

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

M.A. PROGRAM IN LIBERAL STUDIES

CURRICULUM CHANGE

Name of Program and Degree Award: Liberal Studies, M.A.

Hegis Number: 4901.00

Program Code: 562

Effective Term: Fall 2016

1. **Type of Change**: Degree requirement

2. **From**: **36-Credit Interdisciplinary Program in Liberal Studies, M.A.**

The M.A. in Liberal Studies Program is an interdisciplinary 36-credit degree program that allows students to design and pursue an individual course of study among several different departments at Lehman College. Students take a 12-credit core of Liberal Studies courses and 18 credits of graduate electives from various departments. The final requirement is to write a master's thesis under the supervision of a faculty member.

Admission Requirements

- A bachelor's degree with at least a 3.0 grade point average or its foreign equivalent from an accredited college or university. In exceptional cases student with a cumulative undergraduate grade-point average below 3.0 may apply by special petition.
- Submission of an autobiographical letter.
- Two letters of recommendation.
- Submission of a tentative course list related to the area intended to be pursued as a concentration.

Degree Requirements

CURRICULUM (36 credits)

Core courses (12 credits):

MLS 701	Introduction to Liberal Studies
MLS 702	The Arts and Humanities
MLS 703	The Social Sciences
MLS 704	The Natural Sciences

Electives to be chosen by students and adviser (18 credits):

Students may select any graduate courses in the Liberal Arts offered by Lehman College (consult the list of departments below), or enroll in an independent study (MLS 795) with a supervisor approved by the Program adviser.

Thesis (6 credits):

MLS 797 Master's Thesis Preparation

Thesis. ~~The program's major requirements consist of a master's thesis (6 credits).~~ A written thesis proposal must be approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee, assuming prior approval by the student's first and second readers, by the time the student has completed 20 credits and is about to begin serious research or study related to the master's thesis.

Comprehensive Examination. ~~Upon completion of all course work and submission of the thesis, all students must successfully pass a one-hour comprehensive examination. The examination is the same as the student's thesis committee.~~ The chair of this committee and primary reader/adviser of the thesis is a faculty member in the field addressed by the thesis; ~~two other members of the committee~~ and second readers of the thesis will usually be program faculty advisers, but not necessarily in all cases.

Transfer credits. With appropriate permission, matriculated graduate students may apply to transfer up to 12 credits of graduate courses that have been earned within the last five years. A maximum of six credits can be transferred from courses applied toward a previously awarded master's degree.

Credit for Life Experience. With appropriate permission, matriculated graduate students who have not earned any other life-experience credits within the last five years may earn up to 6 credits (to be treated as transfer credits) for Prior Learning Assessment. PLA is based on student's ability to demonstrate learning that has taken place through volunteer activities or employment services. This knowledge must fall within one or more of the academic disciplines of the college. PLA rewards students for the time and advancement they have achieved in alternative learning settings. PLA must be in an appropriate field and is approved by the Program director. Students interested in PLA may register for a non-credit Portfolio Development workshop offered by the Office of Continuing Education.

Curriculum. The liberal studies program offers students the opportunity to design a course of study reflecting specific interest in a particular area of concentration. Students may take graduate courses as part of an individualized course of study, designed by the students themselves in consultation with a faculty committee, and suited to their own interests and professional needs. In

some area of concentration, students should be prepared to meet basic foreign language requirements where appropriate.

Students may choose any graduate course offered by the following departments:

- Anthropology
- Art
- Biological Sciences
- Chemistry
- English
- Earth, Environmental, and Geospatial Sciences
- History
- Journalism, Communication, and Theatre
- Languages and Literatures
- Latin American and Puerto Rican Studies
- Mathematics and Computer Science
- Music
- Physics and Astronomy
- Political Science
- Psychology

Advisement. Upon admission, each student is assigned a faculty adviser with special knowledge of the student's anticipated area of concentration. In consultation with his or her faculty adviser, a student develops a coherent course of study that must provide a balanced, interdisciplinary selection of courses in the spirit of the Liberal Studies Program. When a student is ready to choose a particular area of special research interest, he or she is assigned to an appropriate adviser with a particular interest in or special knowledge of the subject in question. Students who lack sufficient prerequisites for the particular area of study in which they choose to concentrate (e.g., the foreign languages required for focused historical or geopolitical study) are advised to add appropriate undergraduate courses to their graduate course-load.

