

**LEHMAN COLLEGE  
OF THE  
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

**ADULT DEGREE PROGRAM**

**CURRICULUM CHANGE**

Name of Program and Degree Award: Self Determined Studies, B.S., B.A.

Hegis Number: 4901.00

Program Code: 02688, 02689

Effective Term: Spring 2021

1. **Type of Change:** Degree Title, Requirements

2. **From:**

**~~Individualized Study Programs~~**

Dean of The School of Continuing and Professional Studies: Dr. Jane Mackillop

Director, Adult Degree Program: Pamela S. Hinden, LMSW

**~~The Adult Degree Program~~**

~~The Adult Degree Program (ADP) is designed for incoming Lehman students who are 25 years old or older. and meet the eligibility requirements. Applications are available in Garman Plaza NE, Room 128.~~

~~Eligibility~~

~~Students entering Lehman for the first time, either as freshmen or as transfer students, may apply to the ADP if they meet the following criteria: 1) completed 15 college credits or fewer; or 2) completed 16 to 60 college credits but have not been enrolled in an educational institution in the past five years.~~

~~Degree Requirements~~

~~Adult Degree Program students must successfully complete all exams required by CUNY for admission. Students must meet the College's General Education Foundation and Distribution Requirements (CUNY's Common Core). However the program has its own Integration Requirements (which correspond to the CUNY College Option requirements). In addition, all students must meet the minimum index required for graduation by the College and by their major department. ADP students complete a broad liberal arts course of study that includes a minimum of 36 credits of liberal arts courses outside of the major concentration.~~

### Major

Students may opt for either a regular major as described in this Bulletin (e.g., History, Biology) or design their own interdisciplinary major (e.g., Urban Studies) with the advice and approval of a committee composed of two faculty members representing the relevant study areas. The individually designed major must contain a minimum of 24 upper-division credits, excluding independent study, internships, and field placements. Students pursuing individualized majors must take at least 3 credits of independent study to qualify for Departmental honors at graduation.

### Life-Experience Credits

Students in the Program may apply for up to 15 credits for life experience. Students do not automatically qualify for these credits. They are eligible to apply for an evaluation of their employment or volunteer activities when these activities include achievements relevant to a Lehman College department. The credits for life experience will count as electives toward the 120 credits needed for graduation. Veteran's credits, Regents credits, and credits received by departmental qualifying exams are counted as part of the life experience credits.

### Non-Classroom Credits

ADP students may enroll for up to 30 academic credits for independent study activities, such as research projects, reading tutorials, and fieldwork during their college career. Students receiving life experience credits, however, have the total number of non-classroom credits available to them reduced by the number of credits received for life experience. The precise content or structure of the independent study project must be approved by the student's faculty sponsor and the sponsor's Department Chair. Written approval of his or her independent study proposal must be submitted to the ADP Office prior to registration.

### Adult Degree Colloquium

The Individualized Baccalaureate Art Colloquia (IBA 150-IBA 165) are designed to introduce Adult Degree students to various aspects of a liberal arts education.

### The Individualized Baccalaureate Program

The Individualized Baccalaureate Program (IBAP) allows Lehman students to establish their own academic goals. IBAP students can design their own majors with the assistance and approval of a faculty committee and supplement their major with independent study. Applications are available in the Office of Individualized Studies, Garman Plaza NE, Room 128.

### Eligibility

In addition to proposing an individualized major, students must have completed at least 30 credits, but no more than 89 credits, including at least 12 Lehman College credits. Other requirements include a minimum 3.0 Lehman index and successful completion of both the GUNY Proficiency Exam and the College's English writing requirement.

### Major

~~Students can design their individualized major in a number of ways. They may present a course of study that focuses on any of the following: 1) a single aspect of one of the disciplines offered by the College; or 2) an interdisciplinary area of study. The number of credits that constitute the major is determined by the faculty committee supervising the student, subject to the restriction that students must earn a minimum of 24 upper-division course credits in the major area, but no more than 60 credits in any one department, including independent study, internships, and field placements.~~

### Life-Experience Credits

~~IBAP students who are 25 years old or older may apply for life-experience credits, where appropriate. To determine eligibility for these credits, students should meet with an advisor after they have been accepted into the program.~~

### Non-Classroom Credits

~~Students in the IBAP may take up to 30 credits of independent study, inclusive of credits received for life experience.~~

### Degree Requirements

~~See Degree Requirements as outlined under "The Adult Degree Program."~~

3. To:

**Adult Degree Program (ADP)**

Dean of The School of Continuing and Professional Studies: Dr. Jane Mackillop  
Director, Adult Degree Program: Pamela S. Hinden, LMSW

The Adult Degree Program (ADP) is designed for Lehman students who are 25 years old or older. ADP provides academic and student services designed especially for returning adult students. More information and applications are available on the program website: [www.lehman.edu/adult](http://www.lehman.edu/adult).

