

Maine Community College System  
Five Year Program Review

College: Central Maine Community College Program: Liberal Studies  
 CIP: 24.0101 Credential (s): Associate in Arts (AA)  
 Review Team: Betsy Libby, Margaret Brewer, Roger Philippon, Ronald Bolstridge, Jennifer Lyons

Date: September 2020 Period of Review: AY1516 – AY1920

**Program Overview:**

1) **Program description** (from the most recent college catalog):

The Associate in Arts Degree in Liberal Studies is designed primarily for individuals who plan to transfer to a four-year college or university in pursuit of a bachelor’s degree. A core of courses in the program offers students the opportunity to develop skills in communication, the humanities, the social sciences, mathematics and science. Courses taken as electives afford individuals an opportunity to explore a variety of academic disciplines.

In order to ensure optimal transfer of credits to upper division programs, students should work collaboratively with their academic advisor and the Director of Placement and Transfer Services to plan a course of study that meets their goals. To facilitate the transfer of courses, students should identify, as soon as possible, the upper division program and institution in which they plan to enroll.

2) **Program Learning Outcomes: all program learning outcomes are expected to be assessed within the five-year cycle. Please attach an Assessment Data and Reflection Template for each program learning outcome. Explain how the department used the assessment results to improve teaching, learning, and the curriculum.**

List the program learning outcomes:	Method of assessment: list the courses and activities/assignments used to assess the learning outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate clearly and effectively in a variety of contexts.</li> <li>2. Access, evaluate and utilize a variety of information resources.</li> <li>3. Articulate and utilize fundamental mathematical concepts.</li> <li>4. Explain basic general scientific laws, theories, and concepts in either the biological or physical sciences.</li> <li>5. Apply critical thinking skills and link concepts across a variety of disciplines.</li> <li>6. Critically examine the values, rituals and beliefs of cultures that are separated in time or space from one’s own.</li> </ol>	<p>Five of the six program learning outcomes for Liberal Studies have been regularly assessed during the last three years. The fourth, related to biological and physical sciences, is still in process.</p> <p>MAT 122 &amp; MAT 135 - Embedded questioning, five question final exam addendum          ENG 125 - Standardized grading, common rubric          BIO 101 - Uniform lab assignment, still in process          PSY 101 &amp; SOC 101 - Embedded questioning, four discussion questions and four midterm/final questions.</p> <p><b>See attached assessment data and reflection template for more detail.</b></p>

**3) Credentials Awarded within the IPEDS year, i.e. July 1-June 30:**

Credentials Awarded					
Credential	AY1516	AY1617	AY1718	AY1819	AY1920
AA	9	23	13	24	14

**4) Program Graduates Employed:**

Number of Completers with any Wage Data	43
% of Completers with any Wage Data	88
# of Completers with First Year Earnings	21
Median First Year Earnings	\$28,910

**5) Partnerships, collaborations, associations and memberships**

a) Advisory Meeting Dates and Attendance (past 3 years)

The Liberal Studies program does not have a program advisory board, which has been a long-standing practice at CMCC. We are looking to develop a board in light of our goal to increase advising pathways.

b) Program external accreditation, associations, and memberships (if applicable):

The four-year universities and the major that Liberal Studies students most often transfer to are: 1) University of Maine Augusta for Liberal Studies, Mental Health & Human Services and Biology; University of Southern Maine for Social and Behavioral Sciences, Psychology and Health Sciences; and Southern New Hampshire University for Business Administration.

**6) Other Indicators of student success, direct and/or indirect, which may include:**

	AY1516	AY1617	AY1718	AY1819	AY1920
Licensure/certification pass rates (if applicable)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Program Advisory Committee Member Survey (on scale of 1-5 averaged):	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Program Curriculum					
Technical currency of the program					
Preparation of program graduates for work in the field					
Communication from program administration/faculty					
Overall quality of the program					
Other (please specify):					

7) Student demographics:

Admissions					
	AY1516	AY1617	AY1718	AY1819	AY1920
Fall Applications	79	97	61	82	81
% chg in Fall Applicants from PY		23%	-37%	33%	0%
Enrolled (Yield)	29	29	19	28	22
% chg in Enrolled from PY		0%	-34%	47%	-21%