Time Limit. Degree candidates must complete all requirements for the degree within a period of five years following matriculation.

3. To: **36-Credit Interdisciplinary Program in Liberal Studies, M.A.**

The M.A. in Liberal Studies Program is an interdisciplinary 36-credit degree program that allows students to design and pursue an individual course of study among several different departments at Lehman College. Students take a 12-credit core of Liberal Studies courses and 18 credits of graduate electives from various departments. The final requirement is to write a 6-credit master's thesis under the supervision of a faculty member, with the option of substituting a 3-credit capstone project and an additional elective.

Admission Requirements

- A bachelor's degree with at least a 3.0 grade point average or its foreign equivalent from an accredited college or university. In exceptional cases student with a cumulative undergraduate grade-point average below 3.0 may apply by special petition.
- Submission of an autobiographical letter.
- Two letters of recommendation.
- Submission of a tentative course list related to the area intended to be pursued as a concentration.

Degree Requirements

CURRICULUM (36 credits)

Core courses (12 credits):

MLS 701	Introduction to Liberal Studies
MLS 702	The Arts and Humanities
MLS 703	The Social Sciences
MLS 704	The Natural Sciences

Electives to be chosen by students and adviser (18 credits):

Students may select any graduate courses in the Liberal Arts offered by Lehman College (consult the list of departments below), or enroll in an independent study (MLS 795) with a supervisor approved by the Program adviser.

Thesis (6 credits)

MLS 797 Master's Thesis Preparation (6 credits):

A written thesis proposal must be approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee, assuming prior approval by the student's first and second readers, by the time the student has completed 20 credits and is about to begin serious research or study related to the master's thesis.

Or:

Core courses (12 credits):

<u>MLS 701</u>	<u>Introduction to Liberal Studies</u>
<u>MLS 702</u>	<u>The Arts and Humanities</u>
<u>MLS 703</u>	<u>The Social Sciences</u>
<u>MLS 704</u>	<u>The Natural Sciences</u>

Electives to be chosen by students and adviser (21 credits):

Students may select any graduate courses in the Liberal Arts offered by Lehman College (consult the list of departments below), or enroll in an independent study (MLS 795) with a supervisor approved by the Program adviser.

Capstone (3 credits):

Students who plan to do a capstone project first must successfully complete 33 credits of course work with a 3.0 average. They then must meet with two approved readers to frame an interdisciplinary capstone project (MLS 796), to be completed under the direction of an adviser from the program.

Thesis/capstone defense. Upon completion of all course work and submission of the thesis or capstone project, all students must successfully pass a one-hour oral defense with their thesis/capstone committee. The chair of this committee and primary reader/adviser of the thesis/capstone is a faculty member in the field addressed by the thesis/capstone; the second reader of the thesis/capstone will usually be a program faculty adviser, but not necessarily in all cases.

Transfer credits. With appropriate permission, matriculated graduate students may apply to transfer up to 12 credits of graduate courses that have been earned within the last five years. A maximum of six credits can be transferred from courses applied toward a previously awarded master's degree.

Credit for Life Experience. With appropriate permission, matriculated graduate students who have not earned any other life-experience credits within the last five years may earn up to 6 credits (to be treated as transfer credits) for Prior Learning Assessment. PLA is based on student's ability to demonstrate learning that has taken place through volunteer activities or employment services. This knowledge must fall within one or more of the academic disciplines of the college. PLA rewards students for the time and advancement they have achieved in alternative learning settings. PLA must be in an appropriate field and is approved by the Program director. Students interested in PLA may register for a non-credit Portfolio Development workshop offered by the Office of Continuing Education.

Curriculum. The liberal studies program offers students the opportunity to design a course of study reflecting specific interest in a particular area of concentration. Students may take graduate courses as part of an individualized course of study, designed by the students themselves in consultation with a faculty committee, and suited to their own interests and professional needs. In some area of concentration, students should be prepared to meet basic foreign language requirements where appropriate.

