

Liberal Arts Program

Dean of Liberal Arts: Mimi Hedges, M.F.A.

Mission Statement:

The Liberal Arts program provides a women-centered, globally focused course of study that introduces students to the knowledge, skills, methods and approaches of the academic disciplines that constitute the Liberal Arts.

Program Information:

The Liberal Arts curriculum grounds all the College's degree programs, striking an appropriate balance between preparing students for the careers they hope to pursue and educating them for the lives they will lead. Regardless of her major, every student at Stephens completes 30 required semester hours in her Liberal Arts program, unless she brings to the College advanced placement, international baccalaureate or college transfer credit that matches these requirements.

Within the Liberal Arts program, students take four Core Courses, four Learning Community Courses, and two Choice Courses. All Liberal Arts courses, regardless of the topics they cover, provide opportunities for students to sharpen their critical thinking and communication skills. In addition to the Liberal Arts courses they take to fulfill Liberal Arts requirements, students may take other Liberal Arts courses for elective credit. Departments may also approve Liberal Arts courses as electives in their majors and minors.

Core Courses -- 12 semester hours

Composition Sequence (6 hrs.)

Students take the composition sequence during their first two semesters:

- Composition I (3 hrs.)
- Composition and Research II (3 hrs.)

Sophomore Seminar (3 hrs.)

Students take one of the two Sophomore Seminars during their second year:

- Government and Economics -- Fall Semester only (3 hrs.)
- Global Village -- Spring Semester only (3 hrs.)

Senior Seminar (3 hrs.)

- Global Ethics -- Offered Fall and Spring Semesters (3 hrs.)

Learning Community Courses -- 12 semester hours

Students take four area studies courses during their first and second years within a mixed-major Learning Community:

- Cultural Studies (3 hrs.)
- Historical Studies (3 hrs.)
- Literary Studies (3 hrs.)
- Social Science (3 hrs.)

Choice Courses -- 6 semester hours

To complete their Liberal Arts requirements, students choose one approved three-hour course in Quantitative Literacy and one approved three-hour course in the Natural Sciences. Students may take these courses any time during their enrollment.

Quantitative Literacy (3 hrs.)

Approved courses include:

- MAT 111: College Algebra
- MAT 105: Math for Elementary Teachers I
- MAT 106: Math for Elementary Teacher II
- MAT 207: Introduction to Statistics
- BUS 205: Personal and Family Finance
- MAT 211: Calculus and Analytic Geometry I

If a student's major requires a specific Quantitative Literacy course from this list, that required course will satisfy the Liberal Arts program's Quantitative Literacy requirement.

Natural Science (3 hrs.)

Approved courses include:

- BIO 111: Biological Concepts
- BIO 200: Introduction to Crime Scene Analysis
- BIO 115: Everyday Microbes
- BIO 121: The Art and Science of Growing Plants
- NSC 125: The Science of Beauty
- BIO 181: Investigations in Biological Concepts I
- CHM 111: Chemistry in Everyday Life
- NSC 115: Physical Science for Elementary Teachers
- NSC 211: Environmental Science
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If a student's major requires a specific Natural Science course from this list, that required course will satisfy the Liberal Arts program's Natural Science requirement.

The College will determine which transfer courses fulfill Liberal Arts requirements. Stephens students who wish to complete part of the Liberal Arts Program requirements at another regionally accredited college or university may seek approval to do so by providing to the Registrar and the Dean of Liberal Arts, for their review, catalog description(s) of the course(s) they wish to take. To ensure transferability for Liberal Arts requirements, students must secure approvals *prior to enrolling* in courses outside Stephens. The Transfer Equivalency form is available in the Registrar's office and on line. Students should seek approval from the appropriate department chair for transfer courses in the major or minor.

Liberal Arts Courses

LBA 107: Composition I

(3 hrs.)

The first semester of a two-semester sequence, this course provides students with opportunities to sharpen their reading, writing, research, and reasoning skills. At the same time, the course encourages students to develop their own distinct writing and speaking voices. The format of the course will include guest speakers, class discussions, small group presentations, individual presentations, formal and informal papers, writing exercises, and peer reviewing.

LBA 108: Composition and Research II

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 107 with a C- or better)

Students continue to sharpen their skills in critical reading, writing, research and reasoning with an additional focus on learning to make good use of their speaking voices. Composition and Research II links closely with the other Liberal Arts course offered in the student's Learning Community, supporting and enriching the reading, research, and writing required in the linked course.

