

## **Bachelor of Liberal Arts – Assessment Plan**

Submitted: April 22, 2011

**BLA Work Group:** Robin Walz, BLA Coordinator & History (Juneau); Bill Urquhart, BLA Distance Coordinator & Sociology (Ketchikan); Kevin Krein, Philosophy (Juneau); Rod Landis, English (Ketchikan); Sol Neely, English (Juneau); John Radzilowski, History (Ketchikan); Jenifer Vernon, Communication (Juneau)

### **Description**

The Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree provides UAS students with a multidisciplinary course of academic study grounded in the Humanities. It is designed particularly for students who have already completed a two-year Associates degree, transfer students from other universities, and non-traditional students who have previously completed university credits.

Students consult with faculty in their areas of interest to design an interdisciplinary or individualized course of study. This Liberal Arts degree can lead to graduate school or jobs in which critical thinking and communication skills are valued. BLA graduates who are interested in teaching may also apply to the one-year Master at Arts in Teaching programs at UAS.

### **Mission Statement**

The Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree provides students with a self-selected course of study in multiple disciplines, grounded in a Liberal Arts core, which meets individual academic, career and personal goals.

The Bachelor of Liberal Arts program meets this mission through the completion of a student-faculty designed major based in the Humanities, supplemented by Social Science, Mathematics and Natural Science, and supported by all faculty in the School of Arts and Sciences.

### **Core Values**

The Bachelor of Liberal Arts promotes:

- **Multidisciplinary Thinking:** To demonstrate familiarity with content from diverse disciplines and be able to distinguish perspectives within those disciplines.
- **Cultural Diversity:** To recognize the myriad of beliefs, interactional patterns, and symbols shared among social groups.
- **Social Awareness:** To understand how a variety of social forces and cultural influences shape individual consciousness, experience, and status.

## Program Objectives

Students who complete the Bachelor of Liberal Arts will:

- Develop breadth and depth of knowledge in content areas.
- Articulate ideas and content through clear, purposeful and coherent written expression.
- Critically reflect upon their personal beliefs and desires.
- Articulate how the program meets their academic, career and personal goals.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students fulfill core values and program objectives in the Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree through:

- **A Liberal Arts Core:** Students become *multidisciplinary thinkers* through a common set of humanities courses and at least one additional course in math, natural science, or social science. Fundamental to the Liberal Arts core are *cultural diversity* requirements in second languages, comparative studies, or gender studies. In the Orientation to the Humanities course required at the beginning of the degree program, students complete assignments that *critically reflect upon their personal beliefs and desires*. In the required BLA Student Portfolio course, students create their *self-designed course of multidisciplinary study* and establish an entry-level portfolio with examples of *written work* that include a resume, academic and creative work, and an essay that *articulates their academic, career and personal goals*.
- **Emphasis Fields:** In consultation with and mentored by a faculty advisor, all BLA students pursue their *self-selected course of multidisciplinary study* through an emphasis in Interdisciplinary Studies, a Designated Emphasis, or as an Independent Design. At least half of the coursework completed in these emphasis fields is at the upper-division level, and include assignments that demonstrate the student's ability to *articulate ideas and content through clear, purposeful and coherent written expression*.
- **A Senior Capstone Project:** Students demonstrate mastery of *multidisciplinary knowledge* through the completion of a capstone project. The results of that project are presented in a *written* academic paper or capstone essay to be included in the student's BLA portfolio.
- **The BLA portfolio:** In this portfolio, students *articulate how their BLA program of study has met their academic, career and personal goals*. Students establish their portfolios after admission to the Bachelor of Liberal Arts Degree program and continue to add to its content over the course of their program. During their graduating semester, students complete and present the finalized portfolio. The portfolio provides evidence that students have internalized the *core values* of the degree program and have met its *program goals*. The portfolio also serves as a method of *student self-assessment*.

## University Competencies

In addition to the core values, objectives, and student outcomes of the Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree program, the University of Alaska Southeast has established six areas of skill competency for all students:

- **Communication:** College graduates should be able to write, speak, read, and listen effectively for multiple purposes and to a variety of audiences.
- **Quantitative Skills:** College graduate should be able to read and follow logical reasoning, solve mathematical and quantitative problems, and apply logical and mathematical methods.
- **Information Literacy:** College graduates should be able to identify and locate needed information, analyze, integrate and communicate it, and evaluate its usefulness.
- **Computer Usage:** College graduates should have the knowledge to make efficient use of computers and information technology in their personal and professional lives.
- **Professional Behavior:** College graduates should have good work habits, make ethical decisions, recognize the value of community service, and engage in successful human relations.
- **Critical Thinking:** College graduates should be proficient in conceptualizing, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, interpreting, and applying ideas and information.

All of these skill competencies are introduced through university General Education Requirements. The Bachelor of Liberal Arts program particularly emphasizes the development and mastery of written and oral communication, critical thinking, and professional behavior, although other competencies may be emphasized as determined by the individual student's program of multidisciplinary courses.

## Bachelor of Liberal Arts Student Assessment

All Bachelor of Liberal Arts students complete a common set of core requirements, gain depth and breadth of knowledge through multidisciplinary emphasis fields of study, and synthesize their learning through a capstone project. The BLA Student Portfolio is used as the basis for faculty evaluation of student success in the degree program, student self-assessment of academic and personal accomplishments in the program, and continuing program assessment.

