



Academic Affairs

LIBERAL STUDIES

Presented By:

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Overview of Degree

Liberal Studies Philosophy:

- Commitment to the development of content knowledge – breadth and depth.
- Commitment and respect for diversity of all students.
- Commitment to scholarship, teaching, and active, lifelong learning.
- Commitment to excellence across program areas.
- Commitment to active involvement with the surrounding community.

The Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies provides students with a comprehensive, multidimensional education in a variety of disciplines and serves as an excellent base for further professional educational development. There are two options in Liberal Studies:

- Teaching and Learning
- Concentrated Studies

Teaching and Learning Option

This option is for students who plan to pursue a career as an elementary school teacher or an elementary-level special education teacher. The Teaching and Learning Option provides the required multiple-subject content preparation for students seeking the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential for teaching kindergarten through 8th grade or a Special Education credential. This option includes the subject-matter content specified by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC).

Concentrated Studies Option

Students work with a faculty advisor to develop a Program of Study that focuses on a discipline or interdisciplinary area. In addition to students interested in non-traditional or interdisciplinary degree programs, this option will be of interest to students who have taken substantial course work from a four-year institution in a discipline not currently reflected in the majors at CSUCI.

Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the Liberal Studies Programs will be able to:

- Evaluate effectively oral or written communication for accuracy of content, logic of argument, and clarity of reasoning.
- Demonstrate high levels of computer literacy, information literacy, and technological literacy.
- Compare and contrast cultures and their customs regarding race, class, ethnicity, gender, and language and discuss societal issues that may arise.
- Demonstrate content area knowledge, and for prospective teachers, relate it to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) content standards for the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential.

Careers

The Teaching and Learning option provides the content necessary for teaching grades K-8 and for admission into teacher education programs, including the Multiple-Subject and Special Education Teaching Credential Programs. Students who are interested in teaching grades 6-12 should consider obtaining a bachelor's degree in a traditional major (e.g. History, English, Math, or Biology) and then apply to be admitted into Single-Subject Teaching Credential Programs in History, English, Math, Science or Special Education. The Concentrated Studies Option provides a broad-based background for entry into professional and/or graduate programs. This option is for students who need flexibility in order to complete their education, or need to prepare for specific careers not represented by California State University Channel Islands' current majors.

Accomplishments

- Ongoing development of Capstone offerings and pool of faculty to teach them, for the growing number of LS students and their various interests.
- Review/reformatting of the LS Emphasis for submission to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

