

Program Review Self-Study Report

Undergraduate Programs in Liberal Studies

Submitted to the Program Review Steering Committee and the Dean, College of Arts and Sciences on 3/11/08

Submitted by the Director of Liberal Studies, Debra Meyers, PhD

1) Brief Program Profile

a) Name of academic program: Liberal Studies (AALS & BALS).

b) Brief description

- i) The associate degree was created in 2001 and the bachelor in 2004 in response to a growing student demand for a broad-based education and a flexible program of study. Both degrees have been available through the PACE program since 2004 in an effort to further this initial goal.

The Liberal Studies program encourages collaboration and cooperation among departments within the College of Arts and Sciences to provide Liberal Studies majors an effective and valuable learning experience. Often referred to as “completer” degrees, the AALS and BALS degrees provide valuable alternatives to many other College of Arts and Sciences’ majors. Targeting a unique audience, the program serves:

- students who prefer a broader and more flexible approach to their college education than is offered by traditional disciplinary majors.
- students whose primary educational goals demand integrated and multidisciplinary study.
- adult learners who have interrupted their studies for a prolonged period and return with a different academic focus and career goal.
- transfer students whose prior work does not mesh well with existing programs of study at NKU.
- part-time students whose work schedules and other responsibilities preclude them from completing more structured majors.
- students abandoning highly structured majors late in their undergraduate career.

- ii) As a result of the intense focus on the new master’s program beginning in 2004 and the problems posed by limited institutional resources, the undergraduate Liberal Studies programs have not kept pace with other programs in the areas of curriculum development and assessment. In an effort to rectify this situation, the Dean of Arts and Sciences created two administrative positions – the Liberal Studies Director and the Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies. In collaboration with A&S department chairs and faculty, this restructuring will improve the program’s effectiveness and accountability while enhancing students’ education and advancing the full mission of the College and the University.

c) Name and position of person responsible for administering the program: Dr. Debra Meyers, Director of Liberal Studies (as of 7/07)

d) Department committees charged with monitoring the program and a description of their function

- i) An Advisory Council will be created that includes members of the community, the program director, the Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies, a representative from A&S advising, a student representative, and A&S faculty. This body will regularly make recommendations for improvements in marketing the program. The Dean of the College of Arts and

Sciences will receive annual reports from the program director and the Advisory Council. (Anticipated implementation 2009)

- ii) Additionally, we hope to capitalize on a voluntary external review opportunity by 2011. In preparation for this, we have renewed our institutional membership in the national Association for Integrative Studies that provides external auditors for this purpose.
- 2) Relationship to Institutional Mission
- a) The program did not have a mission statement prior to the one developed 8/07.
Program Mission:
 - o NKU's undergraduate Liberal Studies program provides students with a multidisciplinary learning experience within the College of Arts and Sciences and encourages students to integrate ideas from various disciplines. Successful graduates develop leadership skills and gain significant academic skills for lifelong learning that prepare them for careers in education, business, government, social services and related fields.
 - b) Describe the ways in which the program's mission and goals align with the university's mission, core values and strategic plan.
 - i) Liberal Studies provides direct learning and support services to students to buttress NKU's commitment to learner-centered education as expressed in the University's mission statement, core values and strategic plan.
- 3) Program Goals
- a) The new process for generating program goals (as of 8/07) includes dialogue with:
 - i) Department chairs and faculty
 - ii) The Dean of Arts & Sciences
 - iii) The Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies
 - iv) National Integrative Studies organizations
 - v) Master Advisor for Liberal Studies
 - b) Instruction
 - i) Program goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) To provide a flexible program for students seeking personal intellectual growth or professional advancement.
 - ii) Program outcomes of goals for the past year
 - (1) Exclusive of the summer numbers, 21 students received an associate's degree and 28 received a BA in the past academic year (fall 2006-spring 2007). [Data derived from focus reports]
 - (2) Currently there are 256 students enrolled in the undergraduate programs. This is a significant increase over the 169 students enrolled in 2004. [Data derived from focus reports]
 - (3) Graduates of the program have been satisfied with their experience in the major. Of the seniors surveyed over the last three years [N=75], 89% said they would recommend NKU to others. [Data provided by Institutional Research and derived from the annual NKU senior survey results]
 - iii) Program goals/ Priorities for Action (PFA) 2007-2010
 - (1) Enhance the learning experience by developing the infrastructure