**Liberal Arts Core:** The *academic* purpose of the Liberal Arts core is to provide students with a common body of knowledge, grounded in the Humanities. Its *cultural* purpose is to expose students to, and engage them with, a diversity of beliefs, people, and experiences. Its *social* purpose is for students to begin to regard themselves as a cohort of Liberal Arts students and to

critically reflect upon themselves and their relationship to society. The Liberal Arts core achieves these goals through the following curriculum:

- **Orientation to the Liberal Arts (HUM 200):** In this required introductory seminar, each student situates herself or himself in relation to the Liberal Arts tradition. The seminar provides a forum where participants read, critically examine, and discuss a common set of materials according to identified themes or issues in a group setting. This seminar emphasizes the university mandated skill competency of *professional behavior* by having students develop academic and interpersonal skills appropriate to seminar learning and professional civility. It also introduces the Bachelor of Liberal Arts core value of *multidisciplinary thinking* by familiarizing students with basic questions and modes of thinking within the liberal arts tradition. It also introduces students the core value of *social awareness* by situating herself or himself in relation to this tradition in a series of written assignments that require her or him to *critically reflect upon their personal beliefs and desires*.
- **BLA Student Portfolio (HUM 210):** In this required applied course, students develop individual Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree plans and initially establish an electronic BLA Portfolio which includes a resume, examples of best written work, examples of creative work, and representative work from required cultural diversity courses. The cornerstone of this initial portfolio is a “Personal Goals Essay,” which *articulate how the degree program will meet the student’s academic, career and personal goals*.
- **Philosophy (Introduction, Logic, or Ethics):** *Critical self-reflection* is a cornerstone of the Liberal Arts. At UAS, students may achieve this through PHIL 101, 201, 206 or 301. Students who have completed a course in Introduction to Philosophy, Logic, or Ethics at another university may apply that course to this requirement.
- **Communication, Literature or Writing Elective (upper-division):** Continuing development in *communication* is a university mandated skill competency supported by the Liberal Arts program objective that students *articulate ideas and content through clear, purposeful and coherent written expression*. Students continue to develop these skills through completion of an additional Communication (COMM) or Literature or Writing (ENGL) course at the 300 or 400 level.
- **Social Science, Math or Natural Science Elective:** In support of the Bachelor of Liberal Arts core value of *multidisciplinary thinking*, students are required to take at least one additional content course outside of the Humanities beyond General Education Requirements.
- **Cultural Diversity (two courses):** The Liberal Arts core value of *cultural diversity* is intended to introduce all Liberal Arts students to language acquisition beyond English, comparative knowledge societies and cultures (including Africa, Asia, Latin America, Middle Eastern, and indigenous peoples), or to gender studies. The following UAS courses routinely qualify as cultural diversity courses

**Emphasis Fields:** This is the primary place in the Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree program where students *develop breadth and depth of knowledge in content areas*. The three emphasis field options – Interdisciplinary Studies, Designated Emphasis, or Independent Design – all combine multiple disciplinary fields. For this reason, no single set of criteria covers all of core values, program objectives, or university competencies that might predominate in an individual student’s emphasis curriculum. At the same time, completion of the emphasis field constitutes a form of *formative and continual assessment* involving multiple submissions of academic work and faculty evaluation which provides students with accumulated opportunities to *articulate ideas and content through clear, purposeful and coherent written expression* and *critically reflect upon their personal beliefs and desires*.

**Capstone:** In HUM 499 Humanities Capstone, students complete capstone requirements to demonstrate *mastery of multidisciplinary content* in their individual Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree program. Student design, completion, and presentation of a capstone project are the primary outcomes for this course. Students also prepare and submit their completed BLA Student Portfolio, which provides the evidential basis for final assessment of each student’s attainment of Bachelor of Liberal Arts *core values* and *program objectives* and university skill *competencies*. With the support of a student’s faculty advisor, a 400-level internship, practicum, or independent study may be substituted for the capstone project, although the student is still required to meet the schedule of BLA Student Portfolio deadlines established in that term Humanities Capstone course.

**Final Student Assessment** is accomplished in three ways:

**1. Capstone Presentation:** During the final weeks of HUM 499 Humanities Capstone, all students eligible for graduation – including students who have completed a 400-level internship, practicum, or independent study – deliver a formal presentation on their capstone project for the other students in the seminar and the Liberal Arts faculty. Students and faculty in attendance complete an evaluation form for each presenter. The HUM 499 professor writes a final narrative assessment of *mastery of multidisciplinary content* based upon completion of the capstone project and the completed presentation evaluation forms.

**2. BLA Student Portfolio:** This portfolio is the cornerstone for student learning assessment overall. Students begin to compile an electronic portfolio in HUM 210 BLA Portfolio Review. In HUM 499 students complete that portfolio. Students who have completed a 400-level internship, practicum, or independent study follow the same schedule for completion of the portfolio as HUM 499 students.

At mid-semester, students submit their portfolios to the HUM 499 Instructor and the Humanities Director of Composition and Assessment for formative written assessment comments. At the end of the semester, students submit their completed portfolio for evaluation by two assigned BLA degree program faculty.

