

MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY



Program Description Considerable flexibility exists within the MALS program. To enable students to explore their unique interests and educational goals, the opportunity to construct an individualized concentration is available. Students selecting this option are required to formulate a plan of study which focuses on a particular topic, theme, or other special interest that involves several academic disciplines. Examples of such themes include gender issues and multicultural themes. It is expected that students who are pursuing a specific theme will, when enrolled in their various courses, write their paper on a topic related to their individualized concentration. In the individualized study option, students may also use 600-level Liberal Studies courses, including independent study (LS 695) or the Liberal Studies Research Project (LS 692) to meet the required number of credits earned at the 600-level. To be approved for an individualized concentration, the student must meet the following requirements:

- Have completed 9 credits of graduate study at Valparaiso University at the level of B (B=3.0) or higher;
- Submit a personal statement describing the proposed concentration theme or topic, explaining how it will fulfill a personal or professional interest;
- Identify a faculty sponsor who will serve as the student's faculty supervisor for the required research project;
- Provide a plan of study to show how the concentration will be completed. The plan must be approved by the student's faculty supervisor, the Chair of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Administrative Committee, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Liberal Study Research Project Students pursuing the Individualized concentration are required to complete the Liberal Studies Research Project. Students will 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 academic credit by taking advantage of 4-6 week stints of study at one of VU's overseas centers in Cambridge, England; Reutlinger, Germany; Puebla, Mexico; or Hangzhou, China.

Graduate Studies & Continuing Education - Valparaiso University
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 Individualized 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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