- (a) Rename the program Integrative Studies in an effort to reflect new student learning outcomes and program goals in addition to following national trends. These outcomes and goals – based on the Association of American Colleges and University’s recommendations laid out in various publications including *Liberal Education and America’s Promise* (2005) -- will focus on integrative analysis: identifying alternative hypotheses, explanations, conclusions, sources, etc. and critically analyzing them.
 - (b) Establish and implement a variety of suitable assessment methods.
 - (c) Work more closely with department chairs and faculty to develop integrative courses, particularly a capstone experience for the major.
 - (d) Identify desired outcomes aligned with University/College mission including the implementation of coop/internship and civic engagement opportunities. These outcomes will be based on the AACU’s recommendations found in the following publications: *Liberal Education and America’s Promise* (2005), *Liberal Education Outcomes and Student Achievement of Educational Excellence* (2005), and *College Learning for the Global Century* (2007).
- (2) Create a more flexible program to increase enrollments
- (a) Work more closely with department chairs and faculty to develop integrative courses and service-learning opportunities for students.
 - (b) Increase enrollments with an emphasis on e-learning to align with NKU’s strategic agenda that plans to expand enrollments to 26,000 by 2020. This will require the program director to work closely with the Executive Director of NKU’s Educational Outreach program in addition to department chairs, faculty, and A&S advisors.
 - (c) Work more closely with department chairs, faculty, and the Scripps Howard Center’s director of service learning to increase degree production by enhancing learning options (e.g. web-based courses, undergraduate certificates, etc.)
- (3) Make connections and establish recognition of the program’s value
- (a) Market the program more effectively to prospective degree seeking candidates if funds are available.
 - (b) Increase awareness among faculty, students, student service providers and employers of the marketability/value of an NKU Integrative Studies degree.
 - (c) Assist in building a culture of collegiality and collaboration within and between the University and the public we serve by instituting a Faculty Learning Community focused on issues of interdisciplinary pedagogy and the integration of technology in the learning process (Spring 08). While these issues are important for many disciplines, they are particularly important for advancing the curriculum development and assessment agenda for the Integrative Studies program. Specifically, this will assist the program in the process of continual assessment of our instructional goals with the necessary input of faculty actively

engaged in online curriculum development within the College of Arts and Sciences.

- c) Scholarship
 - i) Program goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) NA
 - ii) Program outcomes of goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) NA
 - iii) Program goals for the current academic year -- Priorities for Action (PFA) 2007-2010
 - (1) NA
 - d) Civic Engagement
 - i) Program goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) Search for a new program director with a civic engagement agenda.
 - ii) Program outcomes of goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) The appointment of a new program director dedicated to prioritizing civic engagement in the program.
 - iii) Program goals for the current academic year -- Priorities for Action (PFA) 2007-2010
 - (1) *Public Engagement:* Working closely with the Scripps Howard Center's Director of Service Learning, we will encourage partnerships throughout the region that both serve the learning needs of the public and enhance the learning opportunities available to our faculty, staff, and students by allowing majors to use the new undergraduate Civic Engagement certificate to fulfill the program's graduation requirements. Additionally, we will provide more service learning and internship opportunities to students by adding new course options, such as IST 496 (Internship) and IST 320 (The Power of Black Sacred Music).
 - (2) *Multiculturalism:* We will define our commitment to advancing multicultural understanding within both the University and the community as an educational and civic priority.
 - (3) *Collegiality and Collaboration:* We will contribute to a culture of collegiality and collaboration within and between the University and the public we serve by working closely with department chairs, faculty members, advisors, and the Scripps Howard Center's Director of Service Learning.
 - e) Additional Goals
 - i) Program goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) NA
 - ii) Program outcomes of goals for 2006-2007
 - (1) NA
 - iii) Program goals for the current academic year
 - (1) NA
- 4) Instructional Effectiveness -- The undergraduate Liberal Studies program director is in the process of establishing an ongoing data collection schedule that coordinates the courses and newly adopted learning goals with a measurement instrument, such as student portfolios and exit surveys, to be fully functioning by 2010. The instruments

will be deployed and data will be collected and analyzed by the program director. The analyzed data will be formatted and used to identify potential areas of change or enhancement and the results will be reported to the Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, and an advisory council made up of faculty and advisors in the College of Arts and Sciences.

