

Liberal Arts

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The College of Arts and Sciences recognizes that students' interests may include more than one discipline and that some majors are not formally available at MSU. Students who prefer to specialize in more than one field of study may earn a B.A. degree in Liberal Arts (BALA). Through BALA, students can pursue a major that crosses two or more disciplines offered in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The BALA degree requires satisfactory completion of the following:

1. University General Education and College Core curriculum;
2. College of Arts & Sciences B.A. requirements;
3. Satisfactory completion of the BALA major core;
4. A total of 121 semester hours;
5. A 200-word minimum exit essay

The BALA major core consists of IDS 2111, GLA 4001, and a program of study consisting of at least 36 upper-division hours in approved emphasis areas.

Each BALA program of study must consist of a broad, but coherent pattern of courses in 2-4 disciplines within the College of Arts and Sciences. These disciplines make up the emphasis areas within a student's program of study. Students may propose an individualized combination of emphasis areas, or they may select a preestablished concentration pathway that specifies the emphasis areas they must complete.

Each emphasis area must comprise at least 9 hours of upper-division coursework in that discipline, and a minimum GPA of 2.0 is required in each area of emphasis.

Students seeking admission to the BALA major will be required to submit an application to be reviewed by the Liberal Arts committee. BALA applications must contain the following: completed BALA application form (see BALA advisor); student's proposed program of study; a 100-word entrance essay.

To ensure an orderly progression of work toward the degree, interested students should meet with the program's advisor as early as possible.

Liberal Arts is not suitable for students who are uncertain about their choice of a major; these students should see the Undeclared listing in the Academic Affairs section.

Political Communication Concentration

The Political Communication Concentration combines coursework in Political Science and Communication and Media Studies. It prepares students for careers in campaigning, public address and public affairs, and any public-facing roles related to governmental agencies and policymaking. The Political Communication Concentration is particularly useful for students who want to pursue law school or professional careers in legislation, campaigning, lobbying, and community outreach.

Environmental Justice Concentration

Environmental Justice explores the causes and consequences of inequitable distributions of environmental benefits and hazards. It investigates the ethical, political, economic, legal, and sociological aspects of environmental issues, as well as provides students with sufficient natural science background to understand and explain human impacts on the natural world. Our course of study aims to give students an interdisciplinary perspective on the environmental harms meaningfully, effectively, and fairly. The Environmental Justice concentration is particularly useful for students pursuing careers in fields relating to sustainability, environmental planning, environmental law, and environmental policy.

International Studies Concentration

The International Studies concentration combines coursework in the social sciences, humanities, and foreign languages to give students a well-rounded understanding of how political, economic, and social changes around the world impact our lives. International Studies is an increasingly popular area of study for students interested in careers in business, national security, politics, and the non-profit sector. It equips students with extensive knowledge of international institutions, the history, cultures, and politics of different regions of the world, and training in languages spoken around the world.

Linguistics Concentration

Linguistics is the study of language, including the structure of sounds, words, and sentences, how our brains process it, how people learn it, and the roles it plays in our societies. Studying linguistics teaches students to analyze patterns in the language of their daily lives and can contribute to careers such as language teaching, editing and publishing, speech therapy, advertising, and more. Only grades of C or higher will be accepted for courses in the emphasis areas for the Linguistics concentration.

Gender Studies Concentration

This concentration emphasizes different approaches to understanding gender and sexuality from different disciplinary perspectives. Students take courses in communication studies, English, world literatures, psychology, sociology, and sports studies. Courses emphasize how gender and sexuality are social constructions subject to change and interpretation over time and across cultures, and how inequalities tied to gender and sexuality are explained and addressed from different vantage points. This concentration also emphasizes empirical studies of gender as a form of identity, lived experience, and social inequality. Students draw upon course work in communication studies, criminology, history, political science, sociology, and social work. Courses emphasize the role of media, crime and the criminal justice system, historical constructions of gender, politics, and social problems and the responses to these problems in articulating how key social institutions and culture shape individual lives and societies.

General Education Requirements

English Composition

EN 1103	English Composition I	3
or EN 1104	Expanded English Composition I	
EN 1113	English Composition II	3
or EN 1173	Accelerated Composition II	

Creative Discovery

A&S core		3
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Humanities

History - A&S core		3
Literature - A&S core		3

Social/Behavioral Sciences

A&S core ²		6
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Quantitative Reasoning

A&S core ²		3
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Natural Sciences

Life Science w/Lab - A&S core ²		3-4
Physical Science w/Lab - A&S core		3-4
Natural Science Elective - A&S core		3-4

College Requirements & Major Core

Additional College Requirements

Foreign Language

Foreign Language I		3
Foreign Language II		3
Foreign Language III		3

Additional Humanities

Philosophy - A&S core		3
Humanities Electives ¹		9

Additional Social Sciences

Social Sciences Electives ³		12
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Oral Communication ³

CO 1003	Fundamentals of Public Speaking ⁶	3
or CO 1013	Introduction to Communication	

Major Core

IDS 2111	Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies	1
GLA 4001	Senior Project	1
Emphasis Area Courses ^{4,5}		36

Jr/Sr Writing

Consult advisor - may be specified in emphasis areas or concentrations		3
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Free Electives

Consult advisor ⁷		5-11
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Total Hours		121
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Note: Students must complete 31 upper-division hours in A&S in residence at MSU.

