issues of the exploration of the planets and smaller objects of the solar system. Early rocketry, the race to the Moon, and past robotic missions provide a perspective to consider current and future science missions and human settlement beyond Earth. Includes field observations and activities that may occur on evenings and weekends.

# Indiana University of Pennsylvania

**Department of History**  
203 Keith Hall  
390 Pratt Drive  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1087

Voice: 724 357-2284  
Fax: 724 357-6478  
Internet: <http://www.iup.edu/history>

Dr. R. Scott Moore  
Chair, Department of History  
205 Keith Hall  
724-357-2284  
[rsmoore@iup.edu](mailto:rsmoore@iup.edu)

To: Dr. Mary Sadler, Director of Liberal Studies  
Re: History Department's contribution to the proposed Liberal Studies Revision

Dr. Sadler,

If the current Liberal Studies Revision is approved in its present state (December 2008), the History department plans to offer a slate of courses that can be used to meet the history requirement. The department's Curriculum Committee is currently drafting these courses and plans to submit them for approval once the Liberal Studies Revisions are finalized. In addition, the department is waiting for the guidelines for categories and competencies to be finalized, and at that time will decide if any of the department's courses will be submitted for inclusion.

Sincerely,



R. Scott Moore

**Mary Sadler**

---

**From:** "Mary Swinker" <swinker@iup.edu>  
**To:** "Mary Sadler" <msadler@iup.edu>  
**Cc:** "Sally M McCombie" <smccomb@iup.edu>; "Freddie Bowers" <fbowers@iup.edu>; "Janet Blood" <Janet.Blood@iup.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 10:16 AM  
**Attach:** Liberal Studies Revision for HDES Department.doc  
**Subject:** HDES Suggested Proposed Courses for New Liberal Studies

Mary,

Here are some suggestions of courses that we would propose if there is a new liberal studies.

Mary  
Mary E. Swinker, Ph.D.  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Human Development & Environmental Studies  
207 Ackerman Hall  
911 South Drive  
Indiana, PA 15705  
(724) 357-2336  
[swinker@iup.edu](mailto:swinker@iup.edu)

## Liberal Studies Revision - Proposed Potential Courses from HDES Department

### **First Year Seminar**

#### First Year Experience in Child & Family Studies

This course will be an introduction to working with children and families and will focus on ethical considerations and advocacy efforts in the field. The main course requirement will be a service learning project with children and families in rural areas. Students will be required to complete 20 volunteers hours in rural communities.

#### Personal Management

This course will present management as a system and its relationship to individuals. Topics will include stress management and its effects on physical and mental well-being, time management, basic financial management, planning and goal setting, values and standards clarification, decision-making, problems solving, use of resources, communication and conflict resolution, balancing work and family and understanding of self. Students must choose, read and report on a self-help book of their choice. This course helps students to reflect on their pasts, examine their present lifestyles, and project into the future. Content will be similar to CNSV 101 which has been a long existing liberal studies elective course.

### **Dimensions of Wellness**

#### Marriage and Family Around the World\*\*

This course will focus on patterns and traditions relating to marriage/co-habitation, family units, family structures and the hierarchy within the families throughout the world. Focus will be on how the cultural and ethnic backgrounds effect customs, family patterns and decision-making processes with the family.

#### Children in a Diverse World\*\*

The course will focus on child care and child rearing practices throughout the world. Topics to be covered will include: variations in birthing throughout the world; child rearing practices in various cultures; the view of childhood as seen through the eyes of various ethnic groups; similarities and differences in developmental issues from birth through adolescence around the world; and research related to preparing personnel to work with children who are culturally, linguistically and ability diverse, including English Language Learners.

#### Consumer Economics & Family Finance Fitness

This course will focus on the application of economic, sociological and psychological principles to individual and family money management problems. Information needed to manage finances effectively and to become a rational consumer will also be presented.

The HDES Department asserts that all individuals should have sufficient knowledge and skill to enable each student to take individual responsibility for personal economic well-being. Many people today lack the basic knowledge needed to understand the increasingly complex financial marketplace—building credit, understanding interest rates and planning for retirement. This course extends financial well-being across the life span. It has been a long existing liberal studies elective course that needs no revisions to serve as an option in the Dimensions of Wellness Category

## **Cultural Studies**

### **Cultural Studies in Dress and Appearance**

This course will introduce students to the traditional forms of ethnic dress and appearance from diverse world cultures. The concepts of fashion, beauty, non-verbal communication, symbolism, and adornment will also be examined in the context of a culture's mores, history, available resources, and geographical location.