a) Curriculum

- i) Currently, majors take courses in departments within the College of Arts and Sciences. They do not have interdisciplinary course options within “Liberal Studies” itself.
- ii) The program’s curriculum strengths:
 - (1) Classes, in general, remain small.
 - (2) The program services many non-traditional students particularly those who prefer a broader, more flexible and more integrative approach to their college education than is offered by traditional disciplinary majors.
 - (3) It remains a flexible alternative to many Arts and Sciences’ options particularly for students abandoning highly structured majors late in their undergraduate career, adult learners who have interrupted their studies for a prolonged period and return with a different academic focus or career goal, as well as transfer students whose prior work does not mesh well with existing programs of study at NKU.
 - (4) The major requirements are inline with other institutions across the country.
- iii) Weaknesses of the current curriculum and how are they addressed (prior to 8/07):
 - (1) No clearly identifiable integrative or interdisciplinary courses currently exist within the Liberal Studies program.
 - (2) No student learning outcomes exist for the major.
 - (3) No assessment methods have been implemented.
- iv) Plans to improve instructional effectiveness:
 - (1) Create and implement student-learning outcomes for the newly named program, Integrative Studies.
 - (2) Establish and implement program assessment methods. This will require at least 1/2 reassigned time for a tenure-track faculty member.
 - (3) Given the projections for growth, we hope to secure an additional advisor for Liberal Studies/Integrative Studies.
 - (4) Provide more service learning and internship opportunities for students. This requires faculty reassignment or stipends for curriculum development and student supervision.
 - (5) Offer more integrative/interdisciplinary courses. This requires a new tenure-track faculty line, perhaps a joint-appointment between Integrative Studies and a tenure-granting department within the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - (6) Provide more e-learning opportunities for students. The Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies plans to provide faculty with a technology-based learning community that should lead to a greater number of e-learning

experiences for Integrative Studies students within the College of Arts and Sciences.

(7) Propose new Integrative Studies courses.

(a) IST 492 Directed Research

(b) IST 494 Seminar: Topics

(c) IST 496 Internship

(d) IST 499 Independent Study: Directed Readings

IST 492, 494, 496, and 499 will serve as integrative capstone options for the BAIS. Several options are necessary given our diverse student population. The required integrative capstone experience and new portfolio requirement might be the only integrative experience for certain students. It is our hope that more integrative courses at the undergraduate level will be offered in the future.

(8) Plan new Integrative Studies courses to facilitate future growth.

(a) IST 100 Intro to Integrative Studies

(b) IST 294 Topics in Integrative Studies

v) Role of technology in the delivery of the curriculum -- Most classes are taught with the support of NKU smart classrooms (projector, computer console, basic software) and more faculty members are supporting their courses with Blackboard. Additionally, the Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies plans to provide faculty with a technology-based learning community that should lead to a greater number of e-learning experience (both blended learning and totally web-based courses) for students. In particular, a new web-based capstone experience must be created and made available by Spring 09. This new web-focused initiative needs a budget if it is to be sustained and expanded.

vi) Co-ops and internships -- First, many Liberal Studies students hold full-time jobs and thus experiential learning in the form of co-ops and internships has not been a high priority for students. Second, without the support of Liberal Studies faculty members, it is difficult to find supervisors for students interested in such opportunities. Despite this obstacle, a total of 7 Liberal Studies students successfully completed coop experiences in the past. Additionally, a new course – IST 492: Internship – was proposed fall 2007 in the event that the program obtains funding for full-time faculty. We plan to expand our commitment to service learning opportunities in the future by offering students credit for completing the new Civic Engagement undergraduate certificate to be offered out of Political Science/Criminal Justice.

b) General Education

i) Liberal Studies cannot provide service courses for the general education program since there are no Liberal Studies courses in the catalog at this time.

c) Service Courses

i) Liberal Studies does not provide service courses for other programs since there are no Liberal Studies courses in the catalog at this time. In the future, IST courses might serve as introductions to various disciplines for students who have not decided on a major.

d) Enrollment

- i) The program has not met its potential in this area for the following reasons. First, the program lacks sufficient advising contact hours for students due to insufficient advising capacity. Second, the program has not had a strategic marketing plan in the past. Third, the College of Arts and Sciences does not currently offer enough web-based courses to sustain and foster program growth.
- ii) The first step to expanding enrollments is to establish a solid, valuable program. This will be achieved, in part, by adopting a mission statement and identifying student-learning objectives across the curriculum. Once accomplished, we will create a marketing plan that invites students who have taken courses at NKU --but never completed a degree-- to return to NKU in collaboration with Kentucky's "Project Graduate" initiative. In sum, we believe that the program is positioned to grow substantially given the following new initiatives:
 - o the naming of a new program director and Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies;
 - o the creation of a sustainable interdisciplinary learning community for faculty that will focus on teaching, learning, and technology;
 - o enhance the curriculum by including capstone experiences, exit surveys and a portfolio requirement for assessment;
 - o the planned creation of several new interdisciplinary courses – IST 300, 310 and 320-- that incorporate NKU's Anointed Voices gospel choir participation. In particular, we expect that these courses will increase minority enrollments and retention rates;
 - o improve program visibility through the implementation of a marketing plan to promote the Integrative Studies program to a target audience. (For those who have "stepped out," invite undergraduate students back and offer them a viable path to complete a marketable degree at NKU.) This plan will also include internal outreach efforts by the program director, such as informational meetings with ARC, Student Support Services, Career Development, the Master Advisor group, and the "Project Graduate" committee at NKU.
- iii) The new initiatives outlined above will have a significant impact on enrollment; we have the potential to graduate more than 70 students a year by 2010. The program's resources will be strained by that growth and efforts should be made to fund both instructional and operating costs. These will include the following:
 - (1) New interdisciplinary faculty lines held jointly with tenure-granting departments in the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - (2) Faculty reassignment/stipends for curriculum development.
 - (3) Stipends for graduate students serving as mentors or instructors.
 - (4) Funding and support for more advisors.
 - (5) Funding for additional clerical assistance.
 - (6) Sustainability – marketing costs for all programs.

