

L&S Curriculum Committee Annual Report (2017-2018)

Overview

The L&S Curriculum Committee (LSCC) is comprised of faculty representatives from all L&S divisions, advisors, and ex-officio members from L&S Administration and L&S Student Academic Affairs. The LSCC advises the Dean on the curricular integrity of academic programs offered in the College of Letters and Science, from degree requirements affecting all L&S undergraduates, to changes to requirements for existing majors, certificates, and options. The committee reviews proposals to add, change, or delete courses from the L&S subject listings, after departmental approval and prior to final approval by the University Curriculum Committee. To maintain the integrity of the undergraduate Liberal Arts curriculum, the committee also considers requests to allow courses offered outside the college to count toward L&S undergraduate degree requirements by awarding them the designation of "Liberal Arts and Science" courses. At the Dean's request, the committee considers other issues related to undergraduate education for purposes of advising him, the faculty and L&S departments and programs, and the L&S division of Student Academic Affairs. Below are brief descriptions of issues addressed by the committee this past academic year.

Program Changes

LSCC guidelines regarding changes to requirements for academic programs remain in effect (<https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/page.php?id=20013>). The Committee and L&S Administration staff continue to work with departments to articulate the connections between requests for curricular changes and efforts to assess student learning in academic programs, to link changes to evidence, and to demonstrate more clearly effective student learning. As part of the approval process for changes to existing programs, implementation dates and teach-out plan are established to ensure that students on the "old" programs are still able to complete those requirements or that they may transition to the new requirements without adversely affecting their progress.

Information about these undergraduate program and policy changes are emailed to the advising community through advisor-link, to better communicate recent changes to advising staff across campus. The changes were approved effective Fall 2018 unless otherwise noted.

Undergraduate programs changes:

Afro-American Studies certificate – Clarified requirements and aligned DARS with requirements articulated in Guide.

Biochemistry – Undergraduate major (joint major with CALS): Brings total number of credit into alignment with guidelines and gives students great flexibility in completing requirements.

Botany – Undergraduate major: The new requirements make the Botany major more distinct from other biology-related majors, streamlines requirements (which also simplifies DARS encoding), and clarifies the independent research requirement.

Cartography and Geographic Information Systems – Undergraduate Major: Substantial revisions better align with foundational concepts necessary for employment in the field. The number of credits were reduced, issues causing exceptions were resolved, and the structure of requirements now aligns with the requirement categories of the newly restructured Geography major (requirements of "Breadth," "Depth," "Skills, Techniques & Methodologies," and "Capstone.")

Chemistry – Undergraduate Major and Honors: A new entrance requirement was approved, which requires students to complete a general Chemistry course prior to major declaration. Other changes clarify which courses are accepted towards the non-laboratory and laboratory requirements, which courses count toward the upper-level requirements, expand the list of courses that can meet the Physical Chemistry requirement, and align the Honors GPA calculation with how the GPA is calculated for the major.

Environmental Studies – Undergraduate Major: A small revision removes the requirement that one of the four foundation courses be taken at the Intermediate or Advanced level.

Geography – Undergraduate Major: Geography undergraduate major students will now declare one of three new Named Options: Human Geography, People Geography, and Physical Geography: Earth Systems and Environmental Processes. The requirements were restructured so that all students complete a common set of requirements including 'breadth' and a capstone. Students specialize in one area by completing "Depth" and "Skills, Techniques & Methodology" requirements with courses that are specific their declared Named Option.

Landscape Architecture, BLA. As part of the program move from CALS to L&S, the department of Planning and Landscape Architecture revised existing program requirements to better align with the L&S liberal arts context.

Journalism – Undergraduate Major: Students must complete one additional course (JOURN 203) and the social studies/humanities requirement in the major was simplified.

Psychology – Undergraduate Honors in the Major: PSYCH 386 and 686 are no longer required, and a new course is now required, PSYCH 380 Junior Honors Seminar.

Microbiology – Undergraduate Major (joint major with CALS): The change increases the total required number of credits required by 1 credit, to reflect a credit change of course required for all students..

Chinese and Japanese – Undergraduate Majors: (NOTE: These changes are effective Fall 2019, to align with the effective date of other curriculum changes related to restructuring in the department). The changes align the language requirements in both programs, create a structure where students progress through elementary, intermediate, and advanced level courses, and introduces more flexibility so students may take advantage of opportunities like study abroad, or may have time to complete the major even if they do not start studying Chinese or Japanese language freshmen year.

Graduate Program Changes:

Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies, M.A. Changes shift requirements from a professional MA model to a research model, including requiring a thesis and adding a methods course requirement.