Student Enrollment <sup>1</sup>					
	AY1516	AY1617	AY1718	AY1819	AY1920
Unduplicated Headcount Enrolled in Program	69	74	50	56	55
% chg in Headcount from PY		9%	-32%	12%	-2%
Enrolled Credit Hours	750	758	504	622	552
% chg in Credit hours from PY		1%	-34%	23%	-11%
FTE	50	51	34	41	37
% chg in FTE from PY		1%	-34%	23%	-11%

<sup>1</sup> = students within the program in the fall of the academic year

Student Success					
Cohort Year	AY1516	AY1617	AY1718	AY1819	AY1920
Cohort Enrollment	60	52	41	58	37
Retained to the next semester	45%	50%	41%	47%	32%
Retained to the next year	23%	17%	24%	24%	
100% of program time	15%	19%	22%	22%	5%
150% of program time	18%	21%	24%	22%	5%
200% of program time	18%	25%	24%	22%	5%
Transfer Rate (non-graduates) <sup>2</sup>	33%	35%	32%	19%	5%
Transfer Rate (graduates) <sup>2</sup>	10%	10%	20%	5%	0%
Enrolled in Another Program <sup>2</sup>	5%				
Graduated from Another Program <sup>2</sup>	28%	21%	17%	7%	3%

<sup>2</sup>. Determined at the maximum graduation point in this table, i.e. 200%

8) Strengths, challenges, and planned steps for continuous improvement: In your summary assessment you should reference sections of this review that informs the plan.

**Program Strengths:**

- A wide array of course offerings are available to include a variety of special topics courses to engage students with varied interests or to learn about current events. Special topics courses are not in the regular academic inventory, but rather offered once or twice to add diversity to course offerings. Some recent special topics courses that were offered are: Landscape Drawing; Video Game Narratives; Native

Americans Social Exploration; Woman in Modern American History; Classical Mythology; Africa Since 1945; German I; and Works of JRR Tolkien.

- There are low advisee numbers for Liberal Studies faculty, under 10 advisees each.
- The Liberal Studies degree transfers well to other institutions. This is supported by the MCCS and University of Maine System block transfer agreement, and the long-standing Advantage U program before that. Students can tailor the degree to meet their transfer needs by utilizing the 6 credits of program electives.
- Students are required to take ENG 221 - Advanced Composition and Research. This course is designed specifically for transfer students to prepare them for research and writing at the baccalaureate level. The course includes a field trip to the Bates College library.
- The Math & Science Center and the Writing Center are available for academic assistance and tutoring. Tutoring is available online with synchronous and asynchronous options, and in times outside of COVID-19, all tutoring is available face-to-face in a group or individual setting. Additionally, the Centers provide a paid work opportunity for students who excel in these subject areas, further strengthening those students' connection to the College.
- Online and on-ground course delivery methods are available for all courses. This provides students with flexible options to attend school while balancing work, family and other commitments.
- Establishment of MCCS Math Pathways, led to the development of math assessment artifacts. The artifacts are embedded in all sections of MAT 122 and MAT 135.
- ENG 125 MCCS rubric is utilized across all sections and can be modified by 25% to meet the needs of each campus for assessment purposes. This allows for practical assessment of written assignments.

**Challenges:**

- Students who do not meet the prerequisites to enroll in Liberal Studies (college-level math and English) can start in General Studies and then change their major when they meet the prerequisites. Some students do not ever end up changing their major because they can take the same courses in General Studies as they can in Liberal Studies so they do not see the incentive to change programs, especially if an advising relationship has already formed with a General Studies advisor.
- Data gathered from assessments given in ENG 125, MAT 122, MAT 135, PSY 101 and SOC 101 has not been compiled and reviewed in an electronic format.
- Data regarding transfer rates for Liberal Studies transferring to four-year institutions, is lower than expected. Additional work is needed in tracking students through the College Clearing House, particularly those students who did not apply to graduate from CMCC or who stop attending without notice to find out if they are attending elsewhere.

- The Life Sciences Department initially did well getting started with assessment in BIO 101. They later received faculty pushback when they tried to embed a uniform lab across all sections for assessment. The department now realizes that they need to move forward and reinstate a uniform lab.
- The Social Sciences Department embedded similar discussion questions in all sections of PSY 101 and SOC 101. These were difficult to assess due to the complexity of possible answers; the chair is currently working on a rubric to use in all sections.

