

Liberal Studies Program (LSP) Learning Goals and Outcomes

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Preamble

DePaul's Catholic, Vincentian, and urban character distinguishes its students' experiences. In turn, its Liberal Studies Program connects students – in progressively more integrated ways – to the university's mission and to values associated with social justice, diversity, and the desire to work toward socially and environmentally sustainable communities.

To prepare its students to understand, engage, and effect change as global citizens, these revised Liberal Studies Program learning goals and outcomes provide students with an integrative and intellectually challenging education. The rhetorical, creative, intellectual, analytical, quantitative, and interdisciplinary knowledge gained from the program's connected coursework facilitates success as students and as life-long learners. The Liberal Studies Program supports the student's academic major with learning across disciplines – both in and beyond the classroom.

Faculty from virtually every department, interdisciplinary program, and college teach over 1,400 different courses from which students can choose to fulfill their Liberal Studies Program requirements. This wide spectrum of participation on the part of students and faculty alike contributes to a strong sense of intellectual community at DePaul University as well as a shared commitment to its mission and values.

Overall, these essential learning goals and outcomes charge DePaul University faculty, staff, and students to meaningfully fulfill them, and to cultivate a reflective sense of integration across the Liberal Studies Program.

Liberal Studies Program (LSP) Essential Learning Goals and Outcomes

Goal 1: Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

Given our diverse and increasingly interdependent world, students will develop an understanding of societies and scientific principles.

Outcomes – As a result of their liberal studies coursework students will be able to:

- demonstrate a breadth of knowledge through studies in the arts, history, humanities, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences

Goal 2: Intellectual and Creative Skills

Given the Liberal Studies Program's breadth and importance in the undergraduate curriculum, students will progressively develop the ability to think critically and imaginatively, formulate their own understanding, and effectively communicate their ideas.

Outcomes – As a result of their liberal studies coursework students will be able to:

- systematically access, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas from multiple sources in order to identify underlying assumptions and formulate conclusions
- create and support arguments using a variety of approaches
- use existing knowledge to generate and synthesize ideas in original ways
- employ information and quantitative literacies
- communicate clearly in speech and writing

Goal 3: Personal Responsibility and Social Transformation

To understand and appreciate one's role as a citizen in the greater community and world, students will demonstrate an awareness of their own and others' values and ethical reasoning, consider and synthesize global, transnational, and intercultural perspectives and viewpoints, and understand the importance of civic participation in developing communities.

Outcomes – As a result of their liberal studies coursework students will be able to:

- articulate their own and others' beliefs about what it means to be human and to create a just society
- respect and learn from others' perspectives
- evaluate ethical issues from multiple perspectives
- make ethical decisions and live a life of personal integrity
- benefit communities through socially responsible engagement and leadership
- understand global interconnectedness and interdependencies
- become a steward of global resources for a sustainable future

Goal 4: Integrative Learning

Students will be encouraged – with the help of faculty, advisors, and the structure of the curriculum itself – to make connections between their Liberal Studies Program courses and to understand the value and utility of liberal education. They will also reflectively

connect knowledge and competencies gained in the classroom to experiences beyond this setting.

Outcomes – As a result of their liberal studies coursework students will be able to:

- make connections among ideas and experiences in order to synthesize and transfer Liberal Studies Program learning goals to their personal, academic, and professional pursuits
- relate their learning to multiple fields and realms of experience
- articulate connections to the Liberal Studies Program courses and aspects of DePaul's mission

The revised learning goals and outcomes are derived from national research and best practices surrounding liberal education. Building on the four pre-existing LSP meta-goals (reflectiveness, value consciousness and ethical reasoning, multicultural perspective, and creative and critical thinking), and recognizing the challenges and opportunities of the contemporary world, these revisions amplify the four traditional outcomes of a liberal education¹ while engaging DePaul University's mission throughout the program.

¹American Association of Colleges and Universities. *College Learning for the New Global Century: A Report from the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise*. (Washington, D.C., 2007) 11-50.