Eligibility

Students, age 25 and over, both freshman and transfer, may apply for admission to Lehman College directly through the Adult Degree Program. Students who have been admitted to the College through main admissions, or are readmitting to the College after a significant absence, may also be considered for admission to ADP. Currently enrolled students who have completed more than two semesters, and those who have already earned a Bachelor's degree, are not eligible for admission to ADP. Eligibility is determined via an application process that includes consideration of prior academic history, length of time out of school, work history, and a written essay.

Degree Requirements

Adult Degree Program students must successfully complete all CUNY and Lehman requirements including the Pathways General Education Common Core. ADP has its own Integration Requirements which can be used to fulfill the College Option requirements. ADP students must complete a major and meet the minimum overall and major grade point average (GPA) required for graduation by the College.

**Adult Degree Program IBA Courses**

IBA courses are designed to introduce ADP students to various aspects of a liberal arts education. IBA courses are open only to ADP students, by permission. A list of these courses can be found on the program website: [www.lehman.edu/adult](http://www.lehman.edu/adult). Students may take up to 12 credits of 100 and 200 level IBA courses.

Major

ADP students may choose to complete any Lehman College major as described in the Undergraduate Bulletin (e.g., History, Biology, Business, Nursing, etc.). Alternatively, ADP students may opt to complete the requirements for the major in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies. See Bachelor (B.A. or B.S.) Degree in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies for more information.

Credit for Prior Learning/Prior Learning Assessment (CPL/PLA)

Students in the Program may apply for up to 15 credits for prior learning. Students do not automatically qualify for these credits. They are eligible to apply via portfolio for an evaluation of learning gained through employment or volunteer activities when this

learning is relevant to a Lehman College course or department. Credits for Prior Learning may count as electives toward the 120 credits needed for graduation. Credit for Prior Learning may also be awarded for a specific course when the student is able to demonstrate that they have met at least 70% of the course's learning objectives. Prior learning is evaluated by faculty and credit decisions are final.

### **Bachelor (B.A. or B.S.) Degree in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies (BLIS) – 30-36 credit major**

The Bachelor of Arts or Sciences (B.A. or B.S.) in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies (BLIS) allows ADP students to create an interdisciplinary focus that follows their own academic goals. The credit range, 30-36, is to ensure that students are able to include any prerequisite courses needed for their studies. The B.A. will require that 90 of the 120 credits earned will be designated as liberal arts. The B.S. will require that 60 of the 120 credits earned will be designated as liberal arts. More information is available on the program website: [www.lehman.edu/adult](http://www.lehman.edu/adult).

Eligibility:  
All ADP students are eligible.

Requirements:  
The Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies major requires a minimum of 30-36 credits, of which 18 must be at the 300 level or higher.

There are two required courses for all BLIS majors:

- IBA 301 (3 credits), Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies: intended to be completed during the first semester of participation in the major but after the student has completed a minimum of 24 overall credits.
- IBA 482 (3 credits), Capstone Seminar: to be completed after the student has earned at least 27 credits in the major courses.

The remaining 24-30 credits of the major are chosen by the student as part of a proposal developed during IBA 301, in consultation with ADP faculty/advisors. The proposal must reflect a minimum of two or more disciplines and will be approved by the ADP Advisory Board or by faculty/advisors from the primary disciplines.

#### **4. Rationale (Explain how this change will impact learning outcomes of the department and Major/Program):**

Renaming the degree from Self-Determined Studies (BA/BS) to a Bachelor (of Arts or Sciences) in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies is necessary for two reasons. First, the new name provides further clarity to both internal and external audiences as to the nature of the student's studies. In addition, Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies is a more comprehensive descriptor that is widely recognized and respected in higher education.

Among similar programs offered in the CUNY and SUNY systems, the large majority include “interdisciplinary studies” or “Liberal Studies” in their names (CUNY BA, School of Professional Studies, SUNY Albany, Alfred State, SUNY Empire, SUNY Polytechnic, Potsdam State, SUNY Purchase, and Richmond); only two (Buffalo State and SUNY Fredonia) include “Individualized” or “Self-Design” in their program’s name.

Changing the major requirements provides substantially more structure and rigor to the Major. At present, students who major in Self-Determined Studies must take a minimum of 24 credits at the 200-level or above, as per the undergraduate bulletin. This has been the program’s definition of “upper-division.” In practice, the program has required that students take 30 credits, but this isn’t noted in the bulletin. This has allowed students to graduate in SDS while taking very few, if any, 300-400 level courses. While some students pursued a clearly defined objective that reflected a well-planned set of courses, SDS students also had the choice to choose a general liberal arts focus. In the latter case, the SDS major offered very little academic coherence. Even in the best case, when students have a well-planned set of courses, there is not enough structure to the major. Moreover, there is no learning community; SDS students complete their courses as agreed upon but there is no connection with other SDS students.