The program's capacity to service majors is limited by funding. Even without additional funding, we can expect an increase of at least 40-50 students per year due to several factors. First, the enrollment goals for NKU and subsequent student recruitment initiatives will result in more majors in less selective programs, such as Liberal Studies/Integrative Studies. Second, our successful implementation of valuable assessment measures and more course delivery options will ensure a greater demand for the program in the future.

The program is beyond capacity with regard to advising. One three-quarter time advisor currently serves all of our Liberal Studies students. That advisor is also a back-up advisor for undeclared Arts and Science students. Faculty (for teaching interdisciplinary courses and student/program assessment) and advisors (including some with "virtual" advising responsibilities) will be needed to sustain and increase growth.

Enrollments & BA Graduations (PACE included)						
	Fall 2004- Summer 2005	Fall 2005 – Summer 2006	Fall 2006- Summer 2007	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	
TOTAL	169	237	215	256	257	
Graduates	7	13	44	10	28*	
	All data derived from SIS Focus Reports			*Number of graduation applications received by the Registrar's Office by 3/1/08		

	2008	2009	2010
Projected Enrollments	257	300	350
Projected Graduates	52	61	71

e) Faculty

- i) There are no full-time faculty members currently teaching in this program. This structural problem contributes to the program's instability and the need for full-time advisors. Ultimately, the program requires tenure-track faculty to teach integrative courses, supervise capstone experiences, advise majors, and assess student portfolios. Having full-time faculty in the program will also increase our retention rates – studies show that students are more invested in programs when mentored by full-time faculty. Currently faculty teaching Liberal Studies students place their loyalty and service in their discipline related department because decisions concerning reappointment, promotion and tenure rest in departments outside of Liberal Studies. Hiring full-time

Integrative Studies faculty (holding joint appointments in tenure-granting College departments) would provide a firm foundation for growth.

- f) Learning outcomes/goals for students
- i) The course syllabus acts as the “learning contract” between the student and the program. These syllabi include the specific course goals, learning objectives, and grading measures for the courses. At this time, the director of Liberal Studies has no control over learning outcomes for the program since coursework for the major is offered in specific departments throughout the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - ii) The AACU has identified learning assessment objectives that will be modified slightly and adopted by the Integrative Studies program and its capstone experience in 2008. [The objectives can be found in various AACU publications including, *Liberal Education and America’s Promise* (2005), *Liberal Education Outcomes and Student Achievement of Educational Excellence* (2005), and *College Learning for the Global Century* (2007).]
 - iii) These SLOs *for the major* will be listed on each capstone syllabus and posted on our new website. (The SLOs for the associate’s degree appear at the end of this section.)

I. Knowledge Gained through Integrative Studies by:

- Addressing important questions, both contemporary and enduring.
- Acquiring and analyzing a sufficient volume of content to provide a fundamental knowledge of the disciplines in the program of study.

II. Acquisition of Intellectual and Practical Skills by:

- Demonstrating intellectual curiosity, resources of the imagination, and critical engagement.
- Developing a capacity for critical thinking, inquiry, and analysis.
- Increasing precision and clarity in reading, writing, and oral communication.
- Practicing research and information literacy skills, and using the information effectively and ethically.
- Increasing their appreciation of and tolerance for ambiguity and the ability to reconcile disparate points of view.
- Developing teamwork, problem-solving, and collaborative decision-making skills.
- Creating and refining powers of reflection and judgment.
- Presenting scholarly or creative work through oral, written, or artistic expression.

III. Increased Awareness of Personal and Social Responsibility by:

- Fostering an ethic of social engagement and citizenship and living as engaged citizens who will fulfill their obligation to work in their communities to protect rights and freedoms and advance social justice.
- Evaluating the consequences of actions, maintaining high ethical stands in employment and personal lives, seeking ways to open paths to personal and

social development, and working in personal and public relationships to create sustainable and harmonious relationships.

