Course Description

The concept of Liberal Studies arose during the Middle Ages as branches of knowledge that were commonly taught during the Carolingian Renaissance. The term “liberal” was employed because the main purpose of such pursuits was not to obtain a vocation but to procure a complete education. In this sense the title developed during the dawn of scholasticism, and out of that movement arose academic institutions, such as universities. The liberal studies were usually seven in number and were arranged in two groups. The first included grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic (language studies); the second was comprised of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music (physics).

These evolved as specialized fields of research emerged, and today Liberal Studies is defined as an interdisciplinary branch of academia that prepares students for a broad range of career opportunities. By combining the methods and contents from a wide variety of subjects, instructors are able to emphasize an understanding of concepts, rational analysis, imagination, and communication. As a major it is the choice of many who plan to become multiple-subject elementary teachers or of those who seek an education in several fields of interest. To accomplish this, the culture, thought, art, and religion of civilizations, past or present, are covered in order to provide a well-rounded education.

Humanities 85 is an introductory course to the Liberal Studies program, and among other objectives it provides a rationale for teaching the Humanities as a discipline in relation to other academic endeavors. This term was originally applied academically to the language and literature of the Greeks and Romans, but today its subjects have expanded to comprise a number of related disciplines. A modern definition usually seeks to understand and to appreciate human creativity as it is conveyed in various cultures (especially concerning diversity, traditions, and history) and includes the visual and performing arts as well as both philosophy and theology.

An education in Humanities requires training in oral and written communication so that students are able to analyze critically the foundations upon which such societies are based and to express effectively their learning to others. Underlying this pursuit is the intent to discover the inherent human aspiration that seeks beauty and truth and strives to articulate it accurately in the creative and literary arts. Disciplines belonging to Humanities include: history, philosophy, languages, linguistics, jurisprudence, archaeology, comparative religion, ethics, and the arts.
Introduction to Liberal Education emphasizes the value and importance of a broad-minded education, particularly as a means of preparing students for the teaching profession and other careers requiring a comprehensive range of knowledge. It is designed to create a road map for integrating literature, language, history, philosophy, religion, and the social sciences, as well as other departments in the College of Humanities and the Arts. These academic disciplines, in turn, are discussed as opportunities to deepen a student’s understanding of the human condition, especially as it relates to a diverse population, a global worldview, and a changing socio-economy environment.

Sample Questions of Inquiry:

What constitutes a “liberal” education?
What is the value of studying humanities and the arts?
How is “culture” defined, and how does a society’s ideas change?
What disciplines are identified as humanities?
How does a society develop a value system?
What is the relationship between science and the humanities?
How does education differ in various countries and cultures?
What caused the decline in humanities and how will it affect the West?
How does a person’s views on education develop through liberal studies?
How is “critical” thinking accomplished and what impairs it?
What has contributed to the decline of Western literature?

The seven disciplines discussed this semester are generally included in the modern concept of Liberal Studies: philosophy, religious studies, humanities, history, social studies, behavioral science, and literature. Part of the intent of the course is to equip students in the program for an exciting academic journey that culminates in communicating their knowledge to others.

Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

Introduction to Liberal Education fosters an understanding of the disciplines and approaches to instructing the Liberal Studies. Its intent is to supply academic background for those who seek careers in the teaching profession, especially K-12 students, or a broad academic experience as preparation for occupations that require a well-rounded education. Part of the purpose of HUM85 is to provide a platform for discussion regarding the program with those who were previously unfamiliar with the objectives of those disciplines related to it and the various methodologies that each employs. As a result, strategies and methodologies comprising the Liberal Studies program are presented.

1A. Student Reading
a. Students should be able to perform effectively analysis of the various disciplines associated with Liberal Studies, which include: summarizing academic articles and discussing their contents with others as well as understanding the fields of study related to the program.
b. Students should be able to express selected readings effectively, a process that requires explanation, analysis, paraphrasing, and comparing various points of view.
c. Students should be able to use the proper grammar expected in college-level writing, and this includes syntax, mechanics, and proper documentation.

1B. Student Learning
a. Students should be able to analyze and evaluate primary and supporting materials as well as to summarize the literature required throughout the semester.
b. Students should be able to synthesize ideas encountered in multiple readings of research materials and to explain the paradigms that result in a broad education.
c. Students should be able to construct effective arguments in support of their understanding and to communicate it to others.

2A. Learning Objectives

a. Students shall be able to express and critique ideas effectively and to explain selected readings to others, and this involves various forms of discourse, including group participation and other means of verbal expression.

b. Students shall be able to summarize academic perspectives on education from various disciplines related to the Liberal Studies.

c. Students shall be able to recognize the most common standards used for curriculum and to distinguish between the various methods used in the modern classroom.