Transdisciplinary Study of Visual Cultures, PhD Minor. Reduced the number of required credits from 12 to 9 by removing the independent study requirement.

New Programs

New programs require L&S Academic Planning Committee (L&S APC) review and approval. As part of the L&S review process for new programs, the L&S Curriculum Committee typically reviews and provides advice to the L&S APC about the proposed curriculum, in particular whether it aligns with L&S curricular policies and can be smoothly administered. This year, the L&S Curriculum Committee reviewed the curriculum of the following programs, all of which have since received both L&S APC and UAPC approvals. The administrative home of the program follows the program name:

New undergraduate programs:

Art History, Undergraduate Certificate (Art History)
Digital Cinema Production, Undergraduate Certificate (Communication Arts)
Public Policy, Undergraduate Certificate (LaFollette)

New graduate programs and capstone certificates:

Advanced GIS, Capstone Certificate (Geography)
New "Accelerated/Non-Thesis" Named Option in existing MS-Cartography/GIS (Geography)
Data Analytics for Decision Making, Capstone Certificate (Information School)
New "Quantum Computing" Named Option in existing MS-Physics (Physics)

Curricular Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

The L&S Curriculum Committee is frequently invited to comment on the development of campus policies. The committee commented on and supported the following proposals or policies:

- Honors-Optional course designation guidelines

The L&S CC also discussed and approved matters specific to L&S including:

- A request from the Math Department to offer a Credit by Exam for MATH 234.
- Creation of criteria for the L&S level designations
- Creation of guidelines and process for approving Additional Majors outside of the college to be offered to L&S students. The committee also approved two specific School of Education majors (Theatre & Drama, Education Studies) as AMAJ majors that can be offered to L&S students.
- Retirement of the "71 Curriculum" in DARS, and creating procedures for working with returning students who started under this curriculum.
- Clarification of policy around "LAS" (Liberal Arts and Science) credits and Honors in the Liberal Arts

Modifications to L&S Senior Residency policy. Previously the L&S senior residency requirement was defined as beginning with 90 credits. The policy was modified to "30 degree credits in residence after students have earned 86 credits." This change aligns with campus definition of senior status. Also, it gives students the flexibility to complete a small number of credits (four) out of residence

during their senior year, which should benefit students and greatly reduce requested exceptions. The addition of this flexibility also allows L&S to discontinue an alternate senior residency rule for students who complete their entire first 90 credits in residency.

Course Related Issues

Proposals to Add, Change, or Delete Courses

The LSCC is responsible for college-level review of proposals to add, change, or delete courses managed by L&S departments and programs. Proposals approved by department faculty are forwarded to the college-level Curriculum Committee for approval.

A review is conducted to evaluate whether the proposed courses or changes conform to technical requirements (e.g., valid course number, etc.) as well as the pedagogical goals of the College. New course proposals are carefully reviewed in terms of their syllabi, learning goals, and possible overlap/opportunities for cross-listing with existing courses. The LSCC chair and staff review all proposals to determine if they are ready for committee consideration, and committee members review all proposals online prior to the meeting. On any of these levels, questions may be asked of the faculty and units submitting the proposals; the committee chair and L&S staff work with departments to resolve questions that come up before proposals are submitted to the University Curriculum Committee. This year, the LSCC reviewed and approved 474 course proposals: 128 new courses, 314 changes, 16 deletions, and 15 proposals to add L&S designations to non-L&S courses. Other course related issues considered by the L&S Curriculum Committee includes:

- Requests from departments to update requisites on their entire course array (via an expedited review process)
- Departmental requests to delay automatic discontinuation of an 'obsolete course' (has not been taught in 8 years) because of immediate plans to revive the course.

L&S Curriculum Committee Members:

Chair: Michael Wagner, School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Members:

Seth Blair, Integrative Biology
Valerie Johnson, Psychology
Daniel Quint, Economics
Jelena Todorović, French & Italian
Susan Ridgely, Religious Studies
Jennifer Schomaker, Chemistry
Jean-Luc Thiffeault, Math

Student Members appointed through ASM:

Luke Moore
Quinn Wakley

Ex Officio:

Kimbrin Cornelius, L&S Administration
Elaine Klein, L&S Administration
Christopher Lee, L&S Student Academic Affairs
Jacqui Guthrie, L&S Honors Program

Michael J. Pflieger, L&S Student Academic Affairs
Nancy Westphal-Johnson, L&S Administration

Assistant to the Committee:

Joni Brown, L&S Administration

This report was approved by the L&S Curriculum Committee on October 23, 2018

Submitted by Kimbrin Cornelius, L&S, Curriculum Administration Specialist