

Shepherd University Board of Governors
March 8, 2007
Agenda Item No. 9

MASTER OF ARTS, LIBERAL STUDIES

At its October 2006 meeting the Board of Governors authorized the President to seek the Chancellor's approval for Shepherd University to formally develop a plan for the offering of a Master of Arts, Liberal Studies. That approval was granted and the University has been working closely with the Higher Education Policy Commission staff since that time to develop a program which would be acceptable to the HEPC and to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

The following resolution is recommended for adoption by the Board:

RESOLVED, that the Shepherd University Board of Governors approves the initiation of the Master of Arts, Liberal Studies program, effective August 2008; provided, that the foregoing approval is subject to accreditation being approved by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools prior to such initiation; provided further, that the foregoing approval is subject to the authorization to proceed of the Higher Education Policy Commission prior to such initiation.

Shepherd University

March 8, 2007

Master of Arts, Liberal Studies

Shepherdstown, West Virginia

To begin Academic Year 2008-2009

The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies Program at Shepherd University will offer a selection of seminars in subjects such as those within a flexible graduate program that gives students the freedom to chart their own course of study. Designed for adult learners, part-time students, community members, and returning students, the program will be housed mostly within the School of Arts and Humanities, with selected courses being offered in other schools on a rotating basis. The program will offer an introductory course (Perspectives on Liberal Studies), courses in aesthetics and critical theory, and a wide variety of electives courses from the Liberal Studies Graduate Curriculum, as well as a capstone course. The capstone will include a thesis or significant project designed to encourage a sustained interaction with a specific issue or problem.

3.9 Program Description

The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies Program at Shepherd University is a 33-hour program that will build on Shepherd's recent graduate offerings in such fields as English, History, Psychology, Art, Music, and General Science. The new program will introduce students to the concept of liberal studies through an introductory course. Students will then be able to structure their own course of study by taking eight elective graduate courses in their areas of interest. The capstone experience for the program will feature a thesis or significant project designed to encourage a sustained interaction with a specific issue or problem.

Elective courses for the Master of Arts, Liberal Studies will be largely drawn from existing graduate seminars in the Curriculum and Instruction, College Student Development, and Music Education programs and from undergraduate honors seminars cross-listed and augmented to reflect graduate expectations in reading and writing assignments.

3.9.1 Program Objectives

At Shepherd University, the Master of Arts, Liberal Studies (MALS) degree is tied to the ideals articulated by John Henry Cardinal Newman in *The Idea of a University*: that the liberal education “is simply the cultivation of the intellect, and as such its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence.”

Some objectives of the program include a greater understanding of cultures and values, an expanded historical and geographical context in which to consider current issues, the exchange of viewpoints in a diverse classroom, and objectives which help to develop skills that students can continue to use in their personal and professional lives. A major goal of this program is to provide increased access to affordable, quality graduate education for students in the tri-state area. Through this advanced program of study, students will be afforded the opportunity to develop the habits and skills necessary for critical thinking and self-directed growth.

3.9.2 Program Identification

The proposed program falls under the category **Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies**, ID number **24.0101** in the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) standards developed by the US Department of Education, which is described as. “A program that is a structured combination of the arts, biological and physical sciences, social sciences, and humanities, emphasizing breadth of study.”

3.9.3 Program Features

3.9.3.1 Admissions Standards

All Shepherd University graduate programs require a bachelors degree from a regionally accredited college or university and either a 2.75 grade point average or scores of 440/ Verbal and 560/Quantative on the Graduate Record Exam.

3.9.3.2 Program Requirements

Required Courses (9 credit hours)

LBST XXX: Perspectives in Liberal Studies (3)

LBST XXX: Aesthetics (3)

OR

LBST XXX: Critical Theory

LBST XXX: Masters Thesis (3)

Elective Courses

Students will choose 24 hours of elective credit in MALS courses of their choice. These electives will come from three different sources: graduate courses that are already being taught as part of other degree programs; graduate courses that are created as split-section courses with honors seminars offered at Shepherd, and courses created specifically for the MALS program. Examples of each of these types of courses are listed below:

Liberal Studies Courses Currently Taught in Other Degree Programs

These courses are currently being taught on a regular basis for students in existing graduate programs such as the MA in Curriculum and Instruction and the MA in College Student Development and Administration. Many of these courses are currently unde-renrolled and would benefit from the students that an additional program would offer.