**Portfolio Contents with corresponding primary Program Objectives**

1. Resume – Chronological or Functional. *Program Objective: Critical Self-Reflection.*
2. Academic Writing: Formal or Analytic (12-15 pp.). *Program Objective: Written Articulation of Ideas and Content.*
3. Creative Work – e.g., creative writing (maximum 12-15 pp.), annotated slides (artwork, installations – PowerPoint or Word document), PowerPoint presentation, video (performance). *Program Objective: Breadth and Depth of Knowledge.*
4. Cultural Diversity: representative work or assigned cultural diversity essay. *Assessment Elements: Critical Self-Reflection.*
5. Capstone Project: from HUM 499, Internship, Practicum or Independent Study. *Program Objective: Breadth and Depth of Knowledge.*
6. BLA Goals & Outcomes Essays. *Program Objective: Academic, Career, and Personal Goals.*

**Assessment Rubric for Portfolio Evaluation:** The contents of each category in the portfolio is evaluated in three dimensions:

- CLEAR – Focus, clarity of expression, clarity of presentation (style)
- PURPOSEFUL – Approach, Use, Audience Awareness
- COHERENT – Organization, development

Each rubric element is evaluated on a four-point scale:

- 4 = Excellent
- 3 = Exceeds Expectations
- 2 = Meets Expectations
- 1 = Insufficiently Developed

The scores are compiled as aggregate data for purposes of program assessment.

**Narrative Evaluation:** Each portfolio evaluator will write a summary narrative evaluation of the portfolio, evaluating the student's overall attainment of the BLA core values of *multidisciplinary knowledge*, *cultural diversity*, and *social awareness*.

**3. Exit Survey:** At the end of the semester, all graduating BLA students gather with BLA faculty to provide evaluations of their experiences in the BLA program. Each student will give an *oral evaluation* of their personal experiences in the program, followed by a general discussion of all students with attendant BLA faculty. At this time, students will also complete a *written evaluation* that will be used for purposes of program assessment.

### **Program Assessment Cycle**

Every academic year, both student and program assessment occurs on the following schedule:

- 1. Faculty Evaluation of current BLA graduates:** occurs every semester at the time of exit interviews.
- 2. BLA Coordinator:** prepares mid-year and year-end degree program reports for the BLA Program Faculty, Dean of Arts & Sciences, and the Provost's office.
- 3. BLA Program Faculty Annual Review:** during Fall Convocation each year, the BLA faculty to review data gathered from BLA graduate exit interviews and to suggest modifications to the program as needed.
- 4. Student Self-Assessment:** occurs at the beginning and end of the degree program through the BLA Student Portfolio.
- 5. BLA Program Review:** occurs every five years.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. HUM 200 & 210 Syllabi
2. HUM 499 Syllabus
3. Capstone Presentation Evaluation Form
4. Final Portfolio Evaluation Rubric and Form
5. Student Portfolio Narrative Summary Evaluation Form
6. BLA Graduate Exit Survey Form

**Bachelor of Liberal Arts  
Student Portfolio – Final Review**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment Rubric for Portfolio Evaluation.** The contents of each Portfolio Content item is evaluated in three dimensions:

- CLEAR – Focus, clarity of expression, clarity of presentation (style).
- PURPOSEFUL – Approach, use, audience awareness.
- COHERENT – Organization, development.

Each of those dimensions is evaluated on a four-point scale:

- 4 = Excellent
- 3 = Exceeds Expectations
- 2 = Meets Expectations
- 1 = Insufficiently Developed

Item	Program Objective	
1. Resumé or c.v. (chronological or functional)	Critical Self-Reflection	CLEAR: _____ PURPOSEFUL: _____ COHERENT: _____

Comments:

Item	Program Objective	
2. Academic Writing: Formal or Analytic (12-15 pages)	Written Articulation of Ideas and Content	CLEAR: _____ PURPOSEFUL: _____ COHERENT: _____

Comments:



Item	Program Objective	
3. Creative Work: e.g. creative writing (max. 12-15 pages), annotated slides, PowerPoint presentation, video.	Breadth and Depth of Knowledge	CLEAR: ____ PURPOSEFUL: ____ COHERENT: ____

Comments:

Item	Program Objective	
4. Cultural Diversity: representative work or cultural diversity essay.	Critical Self-Reflection	CLEAR: ____ PURPOSEFUL: ____ COHERENT: ____

Comments:

Item	Program Objective	
5. Capstone Project: from HUM 499 (independent study, internship, practicum or experiential learning)	Breadth and Depth of Knowledge	CLEAR: ____ PURPOSEFUL: ____ COHERENT: ____

Comments:

Item	Program Objective	
6. BLA Goals & Outcomes Essays	Academic, Career, and Personal Goals	CLEAR: ____ PURPOSEFUL: ____ COHERENT: ____

Comments:

## HUM 200 Orientation to the Liberal Arts

Professor Robin Walz  
Fall 2010  
Email: [rwalz@uas.alaska.edu](mailto:rwalz@uas.alaska.edu)

Office: Soboleff 214  
Hours: MWF 1:30-11:30 am & 1:30-2:30 pm  
Tel: 796-6433

**Description.** Traditionally, acquiring a liberal arts education has been synonymous with “becoming a free person.” In classical antiquity, this expressed the difference between being a slave or a self-governing individual; today, it represents the difference between those who pursue knowledge for technical or professional ends, and those who seek a broadly based, interdisciplinary education as the foundation for their adult life and vocation. As an approach to a university education, the liberal arts have scholastic origins in the medieval era when formal instruction was divided into two groups, the *Trivium* of grammar, rhetoric and logic and the *Quadrivium* of geometry, arithmetic, music and astronomy. With the modern development of specializations of knowledge based on scientific, quantitative, or technical training, today liberal arts programs in college and universities throughout the United States are typically housed in the Humanities. At UAS, the Bachelor of Liberal Arts is an interdisciplinary or individually designed program of study undertaken by baccalaureate students with the guidance of a faculty advisor.