LBA 142: Social Science: Peacemaking in the Modern World

(3 hrs.)

Using the resources of philosophical and religious ethics, students in this course examine theories of war, terrorism, justice, and peace, as well as principles of nonviolence and alternative methods of conflict resolution.

LBA 151: Cultural Studies: Seven Pleasures: An Introduction to the Visual Arts

(3 hrs.)

This course provides an opportunity for students to study art as aesthetic experience across cultures and time. Specifically, the course explores seven basic ways of enjoying works of art: the pleasures of naturalism, narrative, pattern, expressionism, abstraction, fantasy and allegory.

LBA 152: Cultural Studies: Women's Folklife, Women's Culture

(3 hrs.)

Examples of folklife, such as verbal folklore, material culture, folk beliefs, customs, rituals and performances, are analyzed in terms of how they mediate women's relationships in cultural contexts.

LBA 153: Cultural Studies: Women in Music

(3 hrs.)

This course takes an historical, international perspective on the study of women's contributions to classical and popular music as composers and performers.

LBA 154: Cultural Studies: World Music

(3 hrs.)

World Music is an interdisciplinary Liberal Arts course that unites the study of world cultures and music. This course involves the examination of music drawn from myriad cultural traditions, with particular focus given to how music reflects the culture that brings it to life.

LBA 155: Cultural Studies: Love Actually: Studies in International Film

(3 hrs.)

In this course students explore how various types of love relationships are portrayed in the films of several countries. The course will look at parental love, friend love, sibling love, and romantic love, as well as how filmmakers use the art and craft of filmmaking to explore these relationships and the cultures in which they occur.

LBA 156: Cultural Studies: Rock & Roll Music

(3 hrs.)

This course offers students an introductory survey of the history of Rock & Roll music, from its initial Golden Age of the 1950s to the digital revolution of the late 1990s. Through lecture, discussion, listening, writing and individual presentations, students will explore a wide range of Rock & Roll styles, musicians, works, and ideas, always with an eye to how this music reflects the cultural context of its time.

LBA 157: Cultural Studies: The Culture of Colour

(3 hrs.)

This course uses color as its investigative medium. Beginning with basic color theory and terminology students consider the scientific, psychological and symbolic aspects of color. Focusing on rites of passage, major religions, spirituality and celebrations, students investigate color and its meanings in various cultures.

LBA 159: Cultural Studies: The World of Theatre

(3 hrs.)

Through the study of theatre past and present, reading of plays, and attending on campus performances, students will develop an appreciation and understanding of how live performance happens throughout the world.

LBA 172: Historical Studies: Unruly Women

(3 hrs.)

Students in this course study the history of women through the perspectives of women who challenged the norms of society through their words, actions, and lifestyles.

LBA 173: Historical Studies: America 1960-1990: Domestic and Global Perspectives

(3 hrs.)

Students in this course study America's involvement in the world through the lenses of human rights, race, roles of women and gender, poverty, the environment, and globalization.

LBA 174: Historical Studies: Major Issues in Recent History: a Global Perspective

(3 hrs.)

Students will discuss readings covering the historical period from the end of the Cold War to the present. Approaches include historiography, mapping global aspects of events and reframing them in terms of gender and culture.

LBA 175: Historical Studies: 20th-century U.S. – a Global Perspective

(3 hrs.)

Students in this course will study America's growth from the turn of the century through the 1980s. Particular focus will be given to immigration, the roles of women, human rights, the Cold War and America's place in the world, acknowledging the influences of radicalism, conformity, liberalism, and conservatism. The importance of gender, race, and religion are investigated as broad topics that shaped America during the 20th century.

LBA 176: Historical Studies: 20th-century Europe

(3 hrs.)

This course will study Europe's involvement in the world through the lenses of human rights, race, roles of women and gender, poverty, the environment and globalization. Ranging from European colonialism to Soviet communism, this course will focus on the impact of the states and citizens of Europe upon the world.

LBA 177: Historical Studies: Perspectives in History

(3 hrs.)

This course will introduce students to aspects of American History through a specific perspective, such as Colonial America or Religion in America. The significance of race, class, gender, and religion will be examined in relation to world views of the given time period.

LBA 178: Historical Studies: Ten Days That Shook the World

(3 hrs.)