ENGL 530 Theories of Rhetoric and Composition

ENGL 535 American Ethnic Literature

ENGL 537 History of English

ENGL 539 Seminar in British Literature

ENGL 540 Seminar in American Literature

GSCI 542 General Astronomy

SOCI 570 Social Forces, Education, and Knowledge

HIST 572 American Society in an Era of Crisis, 1917-1945

HIST 573 History of Women in Europe

HIST 574 The History of Modern East Asia

PSYC 501 Adolescent Psychology

PSYC 505 Social Psychology

PSYC 510 Psychology of Personality

PSYC 576 Personality Theories

MUSC 502 Graduate Seminar in Musicology

Recent Honors Seminars

These courses represent the kinds of honors seminars regularly taught at Shepherd University that could be cross-listed as graduate courses for MALS students

HNRS 399: Philosophy and Science Fiction: The Dream of Progress
 HNRS 399: Literary Expatriates
 HNRS 399: Enchantment: Fairy Tales Across Cultures
 HNRS 399: Perceptions of Beauty
 HNRS 399: Human Nature
 HNRS 399: Religion and Science
 HNRS 399: History of Economic Thought

New Courses in the MALS Program

These courses will be designed to accommodate numerous individual seminars and to be repeatable by students for credit

LBST XXX: Studies in Theme and Genre
 LBST XXX: The Individual and Society
 LBST XXX: Ideas in History
 LBST XXX: The Development of the Scientific Process
 LBST XXX: Science in Society: The Big Questions

3.9.4 Program Outcomes

The proposed Master of Arts, Liberal Studies is a new program and is not an expanded or altered one. The following program outcomes have been established for the program:

- Graduates will learn to read and think critically
- Graduates will be able to synthesize concepts from multiple disciplines to form original ideas
- Graduates will be able to conduct original research in liberal-arts fields
- Graduates will be prepared for further graduate study in the field of their choice

3.9.5 Program Delivery

The MALS will use traditional classroom delivery, supplemented by computer technology, for most of its courses. Some courses may be delivered entirely through course-management software (WebCT), but this will not be the norm. All required courses and a substantial number of electives will be delivered in the evenings and on weekends to accommodate adult learners and students with full-time jobs.

Section Four: Program Need and Justification

4.1 Relationship to Institutional Goals and Objectives

Providing a rigorous liberal education to the citizens of Eastern West Virginia and the

surrounding region has always been a critical part of Shepherd's mission. At the undergraduate level, this commitment is given a central place in our mission statement, which emphasizes that "the heart of our baccalaureate curriculum is a formal General Studies Program that prepares a student to take his or her place as an educated citizen in a changing world." The mission statement further states that "the University is committed . . . to developing and implementing a selected number of graduate programs" in order to meet its goal of offering "a wide variety of distinguished degree programs and other learning opportunities to both traditional and non-traditional students." Most of Shepherd's current graduate programs are designed to prepare students for very specific careers (business, teaching, higher education administration). The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies, however, combines our recent commitment to providing graduate education with our historic emphasis on the liberal arts to create a completely different kind of graduate opportunity for the citizens of our region.

4.2 Existing Programs

Marshall University, which is located 357 miles from Shepherd University and West Virginia University, located 153 miles from Shepherd, are the only state institutions in West Virginia that offer a similar degree to the MALS program proposed by Shepherd. It should be noted that these programs are not offered according to the same curriculum guidelines and are not designed to offer unique specialization concentrations and themes within the overall curriculum design.

In addition, the nearest out of state public institutions of higher education that offer similar graduate level programs include the University of Maryland, located 75 miles from Shepherd, George Mason University in Virginia, located 62 miles away, and University of Delaware, located 165 miles from Shepherd University. Private institutions in the region that offer similar graduate programs include: Loyola College (MD), College of Notre Dame (MD), Hollins University (VA) and Georgetown University (DC).

Shepherd University therefore offers the best opportunity within the Eastern Panhandle and the tri-state region to provide a quality program to meet this student need.

4.3 Program Planning and Development

Shepherd's decision to develop a Master of Arts, Liberal Studies was based on four separate, but interrelated observations:

1. A large number of adult students in our service area currently enroll in, or audit, classes for their own enrichment. Most of these students enroll as non-degree students, but a substantial number of them have contacted the Graduate Office to enquire about a regular program of study. As the region continues to grow, the population of adults with four-degrees will increase substantially, producing an increasingly large number of students interested in non-professional graduate education.