### **Housing and Culture**

Managerial, sociological, economic and aesthetic aspects of housing and people are investigated as well as a consideration of the environment of the home as part of the community.

## **Capstone Course**

### **Child and Family Studies**

The Child & Family Studies Program currently has two courses which serve as capstone courses and are taken in the senior year. Both CDFR 429 Teaching in Child Development Centers and CDFR 463 Family & Community help students assimilate and integrate course material from lower level child development and family studies courses into direct work with children and families and senior projects. Either course could easily be adapted to meet the Capstone criteria and be more beneficial to our majors than current liberal studies courses.

### **Family and Consumer Science Education**

#### **FCSE 450 Teaching Vocational and Family and Consumer Science Education**

Emphasizes teaching vocational family and consumer sciences in consumer/homemaking and occupational family and consumer sciences programs. Federal legislation impacting on family and consumer sciences is analyzed for use in program decisions. Emphasizes program development using CBVE model, development of individual learning packets, vocational youth organizations, advisory committees, family and consumer sciences and vocational educational priorities, professional organizations proposal development for funding, impact on public policy,

marketing family and consumer sciences, and development of a personal philosophy of family and consumer sciences education.

### Fashion Merchandising

#### FSMR 480 Seminar in Fashion Merchandising

Knowledge gained in major and additional requirements courses is applied to individual career goals. Will have the opportunity to pursue related areas not directly covered in previous coursework, with emphasis upon independent research, analytical thinking, and communication skills.

### Interior Design

#### INDS 405 Interior Design Professional Practice

Planning, business organization, management, contracts, procedures, and ethics for the professional interior designer.

**\*\* Course may also fit into First Year Seminar, Cultural Studies or Social Science Categories**

To: Dr. Mary E. Sadler, Director Liberal Studies  
From: Dr. Kustim Wibowo, Chair of MIS/DS Department  
Date: February 27, 2009  
Subject: Liberal Studies Revision

*KWibowo - 2/27-09*

---

Dear Dr. Sadler,

After much discussion and consideration on the Liberal Studies Revision proposal, the MIS/DS faculty voted not to support the proposed revision.

The department will support the Liberal Studies program as it is mandated by the University.

Received

FEB 27 2009

Liberal Studies

72



TO: Mary Sadler, Director  
Liberal Studies

DATE: February 3, 2009

FROM: Sherrill J. Begres, Chair  
Philosophy Department

Please consider this to be the response of the Philosophy Department to the most recent version of the Liberal Studies Revision. Let me begin by assuring you that the Philosophy Department is committed, qualifiedly, to the revision as evidenced, I think, by the fact that members of this department have been active in the process from the beginning; indeed, we initiated contact with the steering committee years ago, engaging in the process voluntarily, even before there were calls for faculty to work on subcommittees, and we did so with the best of intent. Subsequently, five of our six permanent faculty members served on subcommittees, one as chair. We currently have curricular revisions going through the approval process in anticipation of needed changes. These revisions include three new value-theory courses. We developed these courses for two reasons: to respond to our own Departmental outcomes-assessment findings and to get a jump on course offerings suited to the revised Liberal Studies program, with its increased emphasis on ethical and socio-political responsibility.

Our participation notwithstanding, we have some concerns about the current proposal. The most significant concern is with regard to the Competency-Across-the-Curriculum (CAC) requirements and resources. Given the current economic downturn, one cannot help but wonder if this is the most opportune time to engage in a total revision of the Liberal Studies Program. Perhaps amendment to satisfy Middle States and PA Trek is a more cautious approach. In any event, I will respond to the most current version of the proposal and, following that, I will provide you with indications of which courses might fit the current CAC.

**Critical Thinking (CT)/Empowered Learners:**

**The second Liberal Studies (LS) learning outcome is empowered learners, defined first and foremost as “critical thinkers.” Nonetheless, the CT [and critical reading] CAC has been removed from the LS proposal. We object to its removal, and ask that it be reinstated. If the proposed LS program is indeed to produce its stated outcomes, a CT CAC is essential. The removal of the CT CAC is incompatible with the importance placed on it by the objectives of the LS proposal. More and more disciplines, such as nursing and education in California (CA), have a competency in CT as part of their certification credentials. In CA, every student who is certified to teach K-12 must show competency in CT, and all CA state colleges and universities must offer courses in CT. In some Michigan universities CT is a required course for all students. CT is also important for the significant number of pre-law students at IUP. The LSAT, which is taken by many, if not most, of our pre-law majors has a large analytical-reasoning section; in fact, two of the**

