

Minutes of the Bachelors of Liberal Studies Committee  
November 8, 2019

Regular meeting convened at 1:15 pm, November 8, 2019 in Combs 101.

Voting members in attendance: Marco Millones Mayer (CAS, Chair), Abbie Tomba (CAS, secretary), Sushma Subramanian (CAS), Yuan Jen Chiang (CAS).

Non-voting, ex-officio members in attendance: Ana Chichester (Director, BLS Program),

**Report from Admissions:**

No report because Jose Torres was unable to attend the meeting. However, the committee is still interested in how this year's BLS admissions numbers compare to previous years.

**Items of Business:**

The committee unanimously passed the revised BLS general education requirements. The requirements and rationale for the new requirements are attached.

The committee discussed Larry Cox's special major request (Transition Mentoring Studies) advised that he needed another course outside of psychology to make the major more multidisciplinary and unanimously approved the major as amended,

The committee discussed and unanimously approved Ana Torres special major request (Criminology and Leadership).

Finally, Ana Chichester reported the BLS program continues to work on making the Leadership and Management major able to be completed entirely on-line.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Abbie Tomba

BACHELOR OF LIBERAL STUDIES  
GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

<b>FOUNDATIONS</b>	
Written Communication	Three courses designated Writing Intensive
Oral Communication	One course designated Speaking Intensive
<b>METHODS OF INVESTIGATION</b>	
Arts and Literature	One course focusing on visual art, performing art, and/or literature
Humanities (including History)	One course in the humanities
Natural Science	One course in the natural sciences that includes a laboratory
Quantitative Reasoning	One course focusing on quantitative information
Social Science	One course in the social sciences
	Three additional courses from at least two different METHODS OF INVESTIGATION
<b>CONNECTIONS</b>	
Digital Intensive	One across-the-curriculum course designated Digital Intensive that <b>is not being used</b> in METHODS OF INVESTIGATION or to fulfill the ATCE requirement for Diverse and Global Perspectives
Diverse and Global Perspectives	One across-the-curriculum course focusing on global and/or diverse communities that <b>is not being used</b> in METHODS OF INVESTIGATION or to fulfill the ATC requirement for Digital Intensive

**THE BACHELOR OF LIBERAL STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAM**

The Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Mary Washington bears a very close relationship to the academic mission of the University as it focuses on both disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies. The program is uniquely focused in supporting the educational and professional advancement of the nontraditional learner and in contributing to their economic development and that of the region in which they live and work.

The Bachelor of Liberal Studies program extends the boundaries of the University of Mary Washington's traditional bachelor programs to include wider and more diverse populations in the Fredericksburg area. The BLS program promotes the advancement of the nontraditional students' intellectual, academic, professional, and ethical development. BLS graduates are dedicated to community service as leaders in a global, diverse, and complex society. Rather than a traditional college-level opportunity which assumes a four-year residence at an institution of higher learning immediately after the completion of high school, BLS students require non-traditional strategies and opportunities to continue their education.

## RATIONALE STATEMENT

The BLS program has adopted the General Education categories approved by the University of Mary Washington faculty in April 2019. The BLS program has selected courses and requirements in the three categories of Foundations, Methods of Investigation, and Connections.

### Foundations

Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree program will complete a number of skills courses. BLS students will be required to take three courses designated as Writing Intensive and one course designated as Speaking Intensive. These intensive courses will give students in the BLS degree the skills and confidence needed to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

We have exempted BLS from these Foundation requirements:

1. **The first-year seminar.** Rationale: all BLS students are transfer students.
2. **The requirement for a second language.** Rationale: Non-traditional students find extreme difficulty in the acquisition of a second language due to length of time away from language learning, which typically takes place at the high-school level.

### Methods of Investigation

The General Education requirements for the Bachelor of Liberal Studies include significant coursework in the category of Methods of Investigation. BLS students will be required to complete one course in each of these categories: Arts and Literature, Humanities, Natural Science, Quantitative Reasoning, and Social Science. To ground students in the liberal arts, students will take three additional courses from any two categories, according to their interests and their desire to explore in greater depth subjects related to their prospective majors or minors.

Mindful of our population of transfer students, the category of Methods of Investigation encompasses many subjects currently accepted for transfer credit. The requirement of eight courses in Methods of Investigation should not pose a difficulty for our nontraditional student population.

### Connections

The BLS program believes in the mission of the institution: to provide the graduates of the University of Mary Washington with the skills meaningful and appropriate to function in our complex and diverse world. Through the development of skills and knowledge about the Information Age, the globe, or our increasingly diverse society, BLS students will receive an education that is on the cutting edge of societal changes. Through the completion of one course designated as Digital Intensive, students will leave the university knowing how to function in a rapidly developing digital environment. Likewise, students will complete one additional course that explores issues of global significance and that introduces them to cultural and

environmental diversity. BLS student will also need to complete two (2) discrete courses in the category of Connections. Neither of the courses included in Connections will be allowed to count twice.

BLS students are exempt from these Connections requirements:

**Beyond the Classroom and After Mary Washington**

Rationale: BLS students are engaged in the workforce and have other avenues to earn experiential credit (Portfolio review, for example). The Program believes in encouraging students to engage in our community but does not feel that we ought to require nontraditional students to do so, as it could prove burdensome to those who are part of the workforce.

Rationale for compliance with SACSCOC requirements\*

*(a) is based on a coherent rationale.*

The BLS general education requirements are coherent and appropriate for our population of nontraditional students.

*(b) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree program. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent.*

In addition to required courses in Methods, the BLS student will also need to complete two (2) discrete courses in the category of Connections. Neither of the courses included in Connections will be allowed to count twice. A total of these 10 required courses will earn students 30 credits in general education.

*(c) ensures breadth of knowledge. These credit hours include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. These courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession.*

BLS requires students to explore multiple disciplines in arts and sciences through eight (8) required courses in the Methods of Investigation category.

\*<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Interpret%20CR%202%207%203.pdf>