The goal of the newly named BLIS major is to provide students with a well-structured, rigorous and clear path to completion of the major within a learning community of other adult students. BLIS will include an introductory class that will introduce the student to interdisciplinary study and research, and a capstone class that will require the student to produce a paper, presentation or project bringing together the focus of their studies.

Students will begin the major with IBA 301. The course will be similar in structure and content to MLS 701, a required introductory course in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree program. Both courses are designed to help the student gain an understanding of the growing field of interdisciplinary study and research while exposing them to a variety of disciplines. A requirement of IBA 301 will be that the student complete a written proposal describing the areas of study they wish to pursue with a list of possible courses. Once the proposal is approved, the student will have a structured path to follow through the major. Increased rigor is ensured by requiring that students take a majority of their classes at the 300-level or higher.

Although it is not possible to provide a full cohort experience since students will be following individual plans, it is expected that IBA 301 will create a learning community of BLIS majors. This is similar to what happens in other IBA courses; ADP students meet each other in these courses, develop friendships and support systems which they maintain throughout their time at Lehman.

When the student is near completion of their plan of study, BLIS provides an opportunity for reflection and integration. The capstone course, IBA 482, will require the student to develop a paper, presentation or project building on what has been learned from their course of study. This will bring the learning community which began in IBA 301 back together for the conclusion of the major.

Our goal in making this change is to continue providing the flexible curriculum that adult students desire but within a structure that enables them to achieve specific learning and career goals. The structure of this revised program is broadly similar to the successful “Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies” option in the CUNY Baccalaureate Program.

Other changes expand access to the program, establish an application process, modernize language throughout, and make processes/procedures consistent with those of the College, CUNY, and the field of Adult Learning.

5. **Date of departmental approval:** School of Continuing and Professional Studies, Adult Degree Program Advisory Committee, January 19, 2021

Approved by UCC on 2/3/21

Approved by CAEAS on 2/17/21

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1. **Type of change:** New Course

2.

Department(s)	Adult Degree Program
Career	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
Academic Level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Compensatory <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental <input type="checkbox"/> Remedial
Subject Area	Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies
Course Prefix & Number	IBA 301
Course Title	Introduction to Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies
Description	Reading, writing, and research methods for asking questions and finding answers across multiple academic disciplines
Pre/ Co Requisites	Completion of 24 credits
Credits	3
Hours	3
Liberal Arts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course Attribute (e.g. Writing Intensive, WAC, etc)	
General Education Component	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Required <input type="checkbox"/> English Composition <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Science  <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible <input type="checkbox"/> World Cultures <input type="checkbox"/> US Experience in its Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Expression <input type="checkbox"/> Individual and Society <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific World

3. **Rationale:**

This course is required for all students in the BA program in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies and should be taken immediately after declaring the major, but not before earning a minimum of 24 credits.

The course provides an introduction to basic research and writing skills within the liberal arts while exposing them to a variety of disciplines. It provides a deeper understanding of the methodologies and thought processes associated with interdisciplinarity, which will improve their ability to design their own curriculum and will enhance their learning experience in the electives they take within the program. Students will be required to develop a proposal of courses covering a minimum of two disciplines that, once approved, will serve as the course map for their BLIS degree.

4. **Learning Outcomes (By the end of the course students will be expected to):**

- Develop a specific research question in conjunction with a literature review, using sources from multiple academic disciplines
- Identify primary source databases relevant to this research question
- Demonstrate use of critical methodologies for engaging with those sources, drawing from at least two different academic disciplines
- Demonstrate ability to revise based on peer review
- Demonstrate familiarity with methods of data collection and organization

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Academic Level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Compensatory <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental <input type="checkbox"/> Remedial
Subject Area	Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies
Course Prefix & Number	IBA 482
Course Title	Capstone Seminar
Description	Production of a capstone project that serves as a reflection and integration of learning in the Liberal and Interdisciplinary major.
Pre/ Co Requisites	Department permission and completion of 27 credits in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies major.
Credits	3
Hours	3
Liberal Arts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course Attribute (e.g. Writing Intensive, WAC, etc)	
General Education Component	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Required <input type="checkbox"/> English Composition <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Science  <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible <input type="checkbox"/> World Cultures <input type="checkbox"/> US Experience in its Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Expression <input type="checkbox"/> Individual and Society <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific World

3. **Rationale:** This course is intended to enable students in the BA/BS in Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies to synthesize the disciplines of their concentration in application

to a scaffolded capstone research project, which will result in a final paper or project that will be the culmination of the BLIS major.

4. **Learning Outcomes (By the end of the course students will be expected to):**

- Integrate a minimum of two different areas of study in application to a single research question or set of questions
- Research and write a substantial paper that critically analyzes primary and secondary sources or develop a project approved by instructor
- Engage in respectful and constructive criticism of their peers' written and spoken presentations
- Present their work in progress orally and in written form to their peers

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