

Using a Liberal Arts Degree

KU's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the most diverse school on campus, and includes fields of study such as the Arts, Humanities, International & Interdisciplinary studies, Natural Sciences & Mathematics, and Social & Behavioral Sciences. KU's CLAS consists of 52 academic departments and programs, including art history, biology, foreign languages, political science, psychology, and many more. Students of CLAS majors typically complete courses of study that emphasize interdisciplinary education, global awareness, and experiential learning.



THE LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES SKILL SET

LAS students can gain a wide range of valuable (and employable) skills from their academic programs.

Adapters: Their broad backgrounds make them excellent adapters in an ever-changing world.

Analysts: They can effectively analyze and interpret information/data.

Communicators: LAS grads develop excellent written and verbal communication skills.

Critical Thinkers: They can think critically about information to make informed decisions.

Leaders: Their coursework challenges them to develop and implement their unique leadership styles.

Learners: LAS grads are quick learners, capable of picking up and retaining complex concepts and ideas.

Persuaders: They are capable of developing convincing, well-informed, articulate arguments.

Problem Solvers: LAS grads are effective, creative problem solvers.

Relators: They understand, relate to, and connect with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Researchers: Their courses make them resourceful, inquisitive seekers and creators of knowledge.

Synthesizers: LAS grads are excellent at making connections between concepts, ideas, and people.
Team Players: They learn to work with others effectively and professionally.

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CHALLENGES FOR LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES STUDENTS

Answering "The Question"

At some point, most LA&S students will be asked "the question": What can you do with that? This question reflects one of the greatest challenges for LAS students; finding clear connections between their majors and their career options. By definition, LAS majors are meant to provide students with broad transferable skills, spanning multiple disciplines and perspectives; not specialized career-centered

training (like accounting, engineering, or nursing). Unlike their peers majoring in more specialized fields, a clear major-to-career connection typically doesn't exist for LAS students.

So Many Choices

LAS students who gain broad knowledge and skill sets from their majors actually have more career options than their peers majoring in more specialized fields.



CAREER EXPLORATION FOR LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

Self Assessment: Career coaching and assessment services can help students explore their unique interests, personalities, values, skills, and strengths. These services can help LAS students better understand who they are, what they need, what they want, and how these things may influence their major and career choices.

Career Information: The UCC offers web resources to help students explore the connection between areas of study and careers at <http://career.ku.edu/careersandmajors>. LAS students can also meet with staff to develop techniques to support their search for career and major information.

Career Courses: The UCC teaches four career courses that help students explore and pursue their career interests: EPSY 210 (Career and Life Planning), LAS 480 (Preparing for International Careers), LAS 470 (Job Search Strategies for LAS Majors), and LAS 490 (Internship Exploration).

Career Engagement: The UCC helps students find and engage in opportunities that allow them to “try on” majors and careers that interest them. With assistance from UCC staff, LAS students can learn how to source informational interviews, network with employers, find volunteer opportunities, secure part-time jobs, and complete internships before they graduate.

The University Career Center can help students address concerns regarding exploring careers:

“I like my major, but I don’t know what to do with it.”

“I know what I want to do, but I don’t know how to get there.”

“I have no idea what I like or what I want.”



ADVICE FOR LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES STUDENTS

Explore Your Options

It is never too soon to start exploring career interests and options. Knowing your options, clarifying your goals, and focusing your job target will improve your chances for career success and happiness.

Build Your Network

Start connecting with faculty, peers, and employers now so you will have a large network of supporters to reach out to when you are exploring major and career options and, later on, when you it comes time to find an internship or job.

Build Your Resume

Employers want to hire students who have relevant

experiences and employable skills; your degree alone may not get you the job. Get involved on campus, volunteer, work part-time, complete internships; do everything you can to give yourself an advantage.

Know It, Say It, Show It

As a LAS graduate, you will need to provide evidence to support the value you bring to an employer. Be able to demonstrate how you developed valuable skills and when you have applied them effectively. To do this, you will need to invest in your own development; know what skills you want to develop, seek out opportunities to build them, and find ways to apply them in a real way (experiential learning, undergraduate research, part-time jobs, campus involvement, internships, etc.). By doing this, you are setting yourself up for success.



A SAMPLE OF KU'S CLAS DEPARTMENTS & MAJORS

African & African-American Studies
American Studies Anthropology
Applied Behavioral Science Astronomy
Atmospheric Science Biology
Biochemistry
Chemistry
Classical Antiquity
Communication Studies
East Asian Languages & Cultures
Economics
English
Environmental Studies European Studies

Film & Media Studies French
Geography
Geology
Germanic Languages & Literatures
Global & International Studies History
History of Art
Humanities
Italian
Latin American Area Studies Linguistics
Mathematics
Microbiology
Philosophy

Physics
Political Science Pre-Law Studies
Pre-Medical Professions Psychology
Public Administration Religious
Studies
Russian, East European, & Eurasian
Studies
Slavic Languages & Literatures
Sociology
Spanish Speech-Language-Hearing
Women’s Studies