This introductory history class explores ten days in the 20th-century that shaped the world as we know it. They range from the beginning of colonialism to the dawning of freedom in countries like India and South Africa.

LBA 179: Historical Studies: Global Cold War Crises

(3 hrs.)

From the end of the Second World War to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the world was locked in a deadly conflict between the "Communist World" led by the Soviet Union and the "Free World" led by the United States. With both sides possessing nuclear weapons, the world was on the brink of destruction. This introductory course will examine the crises (such as the Cuban Missile Crisis) that threatened to unleash a deadly Third World War and explore how they were defused.

LBA 181: Social Sciences: Psychology of Creativity

(3 hrs.)

This course provides the student with an introduction to the psychological foundations of creativity, including biological, social, familial, and cognitive factors. Basic psychological principles will be studied to expand the student's understanding of the creative process.

LBA 184: Social Sciences: Understanding Our World through Psychology

(3 hrs.)

Students study psychological principles and apply them to current events. The course focuses on the principles of human behavior, using assigned readings and class discussion. Topics include attachment theory, psychopathology, social psychology, development, moral reasoning, and theoretical perspectives on aggression, stress and health. Research studies supporting major theories will be presented throughout the course.

LBA 183: Social Sciences: Psychology of Emotions

(3 hrs.)

This course is geared towards undergraduate students who have not previously studied psychology. Students will address questions of what we mean by emotion, where emotions come from, how they affect the formation of memory, how they affect decision-making, and to be aware of their presence and how to regulate them in order to improve physical and mental health.

LBA 185: Social Sciences: Modern Slavery Around the World: Of Human Bondage

(3 hrs.)

This course will examine forms of modern slavery, including forced labor (as a consequence of human trafficking), sex slavery, and debt bondage.

LBA 186: Social Sciences: Introduction to Anthropology

(3 hrs.)

This is a survey course which may focus on one or more indigenous cultures. Study will include language, art, religion, literature/oral tradition, kinship, social organization and cultural change. Emphasis is placed on critical thinking and analysis skills.

LBA 187: Social Sciences: Psychology of Identity

(3 hrs.)

This course is designed to explore the various aspects of identity theory including racial/ethnic, sexual, gender, career and feminist. Additionally, the course will explore the intersections of multiple identities and the impact of identity on the developmental process. Students will be asked to explore their own identity development through various activities and assignments designed to make the course more applicable to their own experiences.

LBA 188: Social Sciences: Psychology and the Media

(3 hrs.)

The course is designed to provide an introduction to basic psychological principles in the context of the media. Examples of concepts studied will include social psychology, perception and influence, self-image, learning and behavior, decision models, and group process. Students will use critical-thinking skills to examine the interaction between psychological principles and media portrayals of mental illness and mental-health professionals, as well as human behavior in general.

LBA 207: Honors Seminar I

(3 hrs.)

(Open to Honors House Plan students only)

Honors Seminar I is the first semester of a two-semester sequence in which students will approach a selected topic from multiple perspectives. Projects will offer students opportunities to sharpen their reading, writing, research, reasoning and digital media skills. The format of this class will involve seminar style discussion, guest speakers, group and individual presentations, formal and informal papers, and extensive revisions. Key to this course will be a service learning component.

LBA 208: Honors Seminar II

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 207; Open to Honors House Plan students only)

Students continue to explore the selected topic with opportunities to sharpen their reading, writing, research, and reasoning skills. As the culmination of Honors Seminar II students will complete a purpose-driven research project. Emphasis will be placed on their speaking voices and presentation techniques. Honors Seminar II links closely with the Liberal Arts course offered in the honors learning community. The format of this course will place special emphasis on individual conferencing with the instructor.

LBA 214: Honors - Literary Studies: Contemporary International Fiction

(3 hrs.)

(Open to Honors House Plan students only)

This course investigates the elements of fiction by reading six contemporary novels from around the world. Students will examine the historical, cultural, sociopolitical, and economic contexts of the literary readings and explore themes common to contemporary literature.

LBA 218: Sophomore Seminar: Government and Economics

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

This course focuses on the national and trans-national relationships among governments, especially the United States government, and economic systems, corporations, institutions, and agreements. This course helps students learn about some of the most powerful forces in the world and gives students the opportunity to sharpen their reading, writing, researching, reasoning, and speaking skills.