2B. Applying Objectives

a. Students shall select various articles for evaluation and summarize their findings in an abstract suited for publication.

b. Students shall write assignments that include both in-class and out-of-class applications.

c. Students shall explain readings from various disciplines related to Liberal Studies.

Required Texts and Readings

A two-paragraph written assignment is expected for ten of the fifteen weeks this semester, and this provides the opportunity for students to select the articles each evaluates. These two paragraphs should at least fill one page. However, once discussed in class the option to submit that particular assignment is forfeited. The total number of academic and news essays available is twenty-three, and they were derived from multiple fields of education associated with Liberal Studies. Education is the main theme of these published works, and each was included to introduce various points of view, writing styles, and interpretations on the topic. A prompt is supplied for each assignment on which sample questions are included; these assist students determine the main issues that a writer attempts to convey. The essays covered this semester include but are not limited to:

- Pippin, *Liberation and the Liberal Arts: The Aims of Education*
- McCarthy, *Why Be Critical*
- Siegel, *On Defending “Critical Thinker”*
- Wieder, *iPads Could Hinder Teaching, Professors Say*
- Russell, *Knowledge and Wisdom*
- Berkowitz, *Liberal Education, Then and Now*
- Strauss, *Liberal Education*
- Conyers, *Vocation and the Liberal Arts*
- Kimball, *What Was a Liberal Education?*
- Young, *Science and the Humanities in the Understanding of Human Nature*
- Hutchins, *Idea of a College*
- Gilbert, *The Six Secrets of a Happy Classroom*
- Goldman, *Education and Social Epistemology*
- Adler, *Contemporary Education*
- Bennetta, *Phony “Standards” and Fake “History”*
- Barthes, *Discourse of History*
- Curtler, *Culture Studies vs. Liberal Studies*
- Cluff, *The Importance of Fine Arts in the Classroom*

Each article is required reading, and from them in-class discussions are generated; these cannot be substituted in any manner, and no credit is possible for assignments conducted independently as if in-class work. The main purpose of these documents is to facilitate conversation in disciplines related to Liberal Education.
to education, for they focus on issues that every teacher encounters. While it is possible to resubmit work for a higher grade, this must be accomplished within one week of its initial due date. However, this option is available for no more than three articles throughout the semester.

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed for success. It is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf. Furthermore, University policy F69-24 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf states, “Students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein and active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit to all class members.” However, in-class assignments will not be offered after they are submitted, since the purpose of such work is to participate in group projects, and that cannot be accomplished alone.

Six two-paragraph responses and four two-paragraph group summaries are required for this section of HUM85. A prompt is supplied for each assignment. All work must contain a title page with the name of the article and author displayed, and each must be submitted separately and contain replies to all the questions asked on the corresponding prompt as well as additional issues addressed in lectures. The chief focus of these essays is the meaning and purpose of a liberal education from the perspectives of various experts or observers. For this reason it is essential to read each article in advance of its discussion. The course CD contains all texts and prompts required throughout the semester; no paper copy of this material is available.

Course Grading Policy

Liberal Studies is an interdisciplinary field that prepares students for a broad range of career opportunities. By combining methods and contents from a wide variety of academic subjects, it draws attention to an understanding of concepts, rational analysis, imagination, and communication, and hence, those who complete its requirements are prepared to study and to evaluate the educational process. As a major, Liberal Studies offers courses in humanities, the arts, mathematics, natural and the social sciences and is the choice of many who plan to become multiple-subject elementary teachers or of those who desire an education in multiple fields of interest.

To accomplish this, the culture, tradition, art, and religion of civilizations from around the world are introduced in order to provide a truly liberal education. The method of instruction used in this course consists of reading academic articles or research followed by in-class discussion and group sessions. The lectures provide unique information, thus making them essential to attend in order to get the most out of the semester. It is important that all reading and writing assignments are completed in advance of the day on which its topic is covered. Hence, late work is not accepted without previous written arrangement with the instructor and is due on the dates indicated on the schedule.

The total number of potential points for this course is 600. While all submitted work is graded on a curve, the following point-spread may be anticipated as its base:

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Quality of writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation, diction, syntax, and organization are taken into account, as is replying to the questions provided on the prompts. The grade breakdown is as follows:
Six two-paragraph responses: 300 points (50%)
Four in-class summaries: 200 points (33%)
Weekly participation: 100 points (17%)

Incompletes cannot be granted due to work not submitted; consult the SJSU Handbook for further details regarding this procedure.

**Electronic Devices**

The Internet is discouraged as a source of information; however, a few germane websites may be suggested throughout the semester. Computers are not permitted during lectures. If any student is caught accessing the Web via computer or any other device during class, that individual may be asked to leave the classroom. Habitual texting or computer usage during lectures may result in 10-20% reduction of grade. The professor does not have to confront the student more than once for this policy to apply. Thank you for respecting the efforts of your instructor to provide provocative and engaging content without electronic distractions to other students. If an emergency arises, please notify the professor in advance of class, so that cell phone access and seating near the door may be arranged. Special provision is possible for electronic note taking, but specific circumstances and permission are required. The instructor does not accept electronic forms of any assignment, including email. Each must be printed out and submitted according to the specifications printed on the prompt.

