

# LIBERAL STUDIES

## Bachelor of Liberal Studies

The Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree (B.L.S.) is a general studies degree in the liberal arts. It was established by the three Iowa Regent universities primarily to meet the needs of lowans who want to earn a college degree but whose circumstances present obstacles to completing a traditional on-campus degree program. While the B.L.S. has no traditional major and students have more flexibility in choosing courses that apply to their program, the requirements for the degree are as rigorous as requirements for other degree programs offered by Iowa State University. Students earning the B.L.S. take coursework in three areas of distribution. Each distribution area may be focused on a single discipline or diversified over several disciplines. With the assistance of a B.L.S. advisor, students can structure a program that meets their individual educational, vocational or personal goals.

The B.L.S degree is a transfer-friendly degree. Work done in community colleges or other accredited colleges and universities can be applied toward the degree and can often meet requirements for the major. Up to three-fourths of the total degree requirements can be transferred from accredited institutions. The B.L.S. program has no residence requirements, but students are expected to have 30 credits from ISU earned during the junior and/or senior year.

## Admission

Admission to the B.L.S. program is open to persons who have at least 24 semester credits of collegiate work acceptable toward graduation at ISU with a total cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 (a C average).

## Student Learning Outcomes

In addition to meeting the learning goals of the general education program of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and meeting University wide learning goals, Liberal Studies graduates should be able to:

- Use appropriate learning strategies to gain new knowledge
- Integrate knowledge and modes of thinking from multiple disciplines
- Apply their knowledge to solve problems
- Connect their learning to their professional goals

## Requirements for the B.L.S. Degree

The B.L.S. candidate must earn a total of 120 credits in accordance with requirements listed below. Courses taken at Iowa State University on a pass/not pass basis may be counted toward graduation only as electives. No more than 9 credits of 490 (Independent Study) courses may be counted toward graduation.

## University-wide Requirements

Communication Proficiency: Foundation Courses	6
ENGL 150 Critical Thinking and Communication	
ENGL 250 Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition (with a grade of C or better)	
or equivalent of ENGL 150, ENGL 250	
Communication Proficiency: Upper-level curricula (grade C- or better)	3
ENGL 302 Business Communication	
or ENGL 305 Creative Writing: Nonfiction	
or ENGL 309 Proposal and Report Writing	
or ENGL 314 Technical Communication	
or comparable extensive writing experience	
International Perspectives	3
U.S. Diversity	3

## LAS General Education and LAS World Languages/Cultures

Arts and humanities*	12
Mathematics, statistics, or computer science*	3
Natural sciences*	8
Social sciences*	9
World languages/Cultures**	3-8

\*A list of courses acceptable in the general education groups can be obtained from the college website (<http://www.las.iastate.edu/students/academics/general-education/>).

\*\*The requirement may be met by completion of three or more years of high school study in one world language; by meeting the LAS World Language requirement; or by taking six credits from the list of International Perspectives courses, three credits of which cannot be used to satisfy another degree requirement.

## Distribution Requirements and Electives

A minimum of 12 credits is required in each of three of the five distribution areas listed below. Students determine which distribution areas to include in their degree program through consultation with their Bachelor of Liberal Studies academic advisor.

Distribution Areas (Three of five below, with a minimum of 6 credits at the 300 level or above in each of the three)

Humanities (for example, literature, philosophy, history, religion, art and music appreciation)
Communications and arts (for example, journalism, speech, writing, drama, art, world language, communication studies, advertising, public relations)

Natural sciences and computational disciplines (for example, chemistry, physics, biology, geological and atmospheric sciences, mathematics, statistics, computer science, data science, environmental science)

Social sciences (for example, sociology, psychology, economics, political science, anthropology, geography)

Professional fields (for example, business, education, family and consumer sciences, agriculture, engineering – generally courses taught outside the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)

Electives to bring total credits to at least 120

Varies

## Other Requirements

Included in the minimum of 120 credits needed for graduation must be the following:

30 credits from ISU earned during the junior/and or senior year.

45 upper-level (300 level or above) credits from an accredited four-year college with a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

A minimum grade point average of at least 2.00 (a C average).

A student earning a B.L.S. degree may declare a minor. All minors must include 6 credits taken at Iowa State University in upper-level (300 level or above) courses and must include at least 9 credits that are not used to meet any other department, college, or university requirement.

Criteria for graduating with distinction and other academic honors with a B.L.S. degree are available under Scholastic Recognition (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2022-2023/academics/#scholasticrecognitiontext>).