**Goal.** Over the course of this semester, each student will situate herself or himself in relation to the liberal arts tradition. This will occur within a seminar setting, a highly participatory give-and-take style of group learning. The seminar provides a forum within which participants read, critically examine, and discuss a common set of materials according to identified themes or issues in a group setting. In this introductory seminar, participants will accomplish this goal in two ways. First, they will develop academic and interpersonal skills appropriate to seminar learning and professional civility. Second, they will become familiar with basic questions and modes of thinking common to the liberal arts tradition.

**Requirements (Objectives).** Students will generally accomplish the stated goal through consistent class attendance, completing readings in advance of seminar sessions, and active participation in seminar assignments. Depth of understanding will be demonstrated by writing three short response essays on “The Liberal Arts and Me” over the course of the semester, through preparing and leading seminar discussions, and in writing a culminating essay on one’s personal goals in pursuing a Liberal Arts Major which will be placed in each student’s BLA Electronic Portfolio. Through successful accomplishment of these activities, students will be *introduced* to university competencies in the areas of written and oral communication, computer skills, critical thinking, and professional behavior.

**Grading (Assessment).** The course grade will be weighted and calculated on the follow basis:

Attendance & Assignments	(20%)	Absences or Missing Work: 0-2=A; 3-4=B; 5-6=C; 7-8=D; 9+=F
Leading Readings Discussion	(30%)	Group Prep, Presentation, Questions & Leading Discussion Successfully Leading Seminar: 3=A; 2=B; 1=C; 0=F
Individual Presentation	(10%)	Letter Grade
Response Essays	(30%)	Three short <i>UAS Online</i> essays, each with a possible score of 4 Cumulative: 12-11=A; 10-8=B; 7-5=C; 4-3=D; 2-0=F
Liberal Arts Goals Essay	(10%)	Letter Grade

**Readings.** All readings are required and are available for purchase at the UAS Bookstore.

Frank McCourt, *'Tis: A Memoir*

Penguin Custom Editions, *Orientation to the Liberal Arts: Classic Readings on Human Dignity*

Selected Articles posted on *UAS Online!*

## Seminar Schedule

Note: Complete readings *before* attending the scheduled seminar.

Wed, Sept 8 Introduction: Why the Liberal Arts Today?  
*Complete Homework Assignment #1 on UAS Online! before the Sept 13 class session*

### Part One A Life Transformed by the Liberal Arts

Required Text: Frank McCourt, *'Tis: A Memoir*

Mon, Sept 13 Coming to America: McCourt's Memory of the Young Immigrant Experience  
Reading: McCourt, *'Tis* : Chapters 1-10 (pp. 13-66)  
*Complete Homework Assignment #2 on UAS Online! before the Sept 15 class session*

Wed, Sept 15 Going to College: McCourt's Memory of being a Working-Class Student  
Reading: McCourt, *'Tis* : Chapters 23-30 (pp. 146-189)  
*Complete Homework Assignment #3 on UAS Online! before the Sept 20 class session*

Mon, Sept 20 Becoming "Teacher Man": McCourt's Early Experiences as a High School Teacher  
Reading: McCourt, *'Tis* : Chapters 35-39 (pp. 216-258) & 51-56 (pp. 331-367)

Wed, Sept 22 Open Discussion: How might the Liberal Arts influence Your Future?

Mon, Sept 27 Summary Discussion: How does the Liberal Arts Fit into My Life & Vocation?  
**"The Liberal Arts & Me" Essay #1 (UAS Online) — Due Before Seminar**

### Part Two The Liberal Arts Tradition: Classic Readings on Human Worth & Dignity

Required Text: *Orientation to the Liberal Arts: Classic Readings on Human Dignity*

Wed, Sept 29 Who Cares Who Reads? Developing Breadth and Depth of Understanding  
Reading: Ursula LeGuin, "Staying Awake: Notes on the Alleged Decline of Reading"  
(posted on *UAS Online!*)

Mon, Oct 4 The Activity & Art of Reading: Approaches, Goals, and Helpful Rules for Analyzing, Interpreting, and Critiquing Texts  
In-Class Presentation: Mortimer J. Adler & Charles Van Doren, *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*

Wed, Oct 6 The Liberal Arts: The Western Tradition "You Already Know"  
***In-Class Sign-Up for Seminar Presentation Groups***

Mon, Oct 11 Presentation Group #1: Classical Origins – The Socratic Method (4th Century BCE)  
Reading: Plato, "Know Thyself"  
Plato, "Equality for Women"  
Plato, "The Simile of the Cave"

Wed, Oct 13 Presentation Group #2: Classical Virtues (4th Century BCE – 1st Century CE)  
Reading: Aristotle, "The Golden Mean"  
Aristotle, "The State's Role in Moral Education"  
Seneca, "Should a Philosopher Withdraw from the World?"

