

Bachelor of Arts, Majors and Minors

Liberal Studies

- **A Major and Minor are offered**
- **Program Fees: Domestic Students, International Students**
- **Apply for Admission**

General Description

The Liberal Studies Difference

Liberal Studies offers a significant alternative to traditional degrees in a single discipline. It draws its rich content from the humanities, arts and sciences, and treats it in a way which brings out the connections between different disciplines. Courses are team taught by professors from a wide range of academic backgrounds, who form with students a community intent on maximizing the learning of all. In participatory seminars students develop skills in communication and critical thinking so prized in graduate school and in the professions of tomorrow.

What is Liberal Studies?

- A critical and creative exploration of important issues raised by the most influential works of Western culture.
- A vibrant learning community of students and professors, who investigate together alternative conceptions of the universe and our place in it.
- A forum for active learning which does not rely on the work of so-called experts, but challenges students to develop their own understanding.
- An examination of current realities against the fascinating backdrop of the last three thousand years.
- Education of the whole person, through the promotion of crucial skills in communication (oral and written), teamwork, self-reliance, critical analysis and creative expression - skills at a premium in today's workplace.

Who Would Want to Take Liberal Studies?

The Liberal Studies Major is not for students who have decided in advance that their educational goal is a career in a single narrow discipline. Even these students, however, have much to gain from the rigorous skill-training and general cultural awareness they will receive by pursuing a Minor in Liberal Studies or by taking some Liberal Studies courses as electives.

The Liberal Studies Major is for you if:

- you do not want to confine yourself to a traditional discipline, but want a more general education in which the relationships among various disciplines are explored;
- you want to complement your work in a traditional discipline with a broad understanding of its context and relevance;
- your goal is a career in law, public service, architecture, business, art, the media, education or any of a host of alternative where a broad education is recognized as an important asset.

Many possibilities for graduate study will also be open to those who combine a Major in Liberal Studies with one in a specialized discipline. Our students have gone on to postgraduate and professional study in law, architecture, public administration, education, marine archaeology, communications, folklore studies, English, history, women's studies, philosophy and so on, usually without having to complete a qualifying year. A certain number proceed to Post-Degree Programs in elementary or secondary education, and many are working in ESL and adult education.

Programs and Courses in Liberal Studies

The Liberal Studies first-year courses, LBST 111/112, provide an introduction to interdisciplinary study focusing on the development of basic academic skills. They are open to all students and satisfy the Degree English Requirement. Second-year courses allow students to explore some more concentrated topics without taking upper-level classes.

Liberal Studies Major and Minor Programs: The Liberal Studies Major and Minor programs are normally entered at the third-year level. However, accelerated entry in second year is available to those who have demonstrated competence in writing and critical thinking during their first year.

Prior to year 3, students will consult with a degree advisor to declare their degree intentions. The Major and Minor in Liberal Studies are based around a series of four 6-credit courses and a set of 3-credit courses. The 6-credit core courses involve the analysis of interesting and significant works (in literature, philosophy, theology, science, social science, art and music), and all four courses together ensure a varied and deep exposure to the Western cultural tradition from ancient times to the present day. These core courses tend to cover time periods in a chronological fashion and students should try to take them in the following order: LBST 310, LBST 320, LBST 410, LBST 420. The 3-credit courses include laboratories, enquiry seminars, art and music workshops, trips to special events and opportunities for travel-study. They support the understanding, gathered in the core courses, of a particular historical period.

Major Program: The normal route to a Liberal Studies Major involves entering at the start of third year and taking a pair of courses each semester over two years: one 6-credit core course and one 3-credit course. LBST 210 provides students with an introduction to the core courses at the second-year level.

Accelerated Entry: Students who have attained a mark of B- in any course in Liberal Studies, Philosophy or English may enter the third-year core courses after having completed 24 credits, i.e. with second year standing. Alternatively, LBST 210 provides students with an introduction to the core courses at the second-year level.

Minor Program: The main purpose for the Minor program is to offer students a chance to experience a significantly different form of pedagogy for part of their undergraduate career. The Liberal Studies focus on basic academic/employability skills will be of value to those who take even a part of the program. Furthermore, the availability of a Minor will offer students who decide, in mid-career, not to complete a Liberal Studies Major an identifiable credential which marks their achievement in Liberal Studies. The required courses for a Liberal Studies Minor may be completed in as little as two semesters.