- Deepening their awareness of the world through study of language, art, heritage, institutions, nature, work, identity, and applied skills derived from the liberal arts and sciences.
- Developing intercultural awareness, understanding, and competence.
- Creating an appreciation for lifelong learning and recognizing the skills that facilitate continuous learning processes to foster discovery, creativity, and innovation.

IV. Increased Capacity for Integrated Learning by:

- Appreciating the disciplines in the College of Arts and Sciences while drawing upon them in an integrative manner.
- Developing critical synthesis skills that unite concepts and practices across multiple levels, disciplines, and settings.
- Applying knowledge, skills, and abilities to new settings and increasingly complex problems.

The process for evaluating the SLO's effectiveness will include an assessment of senior portfolios and senior surveys. Rubrics for evaluating the portfolio contents are currently being developed. The following is a draft of the guidelines for compiling portfolios:

The portfolio, consisting of two reflective essays and related documents, both develops and demonstrates personal growth and the acquisition of cognitive knowledge. Demonstrators will include:

- ❖ Integration of knowledge— recognition of the intellectual landscape of selected fields and the ability to identify connections between them.
- ❖ Ability to connect theoretical to practical—integration of cognitive learning with practical experiences.
- ❖ Reflective analysis — evidence of progressive intellectual/personal/social growth that reflects the value added by the chosen academic path.

[The demonstrators can be found in various AACU publications including, *Liberal Education and America's Promise* (2005), *Liberal Education Outcomes and Student Achievement of Educational Excellence* (2005), and *College Learning for the Global Century* (2007).]

Portfolio:

For each area of concentration or minor you have chosen to undertake here at NKU, you will provide an example of your best work. If you have transferred an entire area of concentration or minor from another school, please note on the form that you are exempt from that particular section.

Formal written work must be at least three pages long and word-processed. If the example is not a traditional writing sample, please provide a written description of the project, performance, etc. and outline its significance.

Reflective Essay:

For this segment of your portfolio you will want to discuss what new knowledge and insights you have acquired over the course of your study and address how your work represents new and different ways of evaluating problems we face in today's world. Your reflective formal essay should be between 400-500 words and word-processed.

In this reflective essay you may want to address one of the following:

- ❖ Examine the relationship of your education to your intended or desired career path, looking at such issues as preparation and suitability to the job. Explain in what ways you hope your education will enhance your performance on the job. You will want to specifically cite the Student Learning Objectives outlined in the syllabi provided by your instructors that will contribute to your success. These will include, but are not limited to, development of written communication skills, advancement in critical thinking, and the application of theories, concepts and methods in cross-cultural and integrative analysis.
- ❖ Discuss the NKU courses that contributed most to your efforts to become a more aware, involved, and effective citizen. You will want to specifically cite the Student Learning Objectives outlined in the syllabi provided by your instructors that will contribute to your success. These will include, but are not limited to, development of written communication skills, advancement in critical thinking, and the application of theories, concepts and methods in cross-cultural and integrative analysis.

[Integrative analysis includes identifying alternative hypotheses, explanations, conclusions, sources, etc. and critically analyzing them.]

Diversity Essay:

For this portion of your portfolio, you will create a reflective essay (400-500 words) dealing with issues of tolerance, inclusion and anti-discrimination that have been informed by your experiences here at NKU.

The following are suggestions to help you get started:

- ❖ Identify the two most meaningful courses at NKU and discuss how they prompted you to think in new ways about unfamiliar aspects of the world around you.
- ❖ Discuss how issues of diversity in one NKU course applied to (or were useful in) a different course at NKU.
- ❖ Discuss how NKU courses and your service learning experiences relate to diversity issues faced by our society today.
- ❖ Identify a specific issue of diversity in a work of art or a scientific concept that troubles or intrigues you and describe its influence on your current thoughts regarding diversity.

You are encouraged to produce your own unique reflection essays and therefore we do not post any previously submitted examples as templates. Our objective is to gauge Liberal Studies majors as a cohort to see how well we are meeting our stated objectives. Thus, your creative expressions will assist us in making the program better. Additionally, you benefit from this process. Reflecting upon the multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary academic path you have taken allows you to identify the many marketable skills mastered here at NKU. Think of your reflection essays as rough drafts for job/graduate school application cover letters.

The Associate's Degree Student Learning Outcomes

[The following objectives can be found in various AACU publications including, *Liberal Education and America's Promise* (2005), *Liberal Education Outcomes and Student Achievement of Educational Excellence* (2005), and *College Learning for the Global Century* (2007).]