**University Policies**

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and the responsibilities incumbent upon everyone participating in the institution. Students are encouraged to be familiar with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See University Policy S90–5 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the SJSU catalog at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dhgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html. It is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

It is each student’s responsibility to understand all policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawals, incompletes, classroom behavior, and other policies described in the catalog. Please read this resource thoroughly, and feel free to ask your instructor to clarify any ambiguity. Both office phone and email address are located on the front page of this syllabus. You are welcome to visit during office hours or by appointment for reasons germane to this class. Your library liaison will offer guidance concerning how to locate primary sources, reference materials, books, and articles. The Martin Luther King Library is an excellent resource for term papers; useful information about what it contains is located in the catalog and on the library website.

**Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, and so on. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies at http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars. The Late Drop Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

**Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material**

University Policy S12-7, http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf, requires students to obtain the instructor’s permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:
Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or to distribute the material in any form.

It is suggested that the green sheet include the instructor’s process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.

In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.

Course material that the instructor developed is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to submit their own work, and any violation will not be tolerated. This course upholds the Academic Integrity Statement for this campus: “Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State and the University’s Integrity Policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs.” Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San Jose State University, since it ensures that each student is fairly evaluated. The complete policy on academic integrity may be found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial affairs/index.html.

Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work conducted through dishonesty, deception, or fraud will result in failure for that project and might require expulsion from the class. Violations include but are not limited to: 1) copying in part or in whole another’s work, 2) submitting an assignment that was previously graded in another course (unless approval is first attained in writing), 3) presenting work simultaneously in two courses (unless approval is first attained in writing from both instructors), 4) the use of a surrogate to write papers or to take examinations on your behalf, and 5) borrowing from Internet sources without proper annotation.

Instructors have a moral obligation to expose all forms of cheating in order to promote fairness in the classroom. Plagiarism is defined at SJSU as, “the act of incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substances of another’s work, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one’s own work, and representing another’s artistic/scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, painting, drawing, sculptures, or similar works as one’s own.”

**American Disabilities Act**

This course complies with the campus policy outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act: “If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see the instructor during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.” If a student uses the DRC in any way, please notify the instructor at least one week in advance so that proper arrangement may be made for scheduling at the student and professor’s convenience so that lectures are not missed.

**Date of Final**

Monday, May 22, 7:15-9:30 in Boccardo Business Center 221
## Academic Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Texts and Readings</th>
<th>Essays</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02/01</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>02/08</td>
<td>The Liberal Studies</td>
<td>Pippin, “Liberation and the Liberal Arts”</td>
<td>Pippin</td>
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<td>02/15</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>McCarthy, “Why Be Critical”</td>
<td>McCarthy-Siegel</td>
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<td>Siegel, “On Defending ‘Critical Thinker’”</td>
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<td>02/22</td>
<td>Conveying Knowledge</td>
<td>Wieder, “iPad Could Hinder Teaching”</td>
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<td>Russell, “Knowledge and Wisdom”</td>
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<td>03/01</td>
<td>Arts and Education</td>
<td>Cluff, “Importance of Fine Arts in the Classroom”</td>
<td>Cluff</td>
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<td>03/08</td>
<td>Value and Vocation</td>
<td>Conyers, “Vocation and the Liberal Arts”</td>
<td>Conyers</td>
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<td>03/15</td>
<td>Developing Curriculum</td>
<td>Kimball, “What Was a Liberal Education”</td>
<td>Kimball</td>
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<td>03/22</td>
<td>Science and Humanities</td>
<td>Young, “Science and the Humanities”</td>
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<td>03/29</td>
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<td>Spring Recess</td>
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<td>04/05</td>
<td>Pursuing “College”</td>
<td>Hutchins, “Idea of a College”</td>
<td>Hutchins</td>
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<td>04/12</td>
<td>Function and Form</td>
<td>Gilbert, “The Six Secrets of a Happy Classroom”</td>
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<td>Goldman, “Education and Social Epistemology”</td>
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<td>04/19</td>
<td>Education and Culture</td>
<td>Adler, “Contemporary Education”</td>
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<td>04/26</td>
<td>Texts and Standards</td>
<td>Bennetta, “Phony ‘Standards’ and Fake ‘History’”</td>
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<td>05/03</td>
<td>Teaching Effectively</td>
<td>Baker, “What Makes a Good Teacher?”</td>
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<td>Barthes, “Discourse of History”</td>
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<td>05/10</td>
<td>Teaching Methodology</td>
<td>Curtler, “Culture Studies vs. the Liberal Studies”</td>
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