- Mon, Oct 18 Presentation Group #3: A Scholastic Education (11th – 13th Centuries)  
Reading: Hugh of St. Victor, “On Studying and Teaching”  
 Roger Bacon, “Experimental Science”  
 Robert de Sorbonne, “Statutes for a College”
- Wed, Oct 20 Presentation Group #4: Renaissance Humanism (14th – 16th Centuries)  
Reading: Francesco Petrarch, “The Ascent of Mount Ventoux”  
 Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, “The Dignity of Man”  
 Michel de Montaigne, “Cannibals”
- Mon, Oct 25 Presentation Group #5: The Scientific Revolution in “New Knowledge” (17th Century)  
Reading: Galileo Galilei, “Principles of Scientific Method”  
 René Descartes, “A Method for Thinking Clearly and Distinctly”  
 John Locke, “The Extent of Human Knowledge”
- Wed, Oct 27 Presentation Group #6: Individual Enlightenment (18th – 19th Centuries)  
Reading: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Where Truth Lies”  
 Mary Wollstonecraft, “A False System of Education”  
 John Stuart Mill, “Individuality”
- Mon, Nov 1 Presentation Group #7: Biological & Psychological Challenges (19th – 20th Centuries)  
Reading: Charles Darwin, “The Human Animal”  
 Fyodor Dostoyevsky, “A Spiteful Man”  
 Virginia Woolf, “Of Bodies and Brains”
- Wed, Nov 3 Presentation Group #8: Individual Responses to Oppressive Systems (Mid-20th Century)  
Reading: George Orwell, “Why I Write”  
 Karl Jaspers, “The Basic Questions”  
 Hannah Arendt, “Eichmann in Jerusalem”
- Mon, Nov 8 Summary Discussion: What Use is the Liberal Arts Tradition to Me?  
**“The Liberal Arts & Me” Essay #2 (*UAS Online*) — Due *Before Seminar***
- Part Three The Liberal Arts in the Twenty-First Century**  
 Required Readings: posted on *UAS Online!*<sup>v5</sup>
- Wed, Nov 10 Option Discussion: Is a Liberal Arts Education Relevant Today?
- Mon, Nov 15 Presentation Group #9: On the Uses of a Liberal Arts Education (1)  
Reading: Mark Edmundson, “As Lite Entertainment for Bored College Students” (1997)
- Wed, Nov 17 Presentation Group #10: On the Uses of a Liberal Arts Education (2)  
Reading: Earl Shorris, “As a Weapon in the Hands of the Restless Poor” (1997)
- Mon, Nov 22 Presentation Group #11: Is a Liberal Arts Education “Relevant”? (1)  
Reading: Kate Zernkie, “Career U. – Making College ‘Relevant’” & Readers’ Responses (2010)
- Wed, Nov 24 Presentation Group #12: Is a Liberal Arts Education “Relevant”? (2)  
Reading: Darryl Campbell, “Wisdom as a Secret Learning Objective” (2010)
- Mon, Nov 29 The Liberal Arts in My Life: Individual Presentations (1)

Wed, Dec 1	The Liberal Arts in My Life: Individual Presentations (2)
Mon, Dec 6	The Liberal Arts in My Life: Individual Presentations (3)
Wed, Dec 8	Wrap Up Discussion: The Liberal Arts & Me? <b>“The Liberal Arts &amp; Me” Essay #3 (UAS Online) — Due Before Seminar</b>
<b>Fri, Dec 17</b>	<b>Liberal Arts Goals Essay for the BLA Portfolio Due: 12 noon</b>

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## Clarification on Course Assignments and Requirements

### 1. Attendance & Participation in Seminar Assignments (20% Course Grade)

UAS Competencies: Oral & Written Communication, Professional Behavior

More than many other styles of learning, a seminar requires active participation. Completing assigned reading, attending sessions, and actively discussing issues in class are the bases of course content. Being a conscientious seminar participant is also a professional responsibility. ***There is no substitute for seminar participation; there are no “make up” activities.*** Also, at times you will be asked to complete small tasks in preparation for a specific seminar session; ***failure to complete an assigned seminar task counts as an absence.*** Absences or Missed Work: 0-2=A; 3-4=B; 5-6=C; 7-8=D; 9+=F.

### 2. “The Liberal Arts & Me” Response Essays (30% Course Grade)

UAS Competencies: Written Communication, Computer Usage, Critical Thinking, Professional Behavior

Three times over the course of the seminar, you will write short “The Liberal Arts & Me” response essays that correspond to seminar readings and issues (written communication, critical thinking). You will write and post using the Essay feature of *UAS Online* (computer usage). Each response essay is due by the class time as noted on the syllabus. ***Late essays will not be accepted*** (professional behavior). After submitting your response essay, you will be able to read the essays posted by the other members of the seminar. Essays are scored 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). Your grade for this requirement is determined by your cumulative score: 16-15=A; 14-11=B; 10-6=C; 5-3=D; 2-0=F. ***Professor Walz judges the quality of the essays and will score them accordingly.***

### 3. Leading Seminar (30% Course Grade)

UAS Competencies: Oral & Written Communication, Critical Thinking, Professional Behavior

Unlike lecture courses, where professors prepare every class session and instruct students, seminars rely upon the participants to conduct many of the sessions. During Parts Three and Four of the course, you will lead seminar discussions in small groups. You are required to participate in at least one session. Your grade is based upon the number of times you successfully lead those sessions: 3=A; 2=B; 1=C; 0=F.