**three sections of the LSAT (Analytic Reasoning and Logical Reasoning ) involve CT, for which specific training in CT is extremely helpful.**

**The only reason given for removing the CT CAC, to our knowledge, is that every discipline allegedly already teaches CT, so we do not need CT as a CAC. There is research, which I will present below, showing that, while most professors in most disciplines believe they are teaching CT, it is false that all disciplines are already teaching CT. Even if it were true that every discipline is already teaching CT, that would not be a good reason to abandon the CT CAC. All disciplines involve writing, but there is, nonetheless, a writing-intensive (W) CAC. Just as faculty members can be trained by experts to prepare them for the current W CAC, so faculty could be trained for a CT CAC, and such training would enable them to teach CT better in their courses.**

Not just anyone, without proper training, can teach CT. Let me suggest an analogy here: The faculty of the Philosophy Department had hoped to create a Research Writing course for our majors that would count as satisfying the Composition requirement in a new revised Liberal Studies program. As the program draft continued to develop, however, the trend was toward giving the English Department exclusive stewardship of this requirement. A good case can be made for this, we grant. For we do recognize the importance of expertise when it comes to teaching any given subject matter. Writing skills are taught by professors in many disciplines, but arguably an English Composition course does more; literature scholars are singularly able to make explicit, and reflect upon, the principles that determine the quality of writing.

By parity of reasoning, we would argue that the Critical Thinking requirement should be under our watch. There are principles that determine the quality of thinking. And there are different kinds of reasoning, each with its own character and distinctive properties. Philosophers are singularly able to make explicit, and reflect upon, the principles that determine the quality of different kinds of thinking, and that is why the vast majority of Critical Thinking texts are written by professional philosophers.

While it is no doubt true that all or most of IUP's faculty are qualified to teach students to think critically, it is not true that all or even most of IUP's faculty are qualified to teach CT, which is a meta-level field taught by philosophers who have been trained to think about thinking. CT is an area of research and scholarship with its own associations, conferences, centers, and journals. These associations include AILACT, the Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking; OSSA, the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation, started by Ralph Johnson and Tony Blair at the University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada; and ISSA, the International Society for the Study of Argumentation, started at the University of Amsterdam. All of these organizations hold regular conferences. There are also a number of Centers for CT; one of the most well known in the United States is the Foundation for Critical Thinking at Sonoma State University in CA. Some years ago, soon after the current LS requirements were implemented, the IUP PHIL department had a CT specialist as IUP's first visiting distinguished professor for one year. Dr. Jonathan Adler conducted seminars and workshops to educate IUP facul-

ty in how to teach CT. The following year, a number of CT experts came to IUP and conducted faculty workshops in CT. Members of our department have repeatedly given talks on CT to the reflective practice group. Most recently, Dr. Carol Caraway gave one last Spring semester.

Research in teaching CT, such as the "CA Teacher Preparation for Instruction in CT: Research Findings & Policy Recommendations," shows that "most profs who think they are teaching CT are not." California State University Executive Order 338 gives guidelines for instruction in CT and requires that CA college and university students pass a course in CT to graduate. Some years after this order went into effect, this study was conducted to assess how well teacher-training programs in CA prepared candidates to teach CT in elementary and secondary schools. They chose a stratified sample of 120 professors in education from 28 public and 29 private colleges and universities in CA, and 60 professors from 18 public and 9 private institutions. They were able to interview 101 education faculty and 39 subject-matter faculty.

The findings of the CA CT study were shocking. To paraphrase St. Augustine, it seemed that CT was something the respondents knew when no one asked them, but no longer knew when they were asked to give an account of it. Only 19% could explain what CT is. Most could give no examples of how they taught CT in their classes. In short, they in fact did not know what CT was and were not teaching it in their classes.

Here are some of the specific results:

89% claimed that CT was a primary objective of their teaching, but only 19% could explain clearly what CT is.

Only 8% could name any intellectual standards they required of their students or could explain what those standards were.

Most shocking was that 41% said that truth is fundamentally a matter of personal preference or subjective taste.

77% had little, if any, idea how to reconcile content coverage with fostering CT.

Most faculty members confused CT with getting students actively involved in class.

Most could give no examples of how they foster CT in the classroom.

Most did not consider reasoning a significant focus of CT.