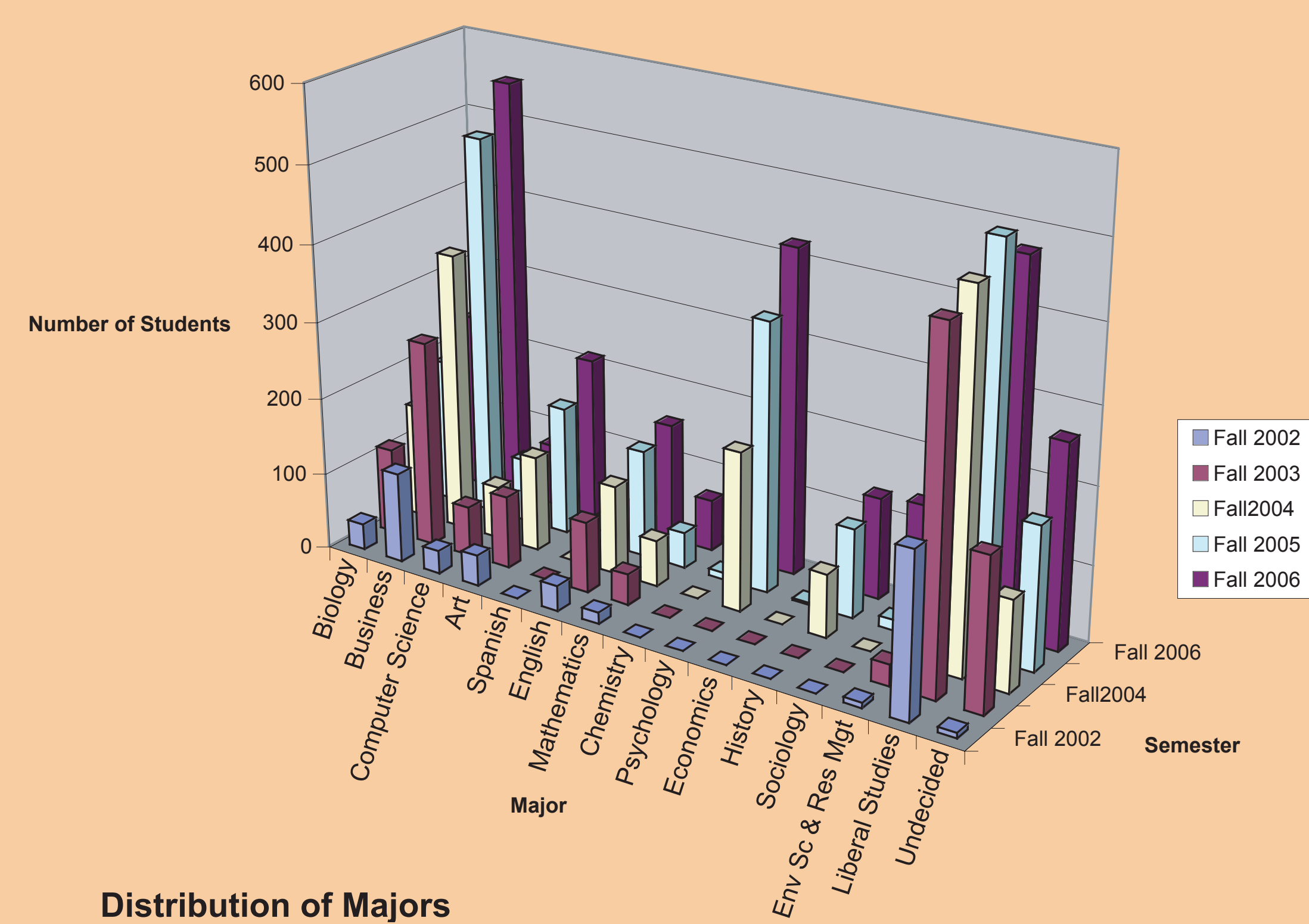
Assessment Activities

Liberal Studies program efforts this year focused on the following program outcome: Liberal Studies graduates will be able to evaluate effectively oral or written communication for accuracy of content, logic of argument, and clarity of reasoning. Because all CSUCI freshmen must complete a freshman level class in critical thinking, the initial assessment and evaluation of critical thinking and reasoning skills was associated with this class. After a brief examination of the literature, Liberal Studies elected to use the California Critical Thinking Skills Test. The test was administered to all students registered in UNIV 110 Critical Thinking in Interdisciplinary Contexts in spring semester 2006 and fall semester of 2005 using a pretest-posttest format. The essential finding from these assessments was that there was no significant difference in the students' critical thinking and reasoning skills after the 16 week critical thinking class. Based on

methodological considerations, Liberal Studies concluded that findings were insufficient to warrant changes in the critical thinking class. However, they feel they have sufficient data to create the mechanisms needed to institutionalize feedback loops in assessment and evaluation programs. The Liberal Studies Implementation Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes proposes that five members of the Liberal Studies Advisory Committee (LSAC) meet for one or two days in the intersession between fall and spring semesters to evaluate annual assessment data, and reflect on what they have learned. The product from this meeting will be a series of recommendations directed to the entire LSAC during the course of the spring semester. This will provide a regular mechanism that ensures that assessment and evaluation data guide decision making in pedagogy and programs.

Unique Attributes of the Program

The Liberal Studies degree was among the first degrees offered at CSUCI. It represents the University's response to a demand from within the communities that we serve, and the CSU's commitment to preparing teachers for California's schools. Currently, the Liberal Studies program at CSUCI matriculates the second largest number of majors in the university, second only to Business. Since its implementation, Liberal Studies has matriculated more students than any other major at CSUCI.



The curriculum for majors is usually developed by the specialty faculty appointed to the discipline represented by the major. The Liberal Studies major is unique because it has no faculty. Unlike traditional majors, the Liberal Studies curriculum is the product of a group of faculty from across the University who are committed to the notion of liberal education and liberal studies. Thus, the potential richness of the educational experience in Liberal Studies results from the diversity of the faculty at large, and the unique ways in which disciplinary content can be combined to create a coherent program of study not represented by traditional majors.