**Definition of “successfully leading the seminar session”:** Complete ***at least two*** of the following:

- 1) Actively participate in the small group preparation for the session, which includes discussing the reading and formulating discussion questions (critical thinking, professional behavior).
- 2) Deliver a portion of the group presentation on the assigned material (oral communication).
- 3) Lead the seminar in at least one of the discussion questions (oral communication, professional behavior).

Specific instructions about preparing and leading seminar sessions will be given in class.

#### 4. The Liberal Arts in My Life: Individual Presentations (10% Course Grade)

UAS Competencies: Written & Oral Communication, Professional Behavior

In addition to leading seminar sessions, you will give a 10 minute presentation on some reading, person, or experience that relates to one of your fields of study in the BLA and has had a significant influence upon you. There will be both written and oral dimensions to this assignment. Presentation guidelines and grading criteria will be distributed in class.

#### 5. Liberal Arts Goals Essay (10% Course Grade)

UAS Competencies: Written Communication, Computer Usage, Critical Thinking, Professional Behavior

As a culminating activity in the seminar, you will write an essay on your academic, personal, and career goals in pursuing the Liberal Arts major. The essay will be permanently placed in your BLA Electronic Portfolio on the HUM 210 BLA Portfolio Review *UAS Online* homesite. This is a formal writing assignment that needs to conform to MLA style (see Hacker's *Guide* or other style manual). **Professor Walz will evaluate the quality of the essays and will grade them accordingly.** This essay is due on or before Friday, December 17 (scheduled final). ***Late essays will not be accepted.***

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#### Additional Important Information

**Disability Policy.** There are policies and procedures at UAS to assist students with documented physical, psychological, and learning or other cognitive disabilities. The UAS Disabilities Services office evaluates reasonable accommodation for documented disabilities within a particular course. To learn about the resources available at UAS to assist students with disabilities in their academic studies, contact Disabilities Support Services at 796-6000 or [dss@uas.alaska.edu](mailto:dss@uas.alaska.edu).

**Plagiarism Policy.** Plagiarism is a when a writer uses another person's work without obtaining formal permission or giving proper acknowledgement. This happens in three ways: copying another person's work (including purchasing a paper online), directly quoting without providing credit citations (this includes "cutting and pasting" from the internet), or paraphrasing another person's words instead of using your own. The UAS policy on plagiarism is explained in detail in the Student Code of Conduct ([http://www.uas.alaska.edu/student\\_services/handbook/code/behavioral.html](http://www.uas.alaska.edu/student_services/handbook/code/behavioral.html)). ***Students who plagiarize will fail the given assignment and, upon Professor Walz's discretion, may fail the course as well.***

**How the Overall Course Grade is Calculated.** Your grade is the ***weighted cumulative average*** of your graded coursework (mean average). This is the same as the way your GPA is calculated.

**Missed Assignments.** ***All dates are firm***; plan your absences around them. There is no "make up" or "extra credit" work. Students who, due to illness or other circumstances, are unable to complete the course should see Professor Walz about receiving an "Incomplete."

**Incompletes.** Students in good standing (earning a C grade or better) who end up having a prolonged absence need to meet with Professor Walz to discuss whether they qualify for an "Incomplete." ***Failure to complete assignments or turn in papers does not qualify for an Incomplete.***

**Withdrawal (Drop) Dates.** September 9 (100% refund); September 16 (50% refund); November 24 (last day to withdraw; no refund). ***Withdrawals must be officially recorded at Admissions and Records (Novatney building).***

## HUM 210 BLA Portfolio Review

Professor Robin Walz  
Fall 2010  
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Office: Soboleff 214  
Hours: MWF 1:30-11:30 am & 1:30-2:30 pm  
Tel: 796-6433

**Description.** In this applied course, students develop their individual Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree plans and set up an Electronic BLA Portfolio.

**Goal.** Each student will define and implement an individual BLA program plan.

**Requirements (Objectives).** Students will generally accomplish the stated goal through consistent class attendance, completing class assignments, develop a BLA program plan and schedule that is approved by a faculty advisor, and set up an electronic BLA portfolio. Through successful accomplishment of these activities, students will be *introduced* to university competencies in the areas of computer skills and professional behavior.

**Grading (Assessment).** This is a Pass/Fail course. To receive a **Pass**, a student must successfully complete *all three* of the following tasks:

1. Attendance & Homework Assignments (No more than *three* absences *or* incomplete assignments).
2. Complete a Faculty Advisor Approved BLA Degree Plan & Degree Completion Schedule.
3. Establish an Electronic BLA Portfolio that includes a résumé or c.v., examples of written or creative work, and a Liberal Arts Goals essay.

Students who receive a **Fail** must retake HUM 210 in a later term and complete all three tasks.

**Material Requirements.** Students need to bring a personal laptop computer with Wifi internet connectivity to class sessions. Students who do not own this resource may sign-out a UAS laptop from IT Services, but they will have to complete assignments on a home computer or in the UAS Computer Lab.

### Friday Class Schedule

Subject to revision during the semester.