- 1 Humanities electives must be courses in A&S and must cover two disciplines.
- 2 Concentrations may require specific courses; see concentration and consult advisor.
- 3 Social Science electives must be courses in A&S. The total 18 hours in Social Science must cover four disciplines; maximum of 6 hours per discipline; only one EC and one CO from A&S core list allowed
- 4 Concentrations require specific courses; see concentration and consult advisor. A minimum GPA of 2.0 is required in each area of emphasis.
- 6 Concentration may require CO 1003; consult advisor.
- 7 Concentrations may require other prerequisite coursework. Students should consult advisor and plan to take additional prerequisite courses as general electives.
- 5 Courses under concentrations may be substituted with a related course not listed with permission from the concentration sponsor.

Political Communication Concentration

Mathematics

MA/ST 2113	Introduction to Statistics
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Social Science

PS 1113	American Government
CO 1223	Introduction to Communication Theory

Oral Communication

CO 1003	Fundamentals of Public Speaking
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Jr/Sr Writing

PS 4464	Political Analysis
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Emphasis Area - Communication

Choose 18 hours:

CO 3803	Principles of Public Relations
CO 3813	Public Relations Case Problems
CO 3873	Public Relations Multimedia
CO 3833	Interviewing in Communication
CO 4043	Communication and Leadership
CO 4203	Nonverbal Communication
CO 4213	Political Communication
CO 4253	Elements of Persuasion
CO 4273	Intercultural Communication
CO 4313	Mass Media Law

Emphasis Area - Political Science

Choose 18 hours:

PS 3013	Political Leadership
PS 3033	Gender and Politics
PS 3063	Constitutional Powers
PS 3073	Civil Liberties
PS 3183	Law and Politics
PS 4173	Legislative Process
PS 4283	Public Opinion
PS 4293	Political Behavior
PS 4703	Principles of Public Administration

Environmental Justice Concentration

Life Science w/ lab

BIO 1134	Biology I
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Social Science

PS 1113	American Government
GR 2013	Human Geography
PS 2703	Introduction to Public Policy

AN 1103	Introduction to Anthropology
SO 1003	Introduction to Sociology

Jr/Sr Writing

Satisfied by BIO 3104 in Ecological Studies emphasis area

Emphasis Area - Justice Studies

PHI 3313	Environmental Ethics
AN 4173	Environment and Society
PS 4743	Environmental Policy

Choose 9 hours from the following:

PHI 3173	Social and Political Philosophy
HI 3183	World Environmental History
HI 4193	U.S. Environmental History
HI 4293	History of Gender and Science
REL 3113	Religions and Environment
FL 4243	Introduction to Ecolinguistics
EC 4323	International Economics
EC 4423	Public Finance
GR 4133	Political Ecology: Space, Nature, and Justice

Emphasis Area - Ecological Studies

BIO 3104	Ecology
GR 3113	Conservation of Natural Resources

Choose 12 hours from the following:

PHI 4143	Philosophy of Science
BIO 4123	Behavioral Ecology
BIO 4993	Community Ecology
BIO 4233	Living with Global Change
AN 3333	Primate Behavior
AN 4353	Biology and Culture
CH 4303	Environmental Chemistry I
GR 4203	Geography of North America
or GR 4213	Geography of Latin America
or GR 4223	Geography of Europe
or GR 4233	Geography of Asia
or GR 4243	Geography of Russia and the Former Soviet Republics
or GR 4253	Geography of Africa
or GR 4263	Geography of the South
or GR 4283	Geography of Islamic World
AEC 4243	Natural Resource Economics
LA 4843	Sustainable Communities
WFA 3133	Applied Ecology
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes
GG 4543	Community Engagement in Environmental Geosciences

International Studies Concentration**Literature**

EN 2283	World Literature After 1600
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Mathematics

MA/ST 2113	Introduction to Statistics
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Social Science

GR 1123	Introduction to World Geography
PS 1313	Introduction to International Relations
PS 1513	Comparative Government

EC 2113 Principles of Macroeconomics
 or EC 2123 Principles of Microeconomics

Additional Foreign Language

Foreign Language IV

Jr/Sr Writing

Satisfied by PS 4323 in Global Affairs emphasis area

Emphasis Area - Global Affairs

PS 4323	International Organization
PS 4343	International Conflict and Security
Choose 12 hours from the following:	
PS 4303	U.S. Foreign Policy
PS 4623	Politics of the Third World
PS 3033	Gender and Politics
PS 4373	International Terrorism
PS 4633	Democracy and Democratization
PS 4643	Ethnic Conflict
PS 4383	National Security Policy
PS 4613	Civil Wars and Intra-State Conflicts
AN 4163	Anthropology of International Development
PS 4313	Principles of International Law
PS 4333	Theories of International Relations
PS 4353	International Political Economy
PS 4363	International Peacekeeping
PS 4393	The Global Context
EN/AAS 4393	Postcolonial Literature and Theory
EN 4813	The World Novel Since 1900
EN 4373	English Literature and the World before 1800