2. The Master of Arts degree in Curriculum and Instruction, which began in 2003, uses a core-strand model of instruction. Fifteen hours in the program consist of a professional education core, while fifteen hours consist of graduate courses in different disciplines that are not professional education classes. Because of the nature of this program, the professional education courses are generally enrolled to capacity, but the disciplinary strand courses are often seriously under-enrolled. As a result, Shepherd generally offers between six and ten graduate courses each semester—most of them in fields such as art, history, and English—with very small enrollments.
3. The Shepherd University honors program offers a special topics seminar to honors students each semester. Often, these courses are among the most innovative, demanding, and interdisciplinary courses offered at the University. However, small enrollments have made these courses difficult to offer, often requiring the Honors Program to admit large numbers of non-Honors students to the courses.
4. At the invitation of the HEPC, Shepherd has begun to plan a new Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies. A coordinator of this planning process has already been named and a committee has been formed. Thus, the administrative foundations for an undergraduate liberal studies program are already in place at Shepherd, making this the ideal time to establish a graduate degree as well.

In the Master of Arts, Liberal Studies, we attempt to address the need described in #1, and solve the problems articulated in #2 and #3 by using existing graduate and honors courses as the basis for a new degree program designed to appeal to adult learners. Since most of the elective courses in the MALS are already being offered—and are chronically under-enrolled—the instructional costs for the new program will be minimal. The converse to this is also true: because many of the courses that will make up the new degree program are already being offered, and because the administrative apparatus for a liberal studies degree program is already in place for the undergraduate degree, the MALS will require only modest additions to the University's existing curriculum to be successful and financially self-sufficient.

4.4 Clientele and Need

Shepherd University is located in Jefferson County, a part of the state that touches the fastest-growing counties in three states: West Virginia (Berkeley), Virginia (Loudon) and Maryland (Frederick). In the spring of 2004, the Jefferson County Development Authority conducted a survey of 3500 county residents to determine their commuter status and practices. Of the 622 respondents, fully one-fourth of the population holds a bachelor's degree. In addition, almost half of the respondents indicated their income exceeds \$50,000 annually. Clearly this income is needed to afford Panhandle housing that is approaching the \$350,000 mark.

We anticipate that the market for this degree will come from several identifiable constituencies in the area:

1. Adults interested in knowledge and self-fulfillment: Large numbers of place-bound adults in our service area take or audit courses at Shepherd University for their personal fulfillment and advancement. During the 2005-2006 Academic Year, non-degree seeking students generated 845.5 credit hours at Shepherd, indicating a strong potential market for this kind of degree that will continue to grow with our region.
2. Professionals interested in a Masters Degree: Many professionals in our area require a master's degree for professional advancement. Our current graduate programs in education and business meet the needs of two specialized constituencies within this group, but others—such as librarians, government service workers, child care workers, and non-certified educators in private schools—stand to benefit greatly from a program that allows them to tailor their degree to their interests.
3. Students interested in further graduate study: The MALS degree will offer graduate course work in a number of disciplines across the humanities, fine arts, social science, and natural sciences. Students will be able to choose electives based on their own goals and interests; consequently, the program will provide an excellent platform for recent college graduates—from Shepherd and elsewhere—to apply to doctoral programs and launch academic careers.

4.5 Employment Opportunities

The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies degree is not primarily designed to be a professional degree or to qualify students for any specific career. However, it is designed to give students a broad understanding of analytical, critical-thinking, and problem-solving skills—exactly the traits that employers consistently demand in nearly all positions. Additionally, the availability of a flexible graduate program that does not require any specific career track or undergraduate major will give many people throughout the region an opportunity to increase their preparation and earning potential.

4.6 Program Impact

We anticipate that the MALS program will have a strong positive impact on two crucial areas of the University: the MA in Curriculum and Instruction and the Honors program. Both of these programs currently offer innovative, integrated, rigorous courses that are currently under-enrolled because of the very nature of the programs to which they are attached. By creating a new graduate program that draws on these courses, we strengthen the existing courses and increase the benefit of an underutilized instructional resource.

We expect a similar impact with the undergraduate Liberal Studies degree currently being developed. The BA and MA in liberal studies will share a complete administrative

structure: a director, clerical support, office expenses, and, in time, faculty lines. We will gain both efficiency and stability by developing the two programs simultaneously.

4.7 Cooperative Arrangements

No cooperative arrangements for the Master of Arts, Liberal Studies are being contemplated at this time

4.8 Alternatives to Program Development

The MALS degree has been designed to pair with other university programs—such as the MA in Curriculum and Instruction, the Honors Program, and the BA in Liberal Studies—to maximize the efficiency and the educational opportunities provided by each. The most commonly discussed alternative to the development of this program has been to avoid creating these links, especially with the Curriculum and Instruction program. However, given the low enrollments of C&I strand classes, this course of action would have required us to change the ratio of core and strand courses within that program, which we believe to be an inferior alternative from the pedagogical point of view. We also discussed going forward with the BA in Liberal Studies without the corresponding Masters degree, with an MA to be considered at a later date. However, we concluded that it was more cost effective to create a single, administrative structure from the outset of both programs instead of trying to integrate them at a later date.