- Sept 3 The BLA: The Degree Design and What It Means
- Sept 10 Where You Currently Stand: Transcript, Advisor, Core & Diversity Courses
- Sept 17 Charting Out Your Degree Plan: Excel Worksheet & Degree Completion Schedule
- Sept 24 Scheduling Your Degree Plan: Introduction to Degree Works
- Oct 1 Reviewing Your Degree Plan & Completion Schedule with Your Faculty Advisor
- Oct 8 Finding the Courses I Need (1): NSE (National Student Exchange) & Study Abroad Options
- Oct 15 Finding the Courses I Need (2): UAS Distance (Ketchikan & Sitka) Options
- Oct 22 Faculty Advisor Approved Degree Plan: Signed, Sealed, Delivered

- Oct 29 The BLA Portfolio: What Is It?
- Nov 5 Résumé & C.V. Writing: Looking at Various Models
- Nov 12 Examples of Best Written or Creative Work (1): Selecting (Bring 2 Copies of 3 Pieces to Class)
- Nov 19 Examples of Best Written or Creative Work (2): Critiquing (Returning Work to Authors)
- Nov 26 Thanksgiving Holiday (no class session)
- Dec 3 Uploading Résumé or CV to the Electronic Portfolio
- Dec 10 Uploading Written, Creative Work, or Cultural Diversity Essay to the Electronic Portfolio
- Fri, Dec 17 – Upload BLA Personal Goals Essay from HUM 200 to the Electronic Portfolio**

### **Additional Important Information**

**Disability Policy.** There are policies and procedures at UAS to assist students with documented physical, psychological, and learning or other cognitive disabilities. The UAS Disabilities Services office evaluates reasonable accommodation for documented disabilities within a particular course. To learn about the resources available at UAS to assist students with disabilities in their academic studies, contact Disabilities Support Services at 796-6000 or [dss@uas.alaska.edu](mailto:dss@uas.alaska.edu).

**Missed Assignments.** There is no “make up” or “extra credit” work. *All dates are firm*, unless Prof. Walz revises the schedule. Plan accordingly.

**Pass / Fail Course Grade.** To receive a **Pass**, a student must successfully complete *all three* of the following tasks: 1. Attendance & Homework Assignments (No more than *three* absences *or* incomplete assignments); 2. Complete a Faculty Advisor Approved BLA Degree Plan & Degree Completion Schedule; 3. Establish an Electronic BLA Portfolio that includes a résumé or c.v., examples of written or creative work, and a Liberal Arts Goals essay (assigned in HUM 200). Students who receive a **Fail** must retake HUM 210 in a later term and complete all three tasks.

**Withdrawal (Drop) Dates.** September 9 (100% refund); September 16 (50% refund); November 24 (last day to withdraw; no refund). *Withdrawals must be officially recorded at Admissions and Records (Novatney building).*



# HUM 499: Humanities Capstone

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*Spring, 2010*

*Wednesday 5:50-8:50, Egan 220*

Professor: Jenifer Vernon, PhD

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Office: SOB210

Office Hrs: 3:00-4:00 Thursday and by appointment

In this last course of the Humanities sequence, students will reflect back on their educational paths, identify interests and values, articulate new goals, and envision future work. To this end, they will keep a journal, conduct an interview with a professional/mentor, and learn about publishing in their areas of interest. Further, they will produce a vita and cover letter directed toward an organization they hope to work with as employees, volunteers or graduate students. In addition to this individualized work, students will collaborate to present a panel or project at the 2010 UAS Spring Forum: *Animals and Society*, and help organize this event. Participation in the Forum will afford students experience presenting in a professional milieu and in organizing, and give them an opportunity to share their work with a public audience at this key juncture in their lives. Ultimately, the course activities, readings, writing, screenings and discussion will help students produce the narrative structure and necessary components of the final project for the Capstone course: the Portfolio.

## Schedule

**1/20** Setting big goals and term goals. Discussion of syllabus, interviews, *Spring Forum*, and portfolio. Reading: Selections from *Wishcraft*, *Fooling with Words* and article on Humanities professions for 1/27. Journal #1, assignment from *Wishcraft* (1 ½ page response) due 1/27.

**1/27** *Identifying Values and Representing Self*. Discussion of Journal entries. Identifying interests and values, imagining possibilities. Reading: Selections from *Wishcraft* and article on Narrative for 2/3. Visit from Wendy Girven on e-blogs and more. Drafting an introductory statement on e-blogs. Journal #2: reflecting on the story one tells the world about oneself on Facebook. What interests and values are reflected in this story? What kind of lifestyle does she aspire to? What more could be said about what makes this person tick, and about what matters most to her? (1 ½ page response) due 2/3.

**2/3** *Interviews with Mentors*. Discussion of Journal entries. Choosing an interviewee/mentor, developing interview skills to draw out a life story, crafting questions, review of recording devices and set up. Reading: Article on Interviewing and selection from Studs Terkel's *Working* for 2/10. Journal #3: describe interviewee, why you want to interview this person, where the interview will take place, what kind of recording equipment you will use, and what ten open-ended questions you will ask to get at the areas you are interested in—and at the same time, let the interviewee lead and tell his or her story. Draw on the reading in your discussion. (2 ½ to 3 page response) due 2/10.

**2/10** Discussion of Journal entries. Screening of filmic bibliographies in students' areas of interest. Interview prep run through. Reading: Articles in interviewees' subject areas to prep for interviews for 2/17. Homework: conduct interviews and come prepared to discuss and screen them in class on 2/17.

