

Evaluation Report for Program Review Face to Face Meeting

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater: Liberal Studies (BA, BS)

Majors and Minors, 2020-2021

Date: 5/17/2021

Invited: Interim Provost Greg Cook; Interim AVC Kristin Plessel; Dean Frank Goza (L&S); Department Chair/Program Coordinator David Simmons; faculty and staff in the Liberal Studies program; Audit & Review Team Chair John Pruitt; Audit & Review team members Denise Roseland, Andrea Ednie, Alexis Piper, Assessment Representative Katy Casey.

Overview of review team evaluation, program comments:

Overall very positive review, John Pruitt summarized discussion points below.

Discussion of Review Team's evaluation:

1 – The review team discussed a desire to better understand the students choosing this program of study and the goals of these students. What is the breakdown of numbers, "traditional," "adult-returning," "transfer," etc.?

- i) There are a number of students who pick up the program after transferring out of another they were unable to complete. This is a subset, and we also serve returning, adult-learners, and transfer students.
- ii) Most students find out about major through academic advising – often get emails from advisors connecting students to program.
- iii) Due to the diversity of students, there is not a lot of information that can be collected from program graduates to help inform the program.

2 – The program noted the diversity exceeds that of the university. This is a significant point, and the review team wondered how the program supports and maintains this diversity. How would understanding what's behind this diversity help retain and enhance the diversity, while also enhancing the experience of the diverse student population in the Liberal Studies program?

Intensive and personal advising that is designed to help the student meet individual goals- program advisors try hard to make the degree meaningful.

3 – Are there any strategies in place to provide additional support to students that may be academically underprepared or unprepared students?

Introduction and capstone courses encourage students to think about what they want to get out of their education. Whether students have a minor or not- we encourage students to think about whether the program of study prepares them for personal and professional goals.

4 – The average credits to degree is high and likely out of the control of program staff. However, it would be helpful to learn more about this problem in light of better understanding the student population.

Many students come as transfer students so they already have a lot of credits entering the program. Other requirements in the major add a bit to the final degree

Significant time and training is put into preparing faculty ready to advise in program to help these students create a meaningful program of study.

Dean Goza noted the hard work and individualized attention of faculty in the program.

Provost Cook thanked the work of the program – he commented on the importance of this degree and believes it is attractive to students, as a new field of study or way to complete a degree.

Recommended Actions:

Recommended Action #1

Continue the assessment work (and report on indirect as well as direct measures). - Continue the assessment retreats and goal setting processes that are currently in place. Take advantage of the assessment plan template for the next self-study. In addition, share data on SLOs based on the assessment plan.

Recommended Action #2

Referring to the section on “Areas for Work and Improvement,” we recommend better tracking of graduates in order to understand what they choose to do with a degree in Liberal Studies. The next self-study should report on the students’ employment prospects having completed this program of study. In addition, consider gathering feedback from graduates to help gain an understanding of the perceived value of the degree once completed.

Recommended Result:

Continuation without qualification

Next Self-Study and/or Progress Report Due Dates:

1 - Next SHORT self-study will be due to the Dean on May 1, 2026 and to the Assessment Office on August 1, 2026

For a copy of the full evaluation report and detailed comments, please reach out to the assessment office: assessment@uww.edu.