

MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES CONCENTRATION IN HUMAN BEHAVIOR & SOCIETY



Program Description

The Liberal Studies degree was first offered in the United States in the 1950's to meet a variety of educational needs. At Valparaiso University, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program was established in 1963, making it the second oldest such program in the US and marking the beginning of a commitment to graduate education at VU. The 36-credit MALS programs--which can be completed through evening study, or through a combination of evening and day study--are made up of core requirements in liberal studies, an area of concentration, and electives. The Core Curriculum MALS programs at VU require a 12-credit core of interdisciplinary study drawn from seminars in the humanities, social and natural sciences, and fine arts. These core seminars provide students with diverse perspectives and methodological tools that help prepare them for in-depth study in their concentration. Although the specific topics of these seminars change regularly, all share the common thread of viewing the human experience through both classical and contemporary perspectives, and all can be approached from the perspective of the student's concentration in Human Behavior & Society. Each seminar involves significant reading, writing, and reflection. Human Behavior & Society Concentration While the core seminars challenge students to think beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries, the concentration encourages them to apply this conceptual and methodological breadth to the specific field of Human Behavior & Society. Content of courses within the concentration are typically interdisciplinary, and students are afforded a great deal of flexibility in constructing their studies in Human Behavior & Society.

A Capstone Experience MALS students are encouraged to culminate their studies with a capstone experience-a research project, a creative or artistic work, a service-learning endeavor, or even a travel/study experience. Regarding this last option, MALS students may earn up to 6 credits of travel/study by taking advantage of 4-6 week stints of study at one of VU's overseas centers in Cambridge, England; Reutlingen, Germany; Puebla, Mexico; or Hangzhou, China. Curriculum

MALS Core Requirements		12 credits
LS 650	Seminar in Religion, Culture, & Value	3 cr
Select three from the following:		

LS 610	Seminar in the Humanities	3 cr
LS 620	Seminar in the Social Sciences	3 cr
LS 630	Seminar in the Natural Sciences	3 cr
LS 640	Seminar in the Fine Arts	3 cr
Concentration Requirements		15 credits
<p>The concentration consists of five courses, usually drawn from a single discipline or several related disciplines. Classes are typically selected from Sociology, Psychology and Communication graduate classes. Your adviser will work with you to select the best courses. Study within the concentration should comprise a coherent course of study that ensures significant in-depth exploration of a single field. Six credits must be taken at the 600-level.</p>		
Electives		9 credits
<p>Six credits of electives are selected from 600-level LS courses. The remaining three credits may be selected from any department as long as the student meets the course prerequisites. The study/travel option may also be used as elective credit toward the MALS degree.</p>		

What Can You Expect? Graduate study at VU requires motivation, dedication, and reflection. Master teachers ensure that courses are challenging yet rewarding. Class sizes are small, and both peer and faculty interactions contribute a critical component to the learning experience. MALS students become acquainted with one another through the core seminars; they become acquainted with faculty in their discipline through coursework in their selected concentration. Periodically, the Graduate Office assembles students in the MALS program for informational and social events.

Criteria for Admission Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate Division, which include:

- Undergraduate degree from an accredited University;
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 (paper version), 230 (computer-based), or Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT) score of at least 80; minimum IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6; CET score of 6, or an INTERLINK Language Center Level 5, or the equivalent for non-native English speakers;
- An overall grade point average of at least a 3.00.

As part of the application process, students must provide:

- [Valparaiso University Graduate Application](#);
- Official transcripts of all prior undergraduate and graduate coursework. If you have received an undergraduate or graduate degree from Valparaiso University, you are not required to submit an official transcript from Valparaiso University;
- Two letters of reference;

- A reflective essay detailing your reasons for pursuing graduate study;
- Application Fee: \$30 for U.S. citizens, \$50 for International Students.

The MALS program features a continuous admission process, so application materials may be submitted at any time. Once received, the admission decision normally takes 2-3 weeks. Financial Considerations Students may be surprised to discover the affordable tuition rate at Valparaiso University. Tuition for the 2008-2009 academic year is \$450 per credit hour, highly competitive for a private institution of recognized national quality. Students enrolled in graduate courses pay a \$80 general fee each semester. [Financial aid](#) is available through direct and indirect student loans for students taking 6 credits or more during fall and spring semesters. Because most course offerings are scheduled for the evening, many students hold part- or full-time employment during their study.

For more information about the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Human Behavior & Society program Interested students should [request an application packet](#) from the Office of Graduate Studies through our website or by e-mailing Graduate.Studies@valpo.edu.

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