

First Read Draft

Liberal Arts Degree Task Force

Table of Contents

Charges	1
Summary of Findings.....	2
Recommended Action For Academic Senate.....	4
Appendix.....	5
Academic Senate	5

Charges

The Liberal Arts Task Force takes its charges from the Academic Senate to be the following:

1. Evaluate the efficacy of the liberal arts degrees
2. Determine who should assess the liberal arts degrees
3. Make recommendations for degree enhancements/expansions, or curricular amendments and/or program changes.

The Liberal Arts Task Force provides the following justification for the interpretation of its charges:

In response to concerns raised by senate members J. Townsend & A. Sample in concert with Dean N. Ybarra, on March 27th 2017 during Agenda item 7 “Liberal Arts Degree – Efficacy”, the academic senate created the Liberal Arts Degree Task Force in the April 17, 2017 meeting.

During the March 27th meeting the follow concerns were raised:

1. Who should assess the liberal arts degrees?
2. Examine these degrees and if they still have efficacy and do we believe in these degrees?
3. Do we think it has use for our students or are they better off with targeted approach here?
4. Are they worth keeping these degrees?
5. Should we have a task force to look at the data and discuss it?

(See appendix for full minutes from March 27th)

Neither of the minutes from the March 27th or April 17 identify clear charges or a Chair for the Liberal Arts Task Force. A call was sent out by academic senate president Silvester Henderson for members, following the March 27th meeting. In the email he identified the following goals:

“The Academic Senate would like to create a team of academics who will assess the current "Efficacy" of our Liberal Art Academic Programs/Degrees. The Task Force will be asked to evaluate and suggest degree enhancements/expansions, or curricular amendments and/or program changes.”

At the November 5th, 2018 senate meeting an unanimous motion was passed to revitalize the Liberal Arts Degree Task Force, with E. Haven as chair. The Senate Minutes from that day reflect no charges, only to say “charges to be created”.

Summary of Findings

The liberal arts degree task force met twice in the Spring of 2019, with the intent of finding meaningful information which could inform the college on the efficacy and legal requirements of the liberal arts degrees.

With help from the office of Planning and Scott Warfe, here are the task forces’ research questions and summary of the findings:

1. What proportion/percent of liberal arts degree recipients are also receiving an ADT?

445 students received an AAT or an AST, which is 38.20% of the population.

African American: 36% of population

White: 38%

Hispanic: 44%

Asian: 34%

Multi Ethnic: 38%

2. What proportion/percent of liberal arts degree recipients are also receiving an another certificate or another local degree?

If we're counting the CSUGE or IGETC as a certificate, then 72.10% of students (840 total students) are receiving multiple certs/degrees. 21% (244) were awarded two certs/degrees. 28% (329) were awarded three. 14% (158) were awarded four. 9% (109) were awarded between five and eight.

Among African American students, 71% are earning multiple degrees with an average total unit count of 80.

Hispanic : 81% | 83 unit average

White: 71% | 80 unit average

Asian: 68% | 79 unit average

Multi Ethnic: 69% | 81 unit average

If we're excluding CSUGE/IGETC, then 63% of students (739 total students) are receiving multiple degrees. 39% (456) were awarded two degrees. 16% (187) were awarded three. 6% (71) were awarded four. 2% (25) were awarded between five and eight.

I didn't disaggregate by actual certificate recipients because that only applied to 37 students in the sample.

4. For students receiving both liberal arts degrees and additional degrees, which departments are most common for the additional degrees?

Here's a list of the top performers:

DEGREE (#)
PSYCH (115)
BSADM (98)
BIOSC (64)
ADJUS (64)
SOCIO (35)
MATH (34)
CHDEV (29)
KINES (24)
COMST (21)
RNURS (22)
PHYS (18)
HIST (14)

*I used a very unscientific method for finding this -- I used CTRL+F. I could have missed a degree that showed up pretty often, so... we might want to double check this.

6. Are students stacking this degree with other certificates?

28% of students (326) only received one LA degree. 40% (462) received the CSUGE certificate and 8% (100) received the IGETC. 6% (71) got both.

The answer to this seems like yes, though it depends on how we define certificates. If it's actual local certificates, then 37 total certificate earners doesn't seem significant.

7. Are students getting other AAs or ADTs and then doing additional classes to complete the Liberal; Arts Degrees.

This is a hard one to answer. The data I've given us doesn't necessarily answer this question -- although we can guess that a student who earned an LA degree in the spring of 2018 and then another LA degree in the fall of 2018 probably hung out to get that extra degree. But here's what the average units are:

1 degree: 73.6
2 degrees: 85
3 degrees: 80
4 degrees: 83
5-8 degrees: 97

The Legal Requirements for any Associates Degree are outlined in Title 5 (Division 6. Chapter 6. Subchapter 1.) and the California Community College Program and Course Approval Handbook. No mention of a liberal arts degree is made in either.

Title 5 (Division 6. Chapter 6. Subchapter 1. Article 6.) offers the following insight in the planning of local associate degrees:

“The awarding of an Associate Degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It is to symbolize a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. ... In addition to these accomplishments, the student shall possess sufficient depth in some field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest.”

Recommended Action For Academic Senate

More research need to be conducted to address additional questions from the gathered data, including digging deeper into some of the trends to find the root cause. However, from the limited information we have the liberal arts degree can concluded:

1. Students who receive the liberal arts degree and another degree are indeed taking significantly more units than those who do not.
2. The liberal arts degrees do not align with the spirit of the associates degree as outlined in Title 5.
3. It needs to be determined how the liberal arts degree should align with other degrees certificates and general education on campus, in order to improve student success and reduce the number of units taken for completion.
4. The liberal arts degrees are out of date and need to be updated in their mission, narrative, PSLOs, and all other documentation outline in the California Community College Program and Course Approval Handbook.