**Planned steps for continuous improvement:**

- Develop and publicize formal advising pathways within the Liberal Studies degree, such as psychology, communications, history, political science and math. This will make it possible for students (and parents) to visualize the opportunities available in the Liberal Studies program. Provide pathways in print and electronic communications and further educate admissions representatives about them.
- Establish a specific, bi-yearly process for reviewing gathered assessments in ENG 125, MAT 122, MAT 135, PSY 101 and SOC 101.
- Utilize Brightspace to collect and organize assessment data in an electronic format.

Five-year Assessment Plan for Student Learning Outcomes

Liberal Studies

September, 2020

Name of Program or General Education Domain

Date

Learning goal:

Student learning outcomes:	Academic year during which assessment will occur	Source(s) and type of assessment artifact(s) that will be collected (e.g.: embedded questioning, capstone assignments, standardized testing, performance observation, portfolio reviews, etc.	Method(s) to be used for assessing artifact(s)	Assessment Goal (targets/criteria) for direct measure	Assessment Outcome ( <i>Number of Students Achieving an "acceptable" or better</i> )	Assessment Goal was:		
						Met	Not Met	Pending Review
1. Communicate clearly and effectively in a variety of contexts.	2020-21  Ongoing, semesterly	MAT 122: Embedded questioning  MAT 135: Embedded questioning  ENG 125: Standardized grading	MAT 122: Five question final exam addendum  ENG 135: Three question final exam addendum  ENG 125: Common Rubric	At least 70% of students will receive a designation of proficient or higher on the assessment.	Assessment tool was given across all sections. Need to apply a more realistic sample size. Not gathered in an electronic format yet.			✓  ✓  ✓
2. Access, evaluate and utilize a variety of information resources.	2020-21  Ongoing, semesterly	ENG 125: Standardized grading	ENG 125: Common Rubric	At least 70% of students will receive a designation of proficient or higher on the assessment.	Assessment tool was given across all sections. Not gathered in an electronic format yet.			✓

3. Articulate and utilize fundamental mathematical concepts.	2020-21 Ongoing, semesterly	MAT 122: Embedded questioning MAT 135: Embedded questioning	MAT 122: Five question final exam addendum ENG 135: Three question final exam addendum	At least 70% of students will receive a designation of proficient or higher on the assessment.	Assessment tool was given across all sections. Need to apply a more realistic sample size. Not gathered in an electronic format yet.			✓ ✓
4. Explain basic general scientific laws, theories, and concepts in either the biological or physical sciences.	2020-21 Ongoing, semesterly	BIO 101	Still in process	At least 70% of students will receive a designation of proficient or higher on the assessment.	n/a			n/a
5. Apply critical thinking skills and link concepts across a variety of disciplines.	2020-21 Ongoing, semesterly	ENG 125: Standardized grading PSY 101: Embedded questioning SOC 101: Embedded questioning	Common Rubric	At least 70% of students will receive a designation of proficient or higher on the assessment.	Assessment tool was given across all sections. Not gathered in an electronic format yet.			✓ ✓ ✓
6. Critically examine the values, rituals and beliefs of cultures that are separated in time or space from one's own.	2020-21 Ongoing, semesterly	ENG 125: Standardized grading PSY 101: Embedded questioning SOC 101: Embedded questioning	Common Rubric	At least 70% of students will receive a designation of proficient or higher on the assessment.	Assessment tool was given across all sections. Not gathered in an electronic format yet.			✓ ✓ ✓

Most significant assessment findings? (Pedagogical, instructional, curricular changes). Please report on actions taken and on ongoing assessment plans.

Five out of six Student Learning Outcomes for Liberal Studies have been regularly assessed during the last three years. Common rubrics and/or embedded questioning were utilized in MAT 122, MAT 135, ENG 125, PSY 101, and SOC 101. These artifacts have been embedded in all course sections for at least three

years. It was discovered that further action is needed to combine and disseminate the data in a useful electronic form. Assessment outcome information will need to be reported and assessed to determine if it is meeting goals. It was discovered that the BIO 101 artifact is still in process.