

**RECOMMENDATION TO MERGE
THE DEPARTMENT OF LIBERAL STUDIES AND THE ARTS AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND APPLIED STUDIES
TO CREATE THE DEPARTMENT OF LIBERAL ARTS AND APPLIED STUDIES**

BACKGROUND

The departments were originally part of UW-Extension. With integration of UW-Extension functions into UW-Madison in 1985 approximately 100 positions with cross-divisional or multi-unit responsibilities created the UW-Madison Division of University Outreach (DUO). The five DUO departments were: Liberal Studies, Governmental Affairs, Health and Human Issues, Communication Programs, and Continuing Education in the Arts.

In 1994, DUO was consolidated with Summer Sessions and Inter-College Programs, and was renamed the Division of Continuing Studies (DCS). In 1997, faced with shrinking numbers as retiring faculty were not replaced, the five DCS departments were merged into the existing two: Liberal Studies and the Arts and Professional Development and Applied Studies.

RATIONAL FOR MERGER

Over the last two years faculty and staff have engaged in a deliberative process and concluded that a merger of the two departments as the Department of Liberal Arts and Applied Studies (LAAS) makes sense programmatically, functionally, and fiscally.

- The departments have a shared mission of providing high quality and innovative continuing education classes for adults (lifelong learners), outreach, service, and scholarship.
- The distinction between personal enrichment and professional development continues to lessen, and classes and other programs reflect this change.
- In terms of day-to-day operations, the two departments increasingly have been functioning as one department. Examples include a move to one physical space, sharing of one department administrator, the sharing of a department chairperson, Executive Committees that meet jointly, and implementation of unified administrative practices and procedures that standardize course planning procedures, registration, marketing and other business practices for both departments.
- To a large extent, the public face is of one department. For example, learners see one dynamic catalog and one print catalog of course offerings.
- Both departments are revenue-generating; registration fees provide a significant proportion of the departmental budgets. This model requires business practices that seek efficiencies, reduce costs, and generate revenue. One department provides more flexibility to assign staff to projects and activities as needed.
- There is support for the merger. Faculty and staff from LSA and PDAS have been involved in a deliberative process and conclude it is time to make explicit the direction the departments have been moving. Chairs of the campus departments in which Continuing Studies faculty currently have affiliate status have expressed support for the merger.

The proposal to consolidate the Department of Liberal Studies and the Arts and the Department of Professional Development and Applied Studies as the Department of Liberal Arts and Applied Studies was approved unanimously by the Executive Committee of each department. The proposal to merge the departments was subsequently unanimously approved by the University Academic Planning Council.