

Report and Recommendations Concerning the Oakland Community College
Liberal Arts Degree

Submitted by the Liberal Arts Review Committee (Ad Hoc Senate Committee)

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The Rationale for the Oakland Community College Liberal Arts Degree:

The Liberal Arts degree remains the hallmark of the highly educated, eminently employable college graduate. The concept was born in the ancient world of Classical Greece and Rome, where advanced education in languages, arts, literature, natural philosophy and mathematics provided the core training for Civilization itself. Throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, as the great universities and colleges were founded, this broad swath of learning across multiple disciplines continued to represent the ideal preparation for careers in law, medicine, politics, the ministry, and most other literate professions. In America, the Liberal Arts continued to be the foundation of the new Republic's growth, strength, and democratic traditions. Today, despite all of our technological and computational advances, a Liberal Arts degree remains as a key path to success in the Professions, in business, in education, and in life. The guiding philosophy of any well-designed Liberal Arts degree is BREADTH. In order to best navigate the complexities of Twenty-First Century life, students need grounding across the sweep of academic disciplines. This is why OCC's Liberal Arts program emphasizes such a broad range of studies:

1. We strongly encourage students to consider studying another language: this study encourages new ways of experiencing the world, engaging with other cultures, understanding the richness of the global society, and can have practical applications in politics, economics, and business.
2. We emphasize immersion in the Humanities and Fine Arts: students study literature, visual and plastic arts, music, and other forms of aesthetic expression. These explorations chart the limits of the human spirit, linking us to the great art of the past, the emotions and beauty of cultural expression in the present, and give us hope for the future of society's growth and happiness. Philosophy, perhaps the oldest formal academic discipline, engages us with the very questions of existence itself.
3. The Liberal Arts program links us to the accomplishments of the human species, the complexities of our global society, and the problems and challenges of human life through the study of the Social Sciences: Students are encouraged to discover the roots of the present by studying world and American history; they plumb the depths of the human mind by studying psychology and the connections shared with others by studying sociology. One of the responsibilities of any rounded higher education program is to encourage the growth of responsible, informed, and committed citizens, which the Liberal Arts program builds through courses in economics and political science.
4. The Liberal Arts programs also considers mathematics and the Natural Sciences to be indispensable to a fully developed college education: We encourage all students in the program to achieve a basic college level competency in mathematics, which is vital to future success in almost every level of advanced studies, and we encourage students to explore statistical literacy in preparation for more advanced studies in the Social and Natural Sciences in general. Basic knowledge of the major scientific disciplines of physics, chemistry, and biology are vital for success in an economy powered by technological innovation and increasingly complex computational and bio-genetic industries. We also encourage students to see the connection between human society and the larger natural world and ecosystem in which it is embedded.

Aside from the direct preparation the Liberal Arts program provides for students who transfer into Liberal Arts disciplines at four year institutions, a Liberal Arts degree also provides students with a plethora of vital life skills:

1. Studies in the Liberal Arts develop critical reasoning capacities and problem solving skills which are useful for all professional and career paths.
2. The breadth of the Liberal Arts program encourages "linkages" in students' thinking, which allow them to synthesize information from a range of different places. This skill is increasingly in demand as so many professions now require a high level of interdisciplinary training and thinking.
3. Liberal Arts studies help to create interpersonal skills, as students study not only the great ideas of human culture, but how those ideas can be effectively communicated to others. Most Liberal Arts courses encourage students to work with others and we specifically emphasize the development of

interpersonal communication skills as an indispensable badge of the highly educated and prepared Liberal Arts graduate.

4. The OCC Liberal Arts program also emphasizes the importance of Information Literacy. In every discipline, students are encouraged to develop research skills and knowledge in using Library and Internet resources to pursue questions and develop answers to complex problems.
5. The Liberal Arts program also encourages students to really see the larger view of the global society of the 21st Century; the program builds a multi-cultural, global viewpoint into every aspect of the core disciplines and coursework we provide.

The OCC Liberal Arts program prepares students for a successful and fulfilling future in several ways:

1. The degree prepares any student for transfer to all four-year institutions to continue in any of the hundreds of Bachelor's degree programs in the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences, and the professions. Students can choose to build on any emphasis started at OCC or can branch out in completely new directions while remaining confident that the breadth of their OCC preparation stands them in good stead for future development.
2. A Liberal Arts degree remains the best and most sought after foundation for all of the Professions: Law, Medicine, Business, and Education.
3. Employers consistently remind us that they seek students with broad problem solving, critical thinking, and interpersonal communication skills: all the very essence of our Liberal Arts training.