Section Five: Program Implementation and Projected Resource Requirements

5.1 Program Administration

The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies will be directed by a Coordinator of Liberal Studies who will be responsible for both the undergraduate and the graduate components of the Liberal Studies program. The program coordinator will report to the Dean of Graduate Studies and to the Graduate Committee and, ultimately, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

5.2 Program Projections

See Appendix A

5.3 Faculty Instructional Requirements

All faculty in the MALS program will be required to have a terminal degree in their field (normally a Ph.D. or MFA) and to be professionally active in their disciplines. The graduate committee and graduate dean will be responsible for enforcing these requirements.

5.4 Library Resources and Instructional Materials

Because the MALS degree will use courses that have already been developed for other graduate and advanced undergraduate programs, most of the library resources necessary are already in place. Additional materials—especially those needed to support the aesthetics and critical theory courses—will be purchased through regular graduate contributions to the library.

5.5 Support Service Requirements

The Office of Graduate Studies has developed relationships with all of the crucial support units on campus, including the library, the bookstore, the health center, the office of financial aid, IT services, student affairs, and the office of the registrar. Each of these units has taken concrete steps to incorporate graduate education and a graduate culture, which will benefit the Master of Arts, Liberal Studies and all new graduate programs.

5.6 Facilities Requirements

Many of the courses for the MA in Liberal Studies are currently being offered in other programs and will require no new facilities. The program will offer, at most, one additional class a semester, which can easily be accommodated with the current facilities base.

5.7 Operating Resource Requirements

See Appendix A

5.8 Source of Operating Resources

The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies, like all graduate programs at Shepherd University, has been designed to be financially self-sufficient. To ensure this self-sufficiency, Shepherd uses a pro-rated formula for paying graduate faculty for teaching overloads and summer courses. No course, therefore, is allowed to operate at a loss. New faculty lines for graduate courses will only be approved once enrollment targets are met, and the university is prepared to terminate graduate programs that do not meet this standard of self-sufficiency.

We have used extremely conservative enrollment projections for the initial years of the degree and conservative-to-moderate prediction for the later years.

Section Six: Operating Existing Programs at New Location

Not applicable to this proposal.

Section Seven: Program Evaluation

7.1 Evaluation Procedures

This program will be evaluated in the following ways:

- Each year the program will be informally evaluated by the faculty
- Each course will be evaluated by students
- The Department and an outside evaluator will analyze the program as part of its self study every five and ten year cycle
- All graduates will take a program review survey upon graduation

7.2 Accreditation Status

The Master of Arts, Liberal Studies will be fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Shepherd University already has five Master's programs fully accredited with this commission and has remained in close contact with commission representatives about the addition of new programs in the fall of 2008.

Enrollment and Budget Projections

	First Year	Second Year	Third year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year
Number of Students served through the offerings of the program	10	15	25	25	25
Three-semester headcount	30	45	75	75	75
FTE/Year	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Student Credit hours Generated in academic year	135	202.5	337.5	337.5	337.5
Income by year (80% instate @\$235 20% out of state @ \$335)	\$34,425.00	\$51,637.50	\$86,062.50	\$86,062.50	\$86,062.50

Operating Requirements and Expenses

FTE Positions	0	0	0	0	0
Administrators	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Fulltime Faculty	0	0	0	0	
Adjunct Faculty	0.75	1	2	2	2
Graduate assistants	0	0	0	0	0
Clerical	0	0	0	0	0
Professionals	0	0	0	0	0
Personnel Costs					
Administrators	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Fulltime Faculty	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Adjunct/Overload Faculty	\$18,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$48,000.00	\$48,000.00	\$48,000.00
Graduate Assistants	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Non Academic Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Clerical					
Professionals	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Salaries	\$21,000.00	\$27,000.00	\$51,000.00	\$51,000.00	\$51,000.00
Operational Costs					
Overhead to University	\$10,327.50	\$15,491.25	\$25,818.75	\$25,818.75	\$25,818.75
Educational	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Library	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
non-recurring	\$597.50	\$6,646.25	\$6,743.75	\$6,743.75	\$6,743.75
Total Expenses	\$34,425.00	\$51,637.50	\$86,062.50	\$86,062.50	\$86,062.50
Revenue Less Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