Liberal Studies Courses as Electives in Other Programs: Liberal Studies courses are open to all students who meet their prerequisites (see individual LBST course descriptions for prerequisite details). As such they will provide a generalist complement to the disciplinary experience acquired elsewhere. Of special interest to students who lack specific prerequisites for other courses but would like to sample the Liberal Studies approach to learning are LBST 430 and 440, which require only third-year standing as the prerequisite and provide students in other disciplines with a taste of the distinctive Liberal Studies approach to learning, in the form of 6-credit upper-level electives whose only prerequisite is third-year standing.

Requirements for a Major

Students must fulfill all the Institutional B.A. degree requirements, including Degree English Requirements and courses listed below:

Years 1 & 2	Credits
The following courses are recommended but not required:	
LBST 111 - (Ways of Knowing I)	6
LBST 112 - (Ways of Knowing II)	6
LBST 210* - (Modern Culture's Ancient Sources)	6
One (or more) 200-level LBST course	3

Years 3 & 4	Credits
LBST 310* - (Modern Culture's Ancient Sources (Advanced))	6
LBST 320 - (Medieval and Renaissance Thought: Imagination, Reason, Faith)	6
LBST 410 - (The Enlightenment and Its Aftermath)	6
LBST 420 - (The Modern Experience and Beyond)	6
Twelve ** credits of LBST courses 300 and above	12

* Students who complete LBST 210 in Years 1 & 2 do not need to complete LBST 310. Credit will not be given for both LBST 210 and LBST 310.

** Only up to 6 credits from the following list may be included in the required 12 credits:

- LBST 322 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: The Italian Renaissance I)
- LBST 323 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: The Italian Renaissance II)
- LBST 390 - (Advanced Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) I)
- LBST 391 - (Advanced Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) I)
- LBST 392 - (Advanced Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) III)
- LBST 400 - (Senior Project in Liberal Studies)
- LBST 412 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: Victorian England)
- LBST 422 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: Bloomsbury)

Requirements for a Minor

Students must fulfill all the Institutional B.A. degree requirements, including Degree English Requirements and courses listed below:

Years 1 & 2	Credits
The following courses are recommended but not required:	
LBST 111 - (Ways of Knowing I)	6
LBST 112 - (Ways of Knowing II)	6
and/or	
Any 100-200 level LBST courses	

Years 3 & 4	Credits
Minimum of <i>eighteen</i> * credits of LBST courses numbered 300 or above, including at least <i>twelve</i> credits chosen from the following list: LBST 310 - (Modern Culture's Ancient Sources) LBST 320 - (Medieval and Renaissance Thought: Imagination, Reason, Faith) LBST 410 - (The Enlightenment and Its Aftermath) LBST 420 - (The Modern Experience and Beyond)	18

* Normally the required 18 credits will include LBST 310, but variations may be allowed by permission of the Department Chair.

Liberal Studies Abroad

The Liberal Studies Department offers the following Liberal Studies Abroad courses.

Liberal Studies Abroad	Credits
LBST 290 - (Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) I)	3
LBST 291 - (Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) II)	3
LBST 292 - (Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) III)	3
LBST 322 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: The Italian Renaissance I)	3
LBST 323 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: The Italian Renaissance II)	3
LBST 390 - (Advanced Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) I)	3
LBST 391 - (Advanced Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) II)	3
LBST 392 - (Advanced Special Topics in Liberal Studies (Abroad) III)	3
LBST 412 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: Victorian England)	3
LBST 422 - (Special Topics in Western Culture: Bloomsbury)	3
LBST 490 - (Directed Study in Liberal Studies I)	3
LBST 491 - (Directed Study in Liberal Studies II)	3

The Liberal Studies Abroad courses are offered in Europe during the summer. This opportunity for intensive, on-site study of a particular cultural period and place is extended to students within or outside the Bachelor of Arts - Liberal Studies program on a cost-recovery basis. Contact the Department Chair for further details, or visit viu.ca/liberalstudies/l sabroad.htm.

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