The OCC difference: Higher and Better:

Our Liberal Arts program has high standards and a higher level of expectations than many of our fellow institutions here in SE Michigan. We unapologetically stand behind these higher levels of development because we believe that it serves our students best in allowing them a competitive edge for both transferability and employment opportunities.

Report and Recommendations

Senate ad hoc Committee

Liberal Arts Degree Review

The committee is prepared to make the following recommendations to Academic Senate:

1. No English (ENG 1055, 1060) or Math (MAT 1045, 1050, 1100) developmental courses may be used for credit as part of the Liberal Arts degree. Only the top tier of ESL (ESL 2410, 2420, 2510, 2520) courses (Maximum of 8 credits) may be used.
2. Placement into MAT 1150, either by testing or by taking coursework equivalent to a MAT 1150 or higher placement in the mathematics discipline, is necessary in order to achieve the Liberal Arts degree.
3. Speech 1610 should be added to the Liberal Arts Degree; the Humanities/Fine Arts total requirements should thus be reduced from 11 credits to 8 credits.
4. The required Social Sciences credits should be reduced from 9 to 6 credits; 3 credits of Political Science remain in place
5. Disciplines in the Liberal Arts should be encouraged to develop "majors" or areas of concentration of 15 credits (or more) so that students could pursue a concentration of their choice in any given discipline included on the General Education List
6. Steps should be taken to make the Liberal Arts degree a key feature of Advising and of Freshman orientation
 - a. Preparation of a document that all faculty can distribute to students at the beginning of semesters; it would communicate the scope and content of the liberal arts degree program
 - b. Each discipline in the Liberal Arts should develop a paragraph describing their discipline's Liberal Arts courses
 - c. The education effort needs to begin with the first year and be continually reinforced, with students encouraged to consistently review the transferability of their work and the extent to which it meets requirements at potential transfer institutions.

Appendix A:
OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC SENATE
LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE REVIEW COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF RESEARCH MATERIALS AVAILABLE

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- "Articulation Isn't Enough," Inside Higher ED, on-line edition January 30, 2009, www.insidehighered.com.
- "At Two-Year Colleges, A Year of Language," Inside Higher ED, on-line edition March 26, 2009, www.insidehighered.com.

GENERAL EDUCATION CONTENT REQUIREMENTS AND PHILOSOPHY STATEMENTS

- "The Essential Learning Outcomes," Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Harvard University statement of General Education Requirements. (*Faye?*)
- "Seven-Course Breadth in the College of Letters & Science," Berkeley University. (*Berry*)

EXTERNAL STATEMENTS OF GENERAL EDUCATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

- The MACRAO Transfer Agreement. (*Kassab?*)
- Minimum Mathematics Requirements for Top Ten Transfer Schools (for OCC Students). (*Kassab*)
- A Comparison of MACRAO Requirements with Liberal Arts Degree Requirements from Select Michigan Community Colleges. (*Kassab*)
- Eastern Michigan General Education Transfer Guide for Oakland Community College.

OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE DOCUMENTS AND DATA

- "Oakland Community General Education Philosophy & Outcomes," Policy adopted by Academic Senate April, 2008 (*Infomart*).
- Counseling brochures detailing requirements for transfer degrees (*McGee*):
 - Associate in Business Administration
 - Associate in General Studies
 - Associate in Liberal Arts
 - Associate in Science.
- Listing of suggested Institutional Research resources and reports (*Brennan*).
- Summary of Courses in which over 10,000 Student Credit Hours were attempted 1991-92, 2004-05, and 2008-09 (*Berry*).
- Fall 2009 Number of Sections Offered, most registered courses (*Berry*).
- OCC Degrees Awarded in Areas with Over 100 Graduates (1992, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2009) (*Berry*).
- Top Credit Programs in which at least 500 students were enrolled (Fall 2000, Fall 2004, and Fall 2008) (*Berry*).
- Summary Student Demographic Data. (*Berry*)
- Non-Returning Student Survey Data. (*Berry*)

Appendix B: The Michigan College Student Guide for Transfer of General Education Credits Within the State of Michigan

What is the MACRAO Transfer Agreement?

The MACRAO Transfer Agreement is designed to facilitate transfer from community colleges to baccalaureate colleges and universities. It provides for transferability of up to 30 semester credits to meet many (and in some cases all) of the General Education Requirements at participating Michigan four-year colleges and universities. Students may complete the MACRAO Transfer Agreement as part of an associate degree or as a stand-alone package.

Once the specified set of courses is completed, the courses will transfer and be applied toward meeting the general education requirements at the 4-year college or university.

- While many Michigan colleges and universities honor the MACRAO Transfer Agreement, some participate in a more limited manner. Students should check with the receiving institution regarding their transfer policies.

