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# Liberal Arts

In the College of Arts and Letters

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## Committee on Graduate Liberal Arts

The Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts is administered through the Graduate Liberal Arts Committee. Faculty assigned to teach courses in the program are drawn from departments throughout the University.

## General Information

The College of Arts and Letters offers a Graduate Liberal Arts program that is one of two in the western United States. The Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts is an interdisciplinary program administered by the Graduate Liberal Arts Committee. Even though this approach to graduate education is over thirty years old in the United States, its interdisciplinary nature has kept it vital and flexible. Students are encouraged to customize their degree by selecting coursework relevant to their interests.

The Master of Liberal Arts degree is an interdisciplinary program intended to provide an alternative approach to continued adult learning by offering a program that crosses disciplinary boundaries and aims for breadth and scope. It provides the unique combination of a highly individualized program of study centered around personal interests combined with a strong grounding in interdisciplinary methods for problem solving.

The student body is drawn from diverse backgrounds, thus adding to the unique character of the program.

## Admission to Graduate Study

Applicants seeking admission to the program leading to the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts should contact the director of Graduate Liberal Arts Committee requesting appropriate application materials. Detailed information concerning application procedures will be sent to the applicant along with the appropriate application forms.

In addition to satisfying the requirements for admission to the University with classified graduate standing as described in Part Two of this bulletin, the student seeking admission must: (1) have a grade point average of 3.0 or better on work completed during the last 60 units for the baccalaureate degree, (2) have a score of 1000 or better on the GRE General Test (combined verbal and quantitative), and (3) complete a statement of purpose essay. A personal interview with a member of the Graduate Liberal Arts Committee is recommended.

Students who do not meet all of the above requirements for admission with classified graduate standing may be admitted with conditional classified graduate standing upon the recommendation of the MALA director and Graduate Liberal Arts Committee. Students so admitted will be advised as to the nature of their deficiency and the time to be allowed to achieve full classified graduate standing.

## Advancement to Candidacy

All students must satisfy the general requirements for advancement to candidacy as described in Part Two of this bulletin. In addition, the students must (1) satisfactorily complete 12 units, with a minimum grade point average of 3.0, including 9 units of core seminars as stipulated (MALA 600A, 600B, 600C, 600D) and (2) if selecting Plan A, have a thesis or project proposal which has received the approval of the Graduate Liberal Arts Committee and its director.

## Specific Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Liberal Arts

(Major Code: 49017)

In addition to meeting the basic requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts as described in Part Two of this bulletin, the student must complete a graduate program of at least 30 units in residence at San Diego State University in the MALA program, of which at least 15 must be in 600- and 700-numbered courses. The total program must include:

1. Three units each of MALA 600A, 600B, 600C, or 600D for a total of nine units.
2. Three units of MALA 601.
3. A theme of study composed of 15 units of graduate coursework, selected with the approval of the MALA director which normally must be in at least two of the following areas: social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and fine arts, with no more than six units in any given discipline. Some 500 level courses may be used in partial fulfillment of this requirement, if approved by the MALA director. MALA 798, where applicable, may be included as satisfying 3 of the 15 units for the thematic component. Under special circumstances, and with permission of the MALA director, a student may compose a theme that deviates in structure from the criteria stipulated above. This theme may include up to a maximum of 12 units of 600A, 600B, 600C, and 600D, in any combination.

Students may select either Plan A or Plan B in consultation with the MALA director. In addition to meeting the distribution requirements given above, students electing Plan A must complete MALA 799A (Thesis or Project). Students electing Plan B must complete MALA 795 (Studies in the Liberal Arts) and pass a written comprehensive examination in lieu of the thesis.

All programs must be approved by the MALA director in consultation with the Graduate Liberal Arts Committee.

#### GRADUATE COURSES

##### **600A-600B-600C-600D. Interdisciplinary Study in the Liberal Arts (3-3-3-3)**

Prerequisites: Admission to the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts program and consent of MALA director.

Interdisciplinary seminars to explore issues that require integration of the perspective of various areas of the liberal arts. Each course may be repeated with new content. See Class Schedule for specific content.

- A.** Social Sciences and Humanities
- B.** Social Sciences and Natural Sciences
- C.** Humanities and Natural Sciences
- D.** Fine Arts and Social Sciences, Humanities, or Natural Sciences

##### **601. Seminar in Interdisciplinary Thinking (3)**

Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts program and approval of director.

Introduction to MALA curriculum and interdisciplinary commitment, especially to connection between fine arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences. See Class Schedule for specific content.

##### **696. Advanced Topics in Liberal Arts (1-3)**

Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts program or graduate standing.

Intensive study in specific areas of liberal arts. May be repeated with new content. See Class Schedule for specific content. Maximum credit six units applicable to a master's degree.

##### **795. Studies in the Liberal Arts (1-3) Cr/NC**

Prerequisite: An officially appointed examining committee and advancement to candidacy.

Individual preparation for comprehensive examination for students taking the Master of Liberal Arts under Plan B. Maximum credit three units.

##### **798. Special Study (1-3) Cr/NC/SP**

Prerequisite: Advancement to candidacy and consent of MALA director

Individual study on a given topic through interdisciplinary perspectives. Maximum credit three units.

##### **799A. Thesis or Project (3) Cr/NC/SP**

Prerequisite: An officially appointed thesis committee and advancement to candidacy.

Preparation of a project or thesis for the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Arts.

##### **799B. Thesis or Project Extension (0) Cr/NC**

Prerequisite: Prior registration in Thesis or Project 799A with an assigned grade symbol of SP.

Registration required in any semester or term following assignment of SP in MALA 799A in which the student expects to use the facilities and resources of the University; also student must be registered in the course when the completed thesis or project is granted final approval.