

Liberal Studies Requirements

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Current Policy

Category: Academic Definitions

Policy

Liberal Studies Requirements

Liberal Studies Program

The Liberal Studies Program prepares you to live a responsible, productive life in a dramatically changing world. In this program, you will:

- deepen your understanding of the natural environment
- learn to appreciate the diversity of other cultures
- explore the traditions and events that have created the dynamics and tensions of the world
- learn to practice ethical and responsible living
- acquire a broad range of knowledge and develop skills for professional success and life after graduation

More specifically, the program enables you to develop skills in:

- critical thinking
- effective writing
- persuasive oral communication
- scientific inquiry
- quantitative reasoning

Degree requirements

All students seeking their first baccalaureate degree from Northern Arizona University must take thirty-five (35) credit units of liberal studies. You will take courses to satisfy both the Foundation and Distribution requirements. Make sure to choose classes from the approved list of [Liberal Studies Courses](#) with the help of an academic adviser.

If your academic catalog is prior to 2014-2015, courses used for liberal studies may share the same prefix as a student's minor discipline but not their major discipline.

If your academic catalog is 2014-2015 (or a subsequent catalog), up to 9 units of the liberal studies distribution requirements can have the same prefix as the student's major. Courses used for the liberal studies distribution requirements can have the same prefix as a student's minor.

Some Liberal Studies courses may also fulfill NAU's Global or U.S. Ethnic Diversity requirements. Please confer with your advisor.

Foundation requirements (7 units)

- English Composition (4 units)
- Mathematics (3 units)

Distribution requirements (28 units)

- Aesthetic and Humanistic Inquiry (6 units)
- Cultural Understanding (6 units)
- Science (must include at least one lab science) (7 units)
- Social and Political Worlds (6 units)
- 3 additional units of any liberal studies distribution course
- optional First-Year Seminar (3 units)

Junior Writing and Senior Capstone

There are two university requirements designed to meet the aims and goals of the liberal studies program that are embedded within the academic major. They are a junior level writing course and a senior capstone experience. These courses are designed to build upon learning and skills developed through Liberal Studies and the major.

Junior Level Writing Course

These courses are designated with a W at the end of the course number. Junior level writing courses engage students in the writing process in the context of a discipline or profession.

Senior Capstone

These courses are designated with a C at the end of the course number. Capstone courses are culminating experiences in the major that involve students in application, synthesis, practice, or inquiry.

For more detailed information on the Liberal Studies Program and its requirements, see the [University College Liberal Studies page](#).