The MACRAO Transfer Agreement Requirements

A minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework must be taken at one of Michigan's participating community colleges. The courses needed to satisfy the MACRAO requirements are as follows:

- **English Composition. . . . 6 credit hours**
- **Science and Math. . . . 8 credit hours** Courses must be taken from a minimum of two subject areas. At least one science course must include a laboratory.
- **Social Science. . . . 8 credit hours** Courses must be taken from a minimum of two subject areas.
- **Humanities. . . . 8 credit hours** Courses must be taken from a minimum of two subject areas.

MACRAO Transcript Posting

When coursework requirements for meeting the MACRAO Transfer Agreement have been completed, the student may request that their transcript be posted "MACRAO Transfer Agreement Satisfied."

- Some community colleges require the student to initiate a formal request to have his/her transcript MACRAO posted. Students should check with the Registrar's Office at their community college regarding the procedure to be followed.

Appendix D:

Top Transfer Schools for OCC Students (ranked in order from most transfers to least)	<u>Minimum Mathematics Requirement Needed for Graduation (student must choose one course). The course will vary depending on major.</u>
Oakland University	MAT 1500, 1580, 1600,1730, CIS 2252, 2757 PHI 1710, 2710
Wayne State University	MAT 1630 or MAT 1540 & 1560
Walsh College	MAT 1580
Central Michigan University	MAT 1150
Eastern Michigan University	MAT 1500, 1540, 1580, 1630, 1730
University of Michigan-Dearborn	MAT 1500, 1540, 1560, 1580, 1600, 1630, 1730, & higher
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	<u>Quantitative Reasoning Requirement:</u> MAT 1580, 1630, PHY 1610, 1620, 2400, 2500 <u>Mathematical & Symbolic Analysis Requirement:</u> CIS 1121, 1150, 1901, 1940, MAT 1560, 1580, 1630, 1730, 1740, 2740, 2810
Michigan State University	MAT 1500 & 1540, MAT 1540 &1560, MAT 1600, MAT 1630, MAT 1730
University of Michigan Flint	No requirement for Arts & Sciences majors. Requirement varies for Science and Engineering students.
University of Detroit	MAT 1150

OCC course titles:

CIS 2252	Object Oriented Programming (C++)
CIS 2757	C# Programming
MAT 1150	Intermediate Algebra
MAT 1500	Finite Mathematics
MAT 1540	College Algebra
MAT 1560	Trigonometry
MAT 1580	Statistics
MAT 1600	Applied Calculus
MAT 1630	College Algebra & Trigonometry
MAT 1730	Calculus I
MAT 1740	Calculus I
MAT 2740	Calculus III
MAT 2810	Differential Equations
MAT 2880	Linear Algebra
PHI 1710	Introduction to Informal Logic
PHI 2710	Introduction to Formal Logic
PHY 1610	College Physics I
PHY 1620	College Physics II
PHY 2400	Engineering Physics I
PHY 2500	Engineering Physics II

Appendix E:
TRANSFER COURSE PLACEMENT POLICY DATA
ENROLLMENT SUCCESS (C OR BETTER*) AT OCC

	Placement	
	<u>Develop. ENG</u>	<u>ENG 1510</u>
PSY 2510	47%	68%
POL 1510	47%	64%
SOC 2510	57%	70%
ECO 2610	32%	51%
BUS 1100	45%	61%
SPA 1510	38%	59%
HUM 1900 (Film)	44%	57%
ART 1560 (Art Appreciation)	58%	67%
MUS 1560 (Understanding of Music)	44%	53%
MUS 1590 (History of Rock)	48%	57%
HIS 1510 (World Civil to Beg. of Modern Era)	44%	59%
HIS 2510 (US History to 1877)	40%	55%
MAT 1150 (Intermediate Algebra)	37%	46%
CHE 1000 (Introductory Chemistry)	38%	56%
BIO 1500 (Environmental Science)	48%	66%
BIO 1511 (Life Science)	35%	61%
BIO 1530 (Intro to Biology - Molecular/Cell)	24%	55%

The above courses meet OCC's General Education Distribution Requirements and are high enrollment classes. For all General Education courses, the enrollment success rate for students who placed into Developmental English ranged from a high of 52.5% in Fall 2006 to a low of 40.3% during Winter 2009. The enrollment success rate for students who placed into English 1510 has been consistently 10% above the rate for students who placed into Developmental English.

The base rate of enrollment success for all types of courses at OCC (Fall and Winter semesters) has averaged 65%.

* Enrollment success is registering and completing the course with a C or better. All marks (I, W, WP, etc.) are non-success.