**2/17** *Life Stories and Emergent Themes*. Screening and discussion of Interviews. Reading: Articles on students' topics for 2/24. Journal #4: As soon after the interview as possible, write about it. How did it go? Did he or she say anything that surprised you? Did you glean any practical advice about how to move from A to D? What door-openers happened in this person's path? Get some of your initial hunches down in a ½ to 1 page journal entry. Then listen and/or view your recording of the interview and address the following questions. This second listening is key to be able to understand deeper meanings. How did the interviewee get from where he started to where he ended up? Describe your interviewee's path—did she have a clear goal before she began or did her road reveal itself as she went along? What narrative themes emerged in the interviewee's life story? How did the interviewee's values influence his or her decisions? What kind of lifestyle was important to him? Does he have a good life/work balance? Does he find his work fulfilling? Would this kind of work be right for you? Or, is it not quite right? What would make this ideal kind of work and life expressed by the interviewee, even better to suit a person like you? Draw on the reading in your discussion when relevant. (3 ½ to 4 pages) due 2/24.

**2/24** *Collaborative Art Making*. Discussion of journals and reading first part of class, discussion of collaborative art project second part of class. Producing a collaborative piece to present and/or exhibit at Spring Forum on personally relevant topics and theme of animals and society. Is this possible? How, what, who, why, where. Brainstorming, project designing, possible visit from Wendy Girven. E-blog projected piece on Conference wall? Big material thing like the poetry-tree? Reading: Selections related to project for 3/3. Journal #5: sketch and write about collaborative project. What ideas do you hope to convey? How? Cut and paste images and words from magazines and/or newspapers that help express your ideas. Incorporate the reading into your response. (1 ½-2 pages) due 3/3.

**3/3** Discussion of journals and articles. Further discussion of project for Spring Forum and activities toward its production. Reading: Article on Presenting at Conferences for 3/10. Reflect on article in relation to your presentation at Forum. Come prepared to discuss orally in class on 3/10.

**3/10** *Conference Presenting and Organizing*. Discussion of article in relation to project. Conference presenting: overview, delivery, practicing presentations. Organizing: soliciting student involvement, making fliers, posting them, communicating the message to the community. Students sign up for what they will do and when they will do it.

**3/17** (No Class) Spring Break

**3/24** Spring Forum activities to prep for weekend event on 3/26 & 3/27. More production work, practice and refinement of collaborative presentation. Last minute organizing work. Reading: Articles on publishing related to students' areas of interest for 3/31. Journal #6: Write about your participation in the Spring Forum and evaluate how it went. Discuss collaborating, interaction with the audience, how you presented, the content of your presentation, and what you learned from others'. (1 page) Then reflect on the reading in relation to your publishing aspirations. What is your goal in being published? What do you

hope will happen? What audience do you really want to reach? Would they be different or the same as the audience that came to the Spring Forum? What steps might you take to reach your chosen audience? Could you be published on a website, through a performance event, through a radio program — or must your project be realized in some kind of book? (1 page) (2 pages total) due 3/31.

**3/31 Publishing.** Discussion of publishing, particular areas, steps toward reaching an audience. Assessment of the goals behind the desire to be published. Retooling the goal as necessary, creating documents to further aims. Crafting the components of the Portfolio. Writing letters to publishers. Reading: Article on Cover Letter writing for 4/7. Journal #7: draft a letter to a publisher. (1 page) due 4/7.

**4/7 Cover Letters.** Workshopping letters, discussion of cover letter writing in general and in students' particular areas of interest, possible visit from Career Services representative. Reading: Article on Cover Letter writing in students areas of interest for 4/14. Journal #8: draft a cover letter to an employer, volunteer organization or graduate school you hope to attend. (1 page) due 4/14.

**4/14 Vitas.** Discussion of cover letters, workshopping and refining them in first part of class, discussion of vitas in second part of class. Students choose one cover letter to polish and submit with Portfolio. Final Cover Letter due 4/21. Vitas. Developing the components. Choosing the best language. Choosing the best layout. Reading: Article on Vita writing for 4/21. Journal #9: Presentation of self to the world. How will you frame yourself to this audience (of grad school, a volunteer org, a dream job, etc.). What is most important to highlight? What will impress them? Sketch components to include in your vita. Then draft a 1-2 page vita (2-3 pages) Due 4/21.

**4/21 Workshopping vitas.** Drafting introduction to present online or face-to-face. Uploading vitas and examples of best work to e-blog or practice presenting vita and work orally in class. Final Vita due 4/28.

**4/28 Portfolios.** Drawing all the pieces together. Workshopping components. Fine-tuning portfolios. Reflection and discussion of Capstone. Final Portfolios due 4/30.

## Grading

Grading for this class is pass/no pass. Students are expected to do good work, complete assignments on time, and take an active role in the learning process. Late Assignments: If an emergency arises due to family or medical reasons, please contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements to submit work. In most cases however, late Journal assignments will not be accepted because they are meant to spur a developmental process and must be done at particular times.

- Journal Assignments, 40%
- Interview with Mentor, 10%
- Collaborating and Presenting at Spring Forum, 10%
- Forum Organizing, 5%
- Cover Letter, 5%
- Vita, 10%
- Portfolio, 20%