Students may choose any graduate course offered by the following departments:

- Anthropology

- Art
- Biological Sciences
- Chemistry
- English
- Earth, Environmental, and Geospatial Sciences
- History
- Journalism, Communication, and Theatre
- Languages and Literatures
- Latin American and Puerto Rican Studies
- Mathematics and Computer Science
- Music
- Physics and Astronomy
- Political Science
- Psychology

Advisement. Upon admission, each student is assigned a faculty adviser with special knowledge of the student's anticipated area of concentration. In consultation with his or her faculty adviser, a student develops a coherent course of study that must provide a balanced, interdisciplinary selection of courses in the spirit of the Liberal Studies Program. When a student is ready to choose a particular area of special research interest, he or she is assigned to an appropriate adviser with a particular interest in or special knowledge of the subject in question. Students who lack sufficient prerequisites for the particular area of study in which they choose to concentrate (e.g., the foreign languages required for focused historical or geopolitical study) are advised to add appropriate undergraduate courses to their graduate course-load.

Time Limit. Degree candidates must complete all requirements for the degree within a period of five years following matriculation.

4. Rationale:

In order to provide more flexibility in the programs of study for candidates for the M.A. in Liberal Studies, the program proposes that the current requirements for thirty credits of graduate-level course work and a six-credit M.A. thesis be expanded to include a non-thesis option. This option would require an additional three credits of graduate-level course work for a total of thirty-three credits and the completion of a three-credit capstone project (MLS 796).

Such projects could include (but not be limited to) an extended original-source research paper, a literature review, an annotated critical bibliography, or the development of a website. Capstone projects would be done under the supervision of a faculty adviser and would be approved by a second reader. Like the thesis, the capstone project should incorporate approaches from at least two different academic disciplines. This option is in line with that offered in MALS programs and other humanities programs in peer institutions.

By introducing the capstone project option, the program can better address the intellectual and professional needs of students for whom a traditional master's thesis may not be suitable, while maintaining an emphasis on research and critical thinking skills and graduate-level academic writing.

The program also has modified the language describing the comprehensive examination (which was developed in the program's first incarnation, in the early 1990s) in order to describe more accurately the accompanying description, which refers to a thesis defense rather than a traditional comprehensive examination (the latter comes before, as opposed to after, the thesis and has primary reference to prior coursework as opposed to the thesis). The new heading will give students a much better idea of what to expect from this program requirement, and it has also been modified to take into account the new capstone option.

5. Date of Advisory Committee Approval: February 22, 2016

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

M.A. PROGRAM IN LIBERAL STUDIES

CURRICULUM CHANGE

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

2.

Department(s)	Liberal Studies
Career	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" 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 Studies
Course Prefix & Number	MLS 796
Course Title	Capstone Project
Description	Under the supervision of a program-appointed adviser, with input from a second faculty member, students research and produce a capstone project. Possible projects, incorporating approaches from at least two different academic disciplines, may include but are not limited to a research paper, a literature review, an annotated critical bibliography, or the development of a website.
Pre/ Co Requisites	
Credits	3
Hours	3
Liberal Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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

	_____ Individual and Society _____ Scientific World
--	--

3. Rationale: This course is intended as an alternative to the 6-credit Master's Thesis in the MA Program in Liberal Studies. Students who choose this option will be required to take an additional 3-credit elective course. By introducing the capstone project option, the program can better address the intellectual and professional needs of students for whom a traditional master's thesis may not be suitable, while maintaining an emphasis on research and critical thinking skills and graduate-level academic writing.

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

- Demonstrate understanding of the stakes, importance, and politics of interdisciplinary thinking
- Demonstrate an understanding of the methods and conventions of critical reading and writing
- Demonstrate familiarity with the language, research methods, and data bases of more than one discipline.
- Demonstrate proficiency in graduate-level academic research and writing (specific evidence of these skills will vary depending on the disciplines with which the student engages and the nature of the project).

5. Date of Advisory Committee Approval: February 22, 2016