Most did not think reasoning within their discipline was, or should be, a major focus of their instruction.

As the proposal stands now, the criteria are so broad and general that almost any course might arguably satisfy them. It is our belief that **the proposed criteria regarding CT should include the following:**

**A. The course must provide a clear explanation of the core concept of CT available from experts in the field of CT.**

- B. The course must enumerate the intellectual criteria or standards required of students. These should include such standards as clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, and logic.**
- C. The course must specify how it will develop important critical intellectual traits in the students. These intellectual traits would be characteristics such as intellectual humility, intellectual courage, intellectual empathy, intellectual integrity, intellectual perseverance, faith in reason, and fair-mindedness.**
- D. The course must demonstrate a fundamental commitment to the view that knowledge, truth, and sound judgment are NOT fundamentally a matter of personal preference or subjective taste.**
- E. The course must not confuse exposing students to alternative viewpoints with CT. Exposure to alternative viewpoints in a non-critical way is NOT CT, and, if not done properly, could reinforce relativistic thinking by students.**
- F. Plausible concrete pedagogical examples need to be provided to show how the professor or course will uphold the intellectual standards; foster the intellectual traits mentioned above; promote knowledge, truth, and sound judgment; and expose students to alternative viewpoints in critical-thinking manner.**

**When CT was part of the LS proposal, the criteria were so broad and general that almost any course might have satisfied them. It is our belief that the proposed criteria regarding CT should include the following:**

- A. the ability to engage in reasoned discourse,**
- B. the ability to reason in the context of the above-specified intellectual standards,**
- C. the ability to analyze and to make good inferences sensitive to the various elements of CT, and**
- D. the commitment to a fundamental value orientation that includes the above-mentioned intellectual traits.**

**We recognize that there exists a substantial budget crisis that makes the hiring of sufficient philosophers to teach all sections of CT impossible. We do think, however, that at a bare minimum, CT should be included as one of the CAC requirements and that department faculty members who wish to teach it be trained properly in accordance with the standards set above by the experts in the field.**

**Values/Responsible Learners:**

The Liberal Studies Revision Steering Committee has long argued for revision of our Liberal Studies program, giving several arguments in support of their considerable efforts. One argument has turned on our commitment to regular learning-outcomes assessment (LOA) required by the Middle States Commission. Given that there must be regular LOA, then the Steering Committee has argued, reasonably we think, that it is fitting to reflect on, and to revise, our shared learning outcomes themselves.

The revised learning outcomes resulted in three categories of goals, and the revised document was ultimately approved by the Senate. The Philosophy Department heartily endorses the introduction of the third category, that of producing responsible learners; however, graduating seniors can be said to possess liberty, we would contend, only if they have the knowledge and propensities that make for responsible citizenship. Surely, contributing to such maturation is a worthy pedagogical goal. A revised Liberal Studies program, oriented in part around such a goal, might result in more good in our community and for our students than in the past. But we think that the proposed revision is not such a program.

**The early commitment to values in Category III is largely gone. We are sad to say that it feels a bit like a bait-and-switch. In place of credit allocation for courses that can help to realize goals falling under Category III, we are given a revision proposal that serves many other ends, with a promise that concern for Category III learning outcomes will be part of the course-approval process. This promise is not reassuring. IUP can contribute to realizing our students' ethical and social-political abilities only by providing them education in ethical and social-political theories, issues and practices. And this should be institutionalized by a share in credit allocation, a share that we expect would go largely to departments in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. There is little reason to think that a whole category of learning goals will be realized by happy accident, as we serve other masters. There is little reason to think that ethically and socio-politically responsible students will somehow emerge, fortuitously, from a program that does not avowedly prioritize this goal.**

**The necessity for prioritizing ethics and social and political values was made evident in a recent outcomes assessment report. The report provided evidence that IUP students are "relatively weak" in areas of competence relevant to Category III. In the *Assessment of the IUP Liberal Studies Program For Academic Year 2007 - 2008*, Dr. Susan Boser finds that only 38% of IUP students demonstrate advanced or proficient concern for social justice, and that only 33% show understanding of, or commitment to, civic engagement. Only 50% demonstrate appreciation for the "ethical and behavioral consequences of decisions."**

The current Liberal Studies program was not explicitly designed to address these concerns, so we should not be surprised by these findings. We fear that the revised program is not significantly different in this regard. **It is our considered belief that values should be added to the CAC in order to produce students who can demonstrate advanced and proficient concern for social justice, who can show understanding of, or commitment to, civic engagement, and who can demonstrate appreciation for the ethical and behavioral consequences of their decisions.**