Students successfully completing the program will demonstrate:

I. Knowledge Gained through Integrative Studies by:

- Addressing important questions, both contemporary and enduring.
- Beginning to acquire and analyze some content to provide a fundamental knowledge of the disciplines in the program of study.

II. Acquisition of Intellectual and Practical Skills by:

- Beginning to foster intellectual curiosity, resources of the imagination, and critical engagement.
- Creating a capacity for critical thinking, inquiry, and analysis.
- Increasing precision and clarity in reading, writing, and oral communication.
- Developing tolerance for ambiguity.
- Formulating teamwork, problem-solving, and collaborative decision-making skills.
- Presenting scholarly or creative work through oral, written, or artistic expression.

III. Increased Awareness of Personal and Social Responsibility by:

- Fostering an ethic of social engagement and citizenship.
- Deepening their awareness of the world through study of language, art, heritage, institutions, nature, work, identity, and applied skills derived from the liberal arts and sciences.
- Demonstrating intercultural awareness, understanding, and competence.
- Anticipating an appreciation for lifelong learning and begin to recognize the skills that facilitate continuous learning processes to foster discovery, creativity, and innovation.

IV. Increased Capacity for Integrated Learning by:

- Appreciating the disciplines in the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Pursuing multilateral learning processes to adapt and succeed within complex systems.
- Demonstrating a basic understanding of the methodology of at least one of the following areas of study: natural science, fine arts, humanities, mathematics, and behavioral and social sciences.

Proposed Assessment Methods:

- Direct measure – review of graduating students’ advising and curriculum records.
 - Indirect measure – exit survey.
- 5) Scholarship
 - a) Faculty Profiles
 - i) Without full-time program faculty, we cannot control faculty scholarship outcomes.
 - b) Faculty accomplishments
 - i) NA
 - 6) Civic Engagement
 - a) List initiatives that include public audiences
 - i) Without full-time faculty or departmental status, we cannot control Civic Engagement outcomes as they relate to the program.
 - b) Outcomes of these initiatives
 - i) NA
 - 7) Student Involvement and Satisfaction
 - a) Program’s website
 - i) The website is outdated and contains inaccurate or confusing information. We are working with members of the College of Arts and Sciences’ instructional design team to create a new site – a virtual handbook for our majors, advisors, and instructors.
 - b) Academic advising process
 - i) Students enter the program after meeting with an A&S advisor. These students are given an “advising syllabus” and asked to sign a contract that explains the students’ and advisors’ responsibilities. A&S advisors then track each student to ensure that all major requirements and general education requirements are met in a timely fashion. In order to accomplish this, an automatic advising hold is placed regularly on students wishing to register for classes.
 - c) Discipline-related student organizations
 - i) Without full-time program faculty and other resources, we cannot engage in this retention-related initiative effectively. However, we hope to collaborate with the Anointed Voices student organization on campus to create Integrative Studies courses that assist in attracting and retaining minority students.
 - ii) With full-time faculty and other resources, we could also begin a chapter of Pi Gamma Mu honor society to recognize our exceptional students and provide them with opportunities to apply for Pi Gamma Mu graduate school scholarships.

- iii) With full-time faculty serving as advisors, we would have greater success in organizing student participation in the annual NKU Celebration of Student Research – an ideal showcase for the interdisciplinary work produced in the Integrative Studies capstone experience.
 - d) Their activities
 - i) NA
 - e) Assessment process used to evaluate student satisfaction
 - i) To date, no assessment has taken place other than NKU's senior survey. Rectifying this situation will be a priority over the next few months.
- 8) Information Resources and Instructional Equipment
 - a) Library holdings
 - i) Currently, the program does not have a library liaison assigned to serve our students' needs. The program director has contacted the Associate Provost to rectify this situation.
 - b) Adequacy of holdings
 - i) The library holdings could be improved if additional faculty/staff assistance were provided to conduct a formal review of the library's current holdings compared with the current interdisciplinary literature available.
 - c) Strengths and weaknesses of library holdings and department's information resources
 - i) A thorough review of library holdings is needed. However, additional staff would be needed to accomplish this.
 - d) Quality of current facilities and capital equipment
 - i) The program would be enhanced if facilities comparable to that of departments were available. This would include enough office and meeting space for staff, advisors, students, and faculty.
 - e) Strengths and weaknesses in facilities and capital equipment
 - i) The program would benefit from a budget tied to the number of students we serve. A budget should include campus facilities, funds for e-learning projects, administrative support, and faculty/staff compensation.
 - f) Identify resources available for integration of technology into learning activities
 - i) Some of the current majors are in the PACE (web-enhanced/hybrid) program. All of the courses in this program include learning activities delivered by technology. Available resources include POD training for instructors, instructional development assistance through the College of Arts and Sciences, and student support through Educational Outreach and the Help Desk support through IT.
 - g) Adequacy of IT support for this program
 - i) Support is adequate, but needs to increase if the program is expanded or improved. Increased support will have to include instructional development, expanded Help Desk hours, and/or an alternate to Blackboard if service cannot be expanded.
 - h) Most pressing unmet needs of the program related to facilities and equipment
 - i) Establish a budget for the program that would include program facilities, staff, full-time faculty with joint appointments in tenure-granting departments, marketing, and funding for e-learning. For the PACE program in particular,