4, The previous issues should be addressed before any governing body takes on the role of assessing the liberal arts degrees.

In response to these issues the liberal arts degree task force recommends the following motion:

WHEREAS The liberal arts degrees impact the majority of our students; and
WHEREAS The liberal arts degrees impact the majority of our programs; and
WHEREAS The liberal arts degrees do not align with student success; and
WHEREAS The liberal arts degrees are not currently assess-able; therefore be it
RESOLVED that the liberal arts degree task force develop a holistic redesign the liberal arts degrees with a targeted approach towards student success, through an alignment with title 5, general education, other associate degrees and guided pathways, resulting in a Phase 1 proposal for each liberal arts degree.

Appendix

Academic Senate

Minutes from November 5th, 2018

- E. Haven gave an overview of Liberal Arts Degree Task Force; never met, charges to be created, GE Chair should chair it, members were E. Haven, K. Alexander, J. Bearden and J. Townsend (withdrew).
- Motion to revitalize Liberal Arts Degree Task Force and for E. Haven to Chair – Approved (M/S; E. Haven/J. Von Bergen) - Unanimous

Minutes from March 27th, 2017

Item 7.

Liberal Arts Degree – Efficacy (N. Ybarra, J. Townsend & A. Sample):

• J. Townsend shared the assessment was discussed pertaining to Liberal Arts degree; degrees that are issued the most of are not assessed. Why we've had these degrees, students stay longer even to their limited financial aid because it's easy to get 2-3 degrees. For each degree, nine of their units include GE from a box; they're one of the degrees is B box, Math & Science, C box for Arts & Humanities; they can take 9 units from each one of those boxes and continue to take 9 more units that counts for their GE for transfer to CSU. Two of those boxes also earn play for students in limited 18 we have for our GE/local degree. Never found them very useful. The AST and AAT degrees that we didn't have when these degrees came in to place seemed less needed. Management would be happy if they eliminated them; the only impact will be the score card; you can explain on the score card why degrees would go down and take off of the time students on catalog rights. Management is also in support; K. Horan felt that those degrees are "obsolete" especially in AAT and AST. J. Townsend asked to examine these degrees and if they

still have efficacy and do we believe in these degrees; do we think it has use for our students or are they better off with targeted approach here?

- It was asked if we had any data of what percentage of the students transferring not in AST are getting these degrees? 54% of our graduates are graduating with one of the liberal arts degrees. It was expressed that it's problematic if we were to keep the degrees and if we keep the degrees, should the PSLOs be differentiated? Two questions were posed: 1) Are they worth keeping these degrees and 2) should we have a task force to look at the data and discuss it?

- The reason why we don't have one was we had one and the Chancellor's office said (2005) that you can't have Liberal Arts degree; they all need to have at least an area of focus and so we chose B, C, and D boxes area of focus. They're not going to let us back in time unless it's focused.

Liberal Arts Degree Task Force Committee Call for Members

LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE – TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

From: Henderson, Silvester

Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2017 1:45 PM

To: LMC ALL Faculty <lmcfaculty@email.4cd.edu>; Hannum, Natalie <NHannum@losmedanos.edu>;

Newman, Gail <GNewman@losmedanos.edu>; Benford, Jeffrey <jbenford@losmedanos.edu>

Cc: Ybarra, Nancy <NYbarra@losmedanos.edu>; Moore, A'kilah <AMoore@losmedanos.edu>; Belman, David <dbelman@losmedanos.edu>; Kratochvil, Bob <bkratochvil@losmedanos.edu>; Duldulao, Abigail <ADuldulao@losmedanos.edu>

Subject: Academic Senate Request for Faculty Participation: Liberal Arts Degree Task Force Committee Formation (PLEASE APPLY)

Dear LMC Faculty:

Hello! The Academic Senate is seeking various faculty members to become part of the newly formed, "*Liberal Arts Task Force Committee*".

The Liberal Arts major provides a rich educational experience through coursework in a broad range of academic disciplines. Liberal Arts provides excellent preparation for university transfer and/or a wide range of careers.

Students graduating with a Liberal Arts major are able to: read critically and communicate effectively as a writer and a speaker; understand the connections among academic disciplines and apply interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving; think critically and creatively; consider the ethical implications of knowledge; and possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural and global perspectives.

The Academic Senate would like to create a team of academics who will assess the current "*Efficacy*" of our Liberal Art Academic Programs/Degrees. The Task Force will be asked to evaluate and suggest degree

enhancements/expansions, or curricular amendments and/or program changes. *The Senate is seeking Faculty Representation from the following areas of emphasis:*

Liberal Arts: Arts and Humanities
Liberal Arts: Behavioral Science and Social Science
Liberal Arts: Math and Science
Student Services: Counseling, Library Services, DSPS

The Academic Senate and Senate Council promotes open applications from all faculty. Please submit your name, along with a brief writing that describes your interest to serve on this Task Force. All prospective applicants are requested to submit their interest in writing, by April 19, 2017. The selected faculty members will be confirmed at the Academic Senate's May 1, 2017, Bi-Monthly meeting, which will be held at 3:00 P.M. in L109. Your attendance at this meeting will allow the Academic Senate to ask questions and validate prospective applicants. Thank you for your consideration and kindness.

Warmest Regards,

Silvester Henderson, President
Academic Senate, LMC
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