We recognize that ethical matters arise in many disciplines. Also, it makes sense for particular disciplines to offer courses that address discipline-specific ethical problems, in business, or nursing, or software design, to name a few. Nevertheless, **we ask the LSRSC to recognize that there is an important difference between discussing eth-**

ical problems and teaching Ethics. In philosophy classes students learn about the ethical theories and about the general principles that drive particular ethical debates. Studying the theories themselves is a necessary condition for appreciating what is at stake in the ethical issues many disciplines are addressing. A student who wants to talk about issues in nursing, for instance, but who cannot distinguish between a Utilitarian framework for justifying an action, on the one hand, and a Deontological one, on the other; or who has not learned the meta-ethical considerations that are the basis for normative ethics, has not really learned to think about ethical matters. Yet it is only in Philosophy courses that students will learn about the complete set of ethical theories, principles, and frameworks that are essential to a learned discussion of particular ethical problems in society.

That being said, we are aware, again, of the financial crisis in which we find ourselves, and are aware of the inevitable turf battles that are beginning for courses that will satisfy the new LS revision. In an ideal academic setting, there would be a Value Theory CAC and the relevant courses would be taught by philosophers whose education in ethics, socio-political philosophy, human rights, etc. make them especially qualified to teach values courses. This is not an ideal academic setting; nevertheless, we urge you to add Value Theory as a CAC, with careful restrictions to disciplines and with syllabi that exhibit competence in theory as well as in application.

#### **Values Classes:**

Recognition of the importance of teaching the ethical theories themselves is a driving motivation in our present restructuring of the ethics classes we will be offering. We will be proposing a 100-level class devoted solely to teaching of the different ethical theories that underlie contemporary moral problems, and a second 100-level class that will be devoted to the teaching of ethical problems (but again, only after students have received a grounding in the theories). In particular, this Spring 09 we will be proposing the following courses, which are to be additions and revisions to our present PHIL 222

#### **Ethics:**

##### **PHIL 122: Introduction to Moral Theory**

This course examines attempts to answer foundational questions of ethics, including the following. Why should we be moral? What do morally correct actions have in common? What does the good life involve? Does morality require religion? Readings will draw on famous figures such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Mill, in addition to contemporary philosophers.

##### **PHIL 124: Introduction to Moral Problems\***

This course explores contemporary moral problems through the lens of different moral theories. Students will read famous moral philosophers and learn to apply their theories to moral issues. Topics may include, but are not limited to: euthanasia, abortion, affirmative action, animal rights, and pornography.

##### **PHIL 270: Environmental Ethics**

This course applies traditional moral theories to current environmental issues. Examines and critically assesses competing ways of grounding shared human responsibility for nature conservation and

We also have the following values-related courses already on the books:

Political Philosophy  
Ethics & Public Policy  
Justice & Human Rights  
Philosophy of Law  
Philosophical Perspectives on Love, Marriage & Divorce

Here is a list of the PHIL classes that we believe are relevant to each CAC category:

1. Global Citizenship

PHIL 122: Introduction to Moral Theory  
PHIL 124: Introduction to Moral Problems  
PHIL 232: Philosophical Perspectives on Love, Marriage, and Divorce  
PHIL 270: Environmental Ethics  
PHIL 323: Political Philosophy  
PHIL 405: Justice & Human Rights

2. Information Literacy

PHIL 101: Informal Logic: Methods of Critical Thinking  
PHIL 110: Reasoning and the Law

3. Oral Communication

An oral component can be added to any of our upper-level classes, especially if there is training analogous to that which is done for writing-intensive certification.

4. Quantitative Reasoning

PHIL 221: Symbolic Logic I  
PHIL 321: Symbolic Logic II

5. Scientific Literacy

PHIL 330: Philosophy of Science  
PHIL 360: Philosophy of Mind  
PHIL 421: Theory of Knowledge

6. Written Communication All faculty are certified to teach all classes as writing intensive; we do so, however, in only our upper-division classes.

Capstone/Oral Communication: The Philosophy Department would also develop and offer a capstone course with an oral-communication component.

First-Year Seminar: Our participation in first-year seminars is problematic for us. We are already committed to the Honors College (3 courses each AY), for which we do not get sufficient credit, negatively affecting our budgets. We are hesitant to take on yet another course with small enrollment unless the enrollment is weighted sufficiently to justify our participation.