LIBERAL STUDIES, AN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

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Academic Program

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Liberal Studies is Cal Poly’s pre-professional Teacher Preparation Program. The mission of Liberal Studies is to ensure that students are prepared to teach competently and professionally each of the seven content areas in the state-mandated curriculum (K-8). These include language arts, mathematics, science, history/social sciences, visual and performing arts, health/physical education and human development. Liberal Studies provides the educational experience and preparation best suited for the prospective elementary teacher. Upon completion of this undergraduate degree, students enter the multiple subject credential program.

Faculty from the following disciplines help to offer the required curriculum in the major: Biological Sciences, English, Ethnic Studies, History, Kinesiology, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Physics, Psychology and Child Development, Social Sciences, Statistics, Theatre, and Education.

Undergraduate Program

BS Liberal Studies

The BS Liberal Studies degree directly addresses California’s need to produce more and better-trained elementary school teachers. LS graduates will be especially well prepared in the “high-need” teaching areas of science, mathematics, and reading. Students have the opportunity to earn a BS in four years including education classes that will count towards earning a credential.

A depth of study is required of all students seeking a multiple subject credential by the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing. Liberal Studies majors select one of the following concentrations or, with prior approval from the department chair, an individualized course of study.

- Biology
- Child Development
- English
- History/Social Sciences
- Mathematics
- Science
- Spanish
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

The Multiple Subject teaching credential requires one additional year. Application to the credential program at Cal Poly is done during the last quarter of the BS degree and it is recommended that you meet all the pre-requisites two quarters before you graduate. For more information: https://soe.calpoly.edu/content/multiple-subject-program-prerequisites

LS Courses

LS 201. Orientation to Liberal Studies. 1 unit
Term Typically Offered: F
Career and academic planning, co-curricular, extra-curricular opportunities, and pathway into a K-8 teaching profession. Academic policies and procedures, goal settings, elements of career in education, and other topics relevant to student and professional success. Intended for new students in the Liberal Studies major. Not open to students with credit in LS 101. 1 activity.

LS 211. Visual Arts in the Elementary Classroom. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Theory, aesthetics, appreciation and applications of visual arts, through multiple two dimensional art strategies, as related to educational processes for the elementary classroom. Focus on elements, principles of design while fostering artistic perception. One Saturday field trip required. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

LS 214. Constitutional Issues in the History of U.S. and California Education. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Examination of U.S. and California constitutions, significant legislation, and court cases affecting public education from the colonial period to the present. Overview of contributions by individuals of historical, national, and international educational significance. Examination of landmark decisions. 4 lectures.

LS 230. Field Experience in the Elementary Classroom I. 2 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Overview of current practices and issues in elementary education, including teacher compensation, cultural impact on schools, time and classroom management, English learners, and the affective aspect of teaching. 24 hours of fieldwork required. 2 activities.

LS 250. Field Experience in the Elementary Classroom II. 2 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Overview of current practices and issues in elementary education, including components of effective teaching, motivating students, diagnostic/prescriptive teaching, curriculum, and accountability. In addition to class time, 24 hours of fieldwork required. Participation in public schools requires fingerprint clearance. 2 activities.

LS 260. Children’s Literature. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.


LS 290. Selected Topics. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Open to undergraduate students and consent of instructor.

Directed group study of selected topics. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1 to 4 lectures.
LS 301. Liberal Studies Career Preparation. 1 unit
Term Typically Offered: F, SP
Prerequisite: Junior standing. Corequisite: LS 201.
Overview of ethical, legal, and historical issues in education; major foundational philosophies in American public education. Career pathways in education, targeted advising, portfolio building and professional goals and opportunities. Not open to students with credit in LS 101. 1 activity.

LS 305. Project Based Learning in STEM Education. 2 units
CR/NC
Term Typically Offered: W
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area B.
Extended collaborative study of a question or problem in STEM using a Project Based Learning (PBL) environment; includes consideration of the educational framework and principles of PBL. Topics will have an engineering design component that will require application of mathematics, technology, and science. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 4 units. Credit/No Credit grading only. 2 activities.

LS 310. Storytelling: Modern Applications of Traditional Narrative. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A2 with a grade of C- or better.
Techniques for selection, preparation and presentation of traditional folktales and myths for an audience. Discussion of theatrical and storytelling techniques. Applications of storytelling in teaching and organizations; theory and history of folk literature and mythology. 4 lectures.

LS 370. Performing Arts in the Elementary Classroom. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: LS 211 and GE C3. Recommended: LS 310.
Current theory and practice of standards based performing arts with an emphasis on the use of music, theater, media arts and dance, as discrete disciplines with historical and cultural context in the classroom. Attendance at outside performances required. 4 lectures.

LS 380. Subject Matter Apprenticeship. 2 units
CR/NC
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Junior standing and consent of instructor.
Structured application of a specific content area in schools and informal educational settings. Topics include: Arts, English, Science, Mathematics, History/Social Studies, and Physical Education and Health. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Participation in public schools requires mandated fingerprint clearance. Total credit limited to 4 units. Credit/No Credit grading only. 2 activities.

LS 400. Special Problems for Advanced Undergraduates. 1-2 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor, junior standing.
Individual investigation, research, studies, or surveys of selected problems. Total credit limited to 4 units, with a maximum of 2 units per quarter.

LS 411. Advanced History/Social Sciences Integration for the K-8 Classroom. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F
Prerequisite: GEOG 308; HIST 208; LS major; and senior standing.
Analysis and practice of history and social sciences knowledge and skills to facilitate K-8 learning through identifying major themes and questions. The use of inquiry, assessment, curriculum integration, and technology to connect discipline specific content to contemporary social issues. 3 seminars, 1 activity.

LS 412. Advanced Arts Integration for the K-8 Classroom. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W, SP
Prerequisite: LS 211 and senior standing.
Analysis and practice of Arts knowledge and skills to facilitate K-8 learning through identifying major themes and questions. The use of inquiry, assessment, curriculum integration, and technology to connect discipline specific content to contemporary social issues. Field trips required. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 4 lectures.

LS 413. Advanced Science/Engineering Integration for the K-8 Classroom. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W, SP
Prerequisite: PSC 103; BIO 211; LS 250; MATH 328; and junior standing. Recommended: MATH 329.
Analysis and practice of science and engineering knowledge and skills to facilitate K-8 learning through identifying major themes and questions. Use of inquiry, assessment, curriculum integration, and technology to connect discipline specific content to contemporary social issues. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

LS 461. Senior Project Seminar. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Senior standing, completion of GWR or consent of instructor.
Examination of issues in education of state, national and international concern. Students prepare presentations and conduct individual research and analysis of selected problems. Substantial research paper required. 4 seminars.

LS 462. Senior Project Research. 2-4 units
Term Typically Offered: W
Prerequisite: Senior standing; completion of GWR; LS 410 or LS 411 or LS 412.
Application of content and theory to the educational experience of one specific subject matter area in the Liberal Studies program. Total credit limited to 4 units.

LS 470. Selected Advanced Topics. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Directed group study of selected topics for advanced students. Open to undergraduate and graduate students. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1 to 4 lectures.