wireless internet access is absolutely necessary at the Covington campus and more classroom computers via a laptop laboratory are needed (at the satellite campuses).

- 9) Program Benchmarking
 - a) Benchmarking selection process
 - i) The director identified the benchmark institutions that offered undergraduate degrees in Liberal Studies from those listed on NKU's Program Review website.
 - ii) For the most part, only two good matches were available.
 - b) Process for gathering information from the benchmark institutions
 - i) The program director downloaded information from the benchmark institutions' websites for comparison to the general program. These included Salem State College and Indiana State University.
 - ii) The PACE program is modeled after Xavier University's CAPS program and Thomas More College's Continuing Education program (excluding TAP). These programs operate on similar, sequenced 8-week sessions. Both institutions were contacted by phone and information was gathered via their website. Additionally, NKU's Educational Outreach Executive Director in charge of our PACE program worked at Thomas More College and is very familiar with their program.
 - c) Significant similarities and differences between this program and benchmark institutions
 - i) Our program is right inline with the benchmark institutions and others that belong to the AIS (Association of Integrative Studies) especially with regard to the program's new mission, student admission requirements, new student learning outcomes and the interdisciplinary nature of course offerings.
 - ii) We do not line up well with regard to other institutions when it comes to departmental status, funding, facilities, e-learning opportunities, faculty lines, advisors, and staff. Many other institutions have created Liberal Studies or Interdisciplinary Studies departments with budgets and other resources.
 - iii) We also do not serve as the center for the general education and/or the honors programs as does the Interdisciplinary Department at Salem State College. Nor do we serve as the state's preferred major for elementary school teachers. Many interdisciplinary departments offer the preferred or required major for elementary school teachers, such as Old Dominion University, Dominican University, James Madison, San Diego University for Integrative Studies, California State University Northridge, and Oregon State University.
 - iv) With respect to the PACE program, Xavier University's CAPS program is very similar to PACE. Eight-week sessions meet once a week and students may begin the program at regular intervals rather than wait until a new semester begins. Both programs produce a BA in Liberal Studies. The two programs differ in the following ways:
 - (1) Xavier has an option for weekend courses (Saturday/Sunday) in addition to weekday evening classes.
 - (2) Xavier offers two areas of concentration: organizational leadership and professional communication.

- (3) Xavier’s program is not web-enhanced. Their website notes that “Because the courses are all intensive and accelerated, students are responsible for learning roughly one-third of the course work outside of class, on your own.” Thus self-directed learning is a significant modality of the program.
- (4) Thomas More’s program rotates 8-week sessions, but their program does not include the major coursework. Their focus is to provide general education courses that support TAP (an accelerated business program) and the BES (Bachelor of Elected Studies).
- d) Features of analogous programs at benchmark institutions that should be considered for adoption
- i) Interdisciplinary faculty lines and departmental budgets that include staff and office space.
 - ii) For PACE – Additional areas of concentration are needed. This can only be done with additional faculty participation. Further, an alternate set of general education requirements would improve retention and graduation rates. Thomas More offers such an option for non-traditional students.
- e) Resources needed to incorporate these features into the current program
- i) Funding is needed for improving and expanding all aspects of the program.
- 10) External Evaluators
- a) No external reviews have taken place.
- 11) Program Planning
- a) Current and long-range opportunities available to the program
 - i) In addition to many of the long-range plans outlined above, we hope to offer several undergraduate certificates. Currently, Liberal Studies majors must complete 4 discipline-based areas of concentration or minors. In keeping with the new mission of the Integrative Studies program, the following thematic certificate offerings would allow the integration of knowledge from several disciplines around a common theme.

