

## **Liberal Studies Plan of Study – Essay Instructions**

The Liberal Studies Program at Oregon State University-Cascades develops student interest in lifelong learning by engaging them in learning experiences that stimulate a lasting attitude of inquiry, openness, and social responsibility. To meet these aspirations, the Liberal Studies program manages the learning process, academic selections, educational experiences, and outlets for creativity for students who thematically connect the disciplinary-based educational offerings of departments of the College of Liberal Arts. The program's specific mission is to facilitate the development and implementation of an interdisciplinary thematically-base learning program selected by the student.

Students are required to submit a 3 page essay along with their Plan of Study to gain entry into the Liberal Studies Major. Your essay should be:

- typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins all around
- in a standard 10 or 12-point font,
- stapled; not paper-clipped,
- free of grammar and spelling errors (have someone proof-read it),
- marked with your name on the top right hand corner of the paper.
- representative of your writing skills and indicate the academic maturity needed for self-directed, goal-oriented learning (you can go to the Writing Center for help).

The primary purpose of the essay is to indicate how your proposed plan of study (list of courses) will prepare you to meet personal and career goals. You also must indicate how your selected courses will help you obtain the skills and knowledge required of all Liberal Studies graduates. We wish Liberal Studies students to graduate with the ability to:

- Manage Information
- Design and Plan
- Research and Investigate
- Communicate
- Manage Interpersonal Relationships
- Think Critically
- Manage and Administer
- Apply Values
- Develop a Successful Career and Personal Life

The result of your plan should be a thematic interdisciplinary field of study that will help you examine and make sense of social, economic, political, and cultural processes and institutions as well as to make contributions to society through your acquired skills, insights and leadership.

# Liberal Studies Learning Outcomes

Below is a detailed list of the knowledge and skills that all graduates of Liberal Studies should obtain during their course of study at OSU. Please read this list of attributes and acknowledge your understanding of these learning outcomes by signing this form.

## 1. Manage Information

- Sort, compile and rank
- Apply knowledge to specific problems or tasks
- Synthesize facts, concepts, and principles
- Evaluate information using standards

## 2. Design and Plan

- Identify alternatives and options
- Set goals, priorities, and measurable objectives
- Develop plans, implementation strategies, and results
- Anticipate unintended outcomes
- Manage time, energy, and resources effectively
- Predict future trends and patterns
- Assess needs and performance

## 3. Research and Investigate

- Know how to access and use a variety of information sources
- Apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data
- Design an experiment or plan a creative endeavor
- Formulate a research question or area for inquiry
- Describe a process, object or event without factual errors

## 4. Communicate

- Listen with objectivity and articulate a message
- Use various forms and styles of written, oral, and electronic communication
- Express needs, wants, opinions, and values without violating the rights of others
- Identify and communicate value judgments effectively
- Convey a positive self-image to others

## 5. Manage Interpersonal Relationships

- Lead individuals or groups toward achievement of a common goal or purpose
- Maintain group cooperation and support
- Interact effectively with superiors, peers, and subordinates in the workplace
- Express feelings appropriately and understand the feelings of others
- Use argumentation and persuasive techniques effectively
- Make commitments to others and follow-through
- Teach, skills, concepts, and ideas to others
- Take the role of others to assess social behavior in various settings and circumstances
- Work effectively under time and environmental pressures

## 6. Think Critically

- Quickly identify and accurately assess critical issues
- Identify general principles that explain experiences or factual data
- Define the parameters of a problem or topic of inquiry
- Identify criteria for assessment of actions and behavior
- Adapt personal concepts and behavior to difference conventions or norms
- Take a research question, premise, or strategy to its logical conclusion
- Create innovative solutions to complex problems
- Analyze inter-related events from several perspectives
- Have familiarity with various theories and applied processes of related disciplines
- able to identify concepts and construct methods of inquiry
- Interpret relevant data

## 7. Manage and Administer

- Identify people who can contribute to the solution of a problem
- Identify resources to complete tasks
- Delegate responsibility
- Motivate and lead people
- Organize people to achieve specific goals
- Be willing to take risks
- To initiate positive change in existing institutions when possible

## 8. Apply Values

- Assess the long-range effects to human welfare of policies and practices
- Make decisions that will maximize both the individual and collective good
- Appreciate the contributions of art, literature, science, and technology to contemporary society
- Identify one's own values
- Assess personal values in relation to others and to important life decisions
- Understand diverse perspectives and to feel comfortable working with people from diverse backgrounds within a global community

9. Develop a Successful Career and Personal Life

- Learn from life experiences
- Match knowledge of personal skills and characteristics with career opportunities
- Identify, describe, and assess the relative importance of one's needs, values, interests, strengths and weaknesses
- Develop ongoing motivational growth and life-long learning goals
- Learn from negative criticism and experiences
- Persist
- Dare to dream
- Generate trust and confidence in others
- Accept the consequences of one's actions

I understand that I should seek out opportunities to learn the above skills and knowledge through the development and implementation of my Liberal Studies Plan of Study.

---

Student Signature

---

Date