LBA 219: Sophomore Seminar: Global Village

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

This course will involve students in three broad topics: global resource management, global economics and global conflict and cooperation. The world is a surprisingly small place, and most of our activities directly or indirectly connect us with people in distant lands. This course seeks to make students more aware of these global connections and empower students to act consciously and responsibly as global citizens. Students have the opportunity to sharpen their reading, writing, researching, reasoning, and speaking skills.

LBA 224: Literary Studies: Contemporary Literature

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

This course offers an introduction to contemporary literature centered on a theme. While special attention is given to work written in the past decade, selections will include influential and pioneering work from the middle of the 20th century. A portion of the selected works will be by international and women writers. Course topics will vary. Recent topics include: Baseball in Literature and Women's Detective Fiction.

LBA 225: Literary Studies: Short Stories from Around the World

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

This course is designed to offer an introduction to the contemporary short story and its various modes. While special attention is given to work written in the past decade, selections will include influential and pioneering work from the middle of the 20th century. A portion of the selected works will be by international and women writers.

LBA 238: Literary Studies: Coming-of-Age Literature

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

This course focuses on coming-of-age narratives, a genre of literature representing the transition between childhood and adulthood, an intense and memorable time filled with conflict: first love, lost love, rebellion against authority.

Readings will include a variety of novels, short stories, essays, and scholarly and popular articles on developmental theory.

LBA 248: Literary Studies: Educating Rita: Students and Teachers

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

A study of literature exploring student-teacher and mentoring relationships both inside and outside the classroom, this course searches for characteristic elements of such literature, for issues particular to education (in the original context of the literary piece and in our own time), and for definitions of “student” and “teacher”.

LBA 250: Fundamentals of Speech

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

This course will introduce students to the basic skills of public speaking, including persuasive, informative, extemporaneous speeches and the use of presentation technology. Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication skills are emphasized through analysis and evaluation as audience and speaker.

LBA 252: Honors Cultural Studies: The Jazz Experience

(3 hrs.)

(Open to Honors House Plan students only)

Jazz music is America’s unique artistic contribution to the world. This course will investigate the history of jazz which is steeped in the singular experiences of African–Americans. It will explore the context in which jazz has developed and produced cultural and political realities. Students will become familiar with the major developments and eras of the jazz art form, as well as specific musical contributions of key individuals.

LBA 253: Honors Cultural Studies: Seven Pleasures: An Introduction to the Visual Arts

(3 hrs.)

(Open to Honors House Plan students only)

This course provides an opportunity for students to study art as aesthetic experience across cultures and time. Specifically, the course explores seven basic ways of enjoying works of art: the pleasures of naturalism, narrative, pattern, expressionism, abstraction, fantasy and allegory.

LBA 258: Literary Studies: The Female Hero in Folktales from Around the World

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 108/208)

The course will require students to read and actively participate in class discussion of folktales from around the world. Students will write short essays, and they will also use writing informally in a series of in-class exercises as a tool for inquiry, discovery, learning, thinking, and communicating.

LBA 275: Honors Historical Studies: 20th Century U.S. – A Global Perspective

(3 hrs.)

(Open to Honors House Plan students only)

Students in this course will study America’s growth from the turn of the century through the 1980s. Particular focus will be given to immigration, roles of women, human rights, the Cold War and America’s place in the world, acknowledging the influences of radicalism, conformity, liberalism, and conservatism. The importance of gender, race, and religion are investigated as broad topics that shaped America during the 20th century.

LBA 340: Honors Social Science: Terrorism Perspectives on Acts of Violence

(3 hrs.)

(Open to Honors House Plan students only)

This course examines different characteristics of terrorism. Because of the negative, and often polarizing, connotation of the word, the course will begin by defining terrorism in a way that removes moral judgments attached to this unusual human behavior. Terrorism, as discussed in this course, refers to a purposeful act or threat of violence to create fear and/or compliant behavior in a victim and/or audience. Next, the course will examine political terrorism, religious terrorism, and terrorism with other motives. The course will seek to answer whether social or physical environments attract certain people to join violent terrorist organizations.

LBA 350: Global Ethics

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LBA 218/219 and Senior Standing; required of all students)

This course looks at a broad spectrum of international issues – from global climate change and sustainability, human rights to gender discrimination – in a context that considers both sides of the dilemma and seeks for an ethical way

forward. The class uses concepts in economics, philosophy, political science, history, sociology and anthropology in its attempt to analyze global problems and decide how best to address the various ethical issues.