Emphasis Area - Area Studies

Choose 9 hours from the following:

PS/AAS 4543	African Politics
PS 4553	Western European Politics
PS 4583	
PS 4593	Latin American Politics
GR 4203	Geography of North America
GR 4213	Geography of Latin America
GR 4223	Geography of Europe
GR 4233	Geography of Asia
GR 4243	Geography of Russia and the Former Soviet Republics
GR 4253	Geography of Africa
GR 4283	Geography of Islamic World
AN 3113	Societies of the World
AN 3133	Anthropology of Latin America
AAS 4793	Modern Africa
AAS 4093	The African Diaspora
AN 3153	
MEC/REL 3473	Islam
REL 3213	World Religions I
REL 3223	World Religions II
REL 3453	Hinduism & Buddhism
AN 3143	Anthropology of the Middle East
AN 3193	African Cultures
AN 3533	Rise of Civilization

AN 3553	Near Eastern Archaeology
GR 4293	Caribbean Geography
HI 3743	History of England
HI 3813	Modern Latin America
HI 3853	The United States and Latin America
HI 4203	Diplomatic History of the U.S.
HI 4213	History of Grand Strategy & International Security
HI 4223	Intelligence Gathering in the 20th Century
HI 4493	Terrorism in America
HI 4583	China Since 1800
HI 4593	Japan Since 1600
HI 4613	History of the Soviet Union
HI 4673	Europe, 1789-1914
HI 4683	Europe: The First World War to Hitler
HI 4693	Europe: The Second World War to the Common Market
HI 4713	Tudor and Stuart England
HI 4723	History of Britain Since 1688
HI 4743	War, Diplomacy, and Statecraft in Europe, 1648-1989
HI 4753	History of Russia
HI 4763	History of Modern Germany
HI 4773	History of Modern France
HI 4853	Modern Mexico
HI 4903	The Far East

Emphasis Area - Language Studies

Choose 9 hours

In addition to completing the fourth level of a foreign language, students must complete 9 hours of upper division coursework in one target language or language area.

Linguistics Concentration**Additional Foreign Language**

Foreign Language IV

Jr/Sr Writing

Satisfied by either EN/AN/SO/LIN 4623 or EN/AN/SO/LIN 4633 in required emphasis area

Up to 6 hours of humanities and 6 hours of social sciences may be satisfied with courses in the Linguistics concentration; 121 total degree hours will still be required

Required Emphasis Area

AN/EN/LIN 4403	Introduction to Linguistics
AN/EN/SO/LIN 4623	Language and Culture
AN/EN/SO/LIN 4633	Language and Society

LIN Upper Division Electives - 12 hours

Choose 2 of the following emphasis areas:

Emphasis Area - Cognitive Science

Choose 9 hours from the following:

PHI 4223	Philosophy of Cognitive Science
PSY 3343	Psychology of Learning
PSY 3713	Cognitive Psychology
PSY 4413	Cognitive Neuroscience
PSY 4653	Cognitive Science

Emphasis Area - Culture & Society

Choose 9 hours from the following;

AN 4123	Anthropological Theory
AN 4143	Ethnographic Methods

AN 4163	Anthropology of International Development
CO 4273	Intercultural Communication
PSY 3623	Social Psychology
PSY 4233	Culture and Psychology
SO 3003	Social Inequality
SO 3013	Society and the Individual
SO 3703	Racial and Ethnic Inequality
SO 4143	Gender, Race, and Social Movements

Emphasis Area - Language Studies

In addition to completing the fourth level of a foreign language, students must complete 9 hours of upper division coursework in one target language or language area.

Gender Studies Concentration

Fine Art

MU 2173	Women in Music
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Social Science

GS/SO/AN 1173	Introduction to Gender Studies
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Jr/Sr Writing

Satisfied by EN/SO/GS 4133 in Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality emphasis area

Emphasis Area - Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality

EN/SO/GS 4133	Feminist Theories
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Choose 15 hours from the following:

CO/GS 4233	Gender and Media
COE 4743	Gender Issues in Counseling
EN/GS 3513	Women and Literature: Selected Topics
FLS 4213	Modern Spanish Women Writers
PSY 3203	Psychology of Gender Differences
SO 4403/GS 4413	Sociology of Gender and Sexuality
SO/GS 4503	Gender and Work
SS/GS 4403	Gender and Sport

Emphasis Area - Gender in Society and Culture

Choose 18 hours from the following:

CO/GS 4263	Gender Communication
CRM/SO/GS 3343	Gender, Crime, and Justice
HI/AAS/GS 3713	History of African American Women
HI 4273	Women in American History
HI 4283	History of Southern Women
HI 4823	Issues in Women's History
HI 4293	History of Gender and Science
PS 3033	Gender and Politics
SO/SW/GS 4543	Gender and Food
SO/GS/AAS 4143	Gender, Race, and Social Movements