Students seeking the Bachelor of Arts degree in Integrative Studies (BAIS) must complete all NKU graduation requirements including:

- general education requirements, which must be completed within the first 60 hours of college-level work
- 45 hours of upper-division coursework
- A minimum of 128 credit hours
- A minimum 2.0 GPA
- 4 minors, areas of concentration, or thematic certificates outlined below. Students may choose as many as four different thematic certificates for the major, but no course can be counted in more than one area of study. Students must maintain a GPA of 2.00 in any of the certificate programs and no course in which a grade below a C is earned can be used to fulfill the major course requirements.

Based upon an informal study of the courses Liberal Studies students selected in the past, it was clear that they were already choosing what

amounts to thematic areas of concentration. Thus, we have clustered these courses around the following themes that were submitted to UCC as new undergraduate certificates to be offered Spring 09:

- Family/Child Development
- Freedom Studies
- Global Citizenship
- Studies in Creativity

Additional certificates, such as Professional Development that capitalize on some of the Organizational Leadership courses, are also in the planning stages.

In addition to the thematic certificates, Integrative Studies majors may also use the undergraduate Certificate in Civic Engagement offered through the department of Political Science and Criminal Justice as an area of concentration. This 16-credit hour certificate includes two required courses (4 credits total) and four self-selected service learning courses (12 credits total). The goal of the certificate is to help students see that regardless of their academic, personal and professional interests, there is service that they can do to help benefit our community. Through this Undergraduate Certificate Program students will be exposed to and immersed in opportunities to create change through their knowledge and experiences and which are grounded in their academic program.

- ii) The PACE program continues to grow, but the growth potential cannot be maximized unless more progress is made in offering business, communications, and organizational leadership areas of concentration options for majors.
- b) Current and long-range challenges facing the program
 - i) In order to graduate more majors, we need more advisors and several new Integrative Studies faculty. If funded, the program is expected to grow in conjunction with Organizational Leadership.
 - ii) The PACE program faces increased competition for adult learners in Northern Kentucky. Indiana Wesleyan now has a center in Florence that caters to this cohort. In addition, the University of Phoenix is expanding into this area in 2008. Both of these competitors offer more flexible and more accelerated (5-6 week courses) programs than PACE.
- c) Program's strategies for taking advantage of these opportunities and meeting these challenges
 - i) We will seek funding for advisors, staff, and faculty.
 - ii) We will collaborate with Organizational Leadership on curriculum matters, staffing, and especially marketing to advance NKU's talent initiative and Kentucky's "Project Graduate."
 - iii) We will explore the possibility of alternative general education courses for the PACE program.

- iv) We will increase our marketing efforts. With regard to the PACE program, market efforts will include radio and online ads, conducting monthly information sessions for potential students, and expanding the efforts aimed at businesses.
- d) Program's strategic plan's relationship to Academic Affairs' Academic Plan
 - i) Programming: the new Integrative Studies program will "assure our students a high quality liberal education." To achieve this goal we will conduct regular program reviews to "assess continuing need or demand, evaluation of funding and other support, and comparison with appropriate benchmark programs." Further, we will contribute to the interdisciplinary programming initiative that will "advance the best interests of our students and our community." And, if funded, we hope to improve advising "to strengthen the first-year experience of students." ("Creating Our Future," 4)
 - ii) Learner-Centered Delivery: the Integrative Studies program will "encourage, support and broaden the delivery of programs and courses through distance learning technologies" and "offer classes and/or programs of study at non-traditional times...[and] create compressed course schedules." ("Creating Our Future," 5)
 - iii) Improving Quality: the Integrative Studies program will participate "in faculty development programs" and "provide individual and unit incentives to increase faculty participation in technology-based course delivery and off-campus programs and courses." ("Creating Our Future," 6)
- e) Program's strategic plan's relationship to the University's Strategic Agenda
 - i) Develop Talent: the Integrative Studies program will work to "increase our undergraduate enrollment, retention and graduation rates consistent with available financial and physical resources.... [and] increase our enrollment of transfer students, adult learners and low-income students." Further, we will "expand opportunities for working adults to earn undergraduate" degrees "and certificates through programs delivered in non-traditional ways." ("The Talent Imperative!" 4-5)
 - ii) Increase Student Engagement in Learning: the Integrative Studies program will ensure "outstanding advising for all students" and work to "increase opportunities for active learning through student research and creative work, service learning." ("The Talent Imperative!" 5)
 - iii) Ensure Academic Quality: the Integrative Studies program will "foster teaching methods that establish clear expectations, set high standards, encourage maximum effort, provide prompt feedback, demonstrate respect for diverse talents and ways of learning and provide students with challenging and creative work that is central to their learning." Further, we will "provide a curriculum that aligns" with NKU's mission and we will implement "outcomes-based indicators" to assess student learning." ("The Talent Imperative!" 5)

12) Dean's Response