E.

LIBERAL LEARNING

About Section E...

This section addresses the LIBERAL LEARNING component of the MAEA Program. Specifically, this section includes the following subsections:

- Introduction to Liberal Learning...
  - Elements of Better Practice—revisited

- LIBERAL LEARNING SEMINARS
  - Domains of Applied Effectiveness
    - Personal Effectiveness
    - Interpersonal Effectiveness
    - Organizational Effectiveness
    - Values Effectiveness
    - Inquiry Effectiveness (LLS ◆ Finding & Managing Information)
  - Certificate of Achievement in Liberal Learning for Professionals

- Seeking Feedback---from Self & Others
Introduction to LIBERAL LEARNING...

Even as professionals are increasingly called upon to contribute competence or mastery in their particular areas of expertise, they are also increasingly called upon to make their contributions from an ever broadening and deepening context of thought, imagination, understanding and responsible choice.

This broader context is the aim of Liberal Learning, i.e., to "liberate" oneself from the single point of view in order to expand the perspective from which one engages in professional, civic, interpersonal and avocational decision-making and action.

Fundamental to this process of broadening perspective in order to increase capacity to engage/contribute are the three Elements of Better Practice (introduced in Section D) as well as the Liberal Learning Seminars outlined in this section.

Elements of Better Practice (revisited from Section D)
The overarching and, at the same time, foundational "elements" to better practice include:

(1) Reflection:
   a. Understanding reflection.
   b. Exploring experiences, understandings, feelings, perceptions and actions.
   c. Reflecting critically on past and present experiences to inform present and future actions, decisions and progress.
   d. Drawing on ideas to interpret experiences.
   e. Surfacing emotions/feelings that underlie assumptions and perspectives and staying open to data regardless of emotional reactions.
   f. Selecting purposeful approaches and strategies for: (a) self-reflecting; (b) eliciting constructive feedback; and, (c) self-assessing.
   g. Using self-reflection, feedback and self-assessment to advance learning and development.
   h. Determining course(s) of action guided by critical reflection(s).

(2) Agency:
   a. Understanding agency.
   b. Taking responsibility for achieving goals (including learning goals) and adding value.
   c. Identifying and using a variety of learning resources.
   d. Turning specific events into experiences for learning.
   e. Participating proactively and creating networks.
   f. Managing time and tasks to fulfill commitments.
   g. Finding and using standards to track progress and assess effectiveness.
   h. Accepting responsibility for outcomes (positive and negative) of actions.

(3) Flexibility:
   a. Understanding flexibility.
   b. Analyzing messy conditions/situations and applying knowledge from multiple perspectives, models and theories as well as roles, responsibilities and contexts.
   c. Making connections between seemingly disparate entities.
   d. Generating and entertaining multiple interpretations for any proposition, assertion or observation.
   e. Devising well-framed problems and inventing possible solutions.
   f. Adapting to various situations based on awareness/examination of learning processes.
   g. Practicing a repertoire of skills and responses across a variety of personal/professional settings.
   h. Taking appropriate risks.
While the Elements of Better Practice are explored and reinforced within the Learning Plan Research and Development Seminar/LPRD as well as ‘coaching/mentoring’ space afforded between students and their Faculty Mentors (See Section C.), they also serve as the backdrop for ongoing practice within the context of the Liberal Learning Seminars (See below.) as well as within the “laboratory” of ongoing personal/professional life in general---at DePaul and beyond.

Liberal Learning Seminars

Interspersed throughout their individualized Focus Area study (See Section F.), students participate—with other graduate students and faculty colleagues—in a variety of Liberal Learning Seminars. These seminars are designed to enhance personal/professional effectiveness within, and across, the key Domains of Applied Effectiveness (See following page.) while also providing additional context for ongoing practice of reflection, agency and flexibility.

a. In the area of Inquiry Effectiveness, LLS 550/Finding & Assessing Information (2 cr hrs) is required. MAEA students complete this seminar during the first quarter of the program (along with EA 515/Developing Professional Identity; See Section D.)

Course Description for LLS-450◆Finding & Assessing Information

This foundational course provides participants with advanced skills in collecting, analyzing and synthesizing literature and resources in their respective area(s) of practice. Among these skills are: searching and accessing various sources; discerning credibility of sources; storing and retrieving information for oneself; constructing thematic literature reviews; and, citing sources using APA style.

b. Regarding the remaining required 16 credit hours (at minimum) in the Liberal Learning area, MAEA students choose from a variety of Liberal Learning Seminars (LLS) across all domains: LLS-410/Personal Effectiveness, LLS-420/Interpersonal Effectiveness, LLS-430/Organizational Effectiveness, LLS-440/Values Effectiveness and LLS-450/Inquiry Effectiveness. Students are at liberty to choose (according to their interests and needs) from an ongoing array of LLS options offered by SNL’s Graduate Programs; however, for maximum breadth of perspective, students are advised to diversify their 16 credit hours across multiple domains.

c. Seminars are offered throughout the year. Meeting in various formats (weeknights, weekends, on-campus, online, etc.), two-credit-hour seminars meet for five 3.25hr sessions (with break per session) and four-credit-hour seminars meet for ten 3.25hr sessions (with break per session).

d. Seminar descriptions are contained in the LLS Planning Schedule. Additional details per seminar (topic, schedule, assignments, assessment considerations, etc.) are contained within each seminar’s respective syllabus. Specific syllabi are posted on the SNL website approximately two weeks prior to the beginning of the quarter in which related seminars are being offered. (See Index—Calendar & Planning Schedules.)

e. Upon successful completion of the Liberal Learning requirement (18 credit hours minimum), students may receive a “CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN LIBERAL LEARNING FOR PROFESSIONALS.” To do so, students are to email their requests to the Graduate Programs Office (snlgrad@depaul.edu) and include their name, ID# and name of certificate requested.

NOTE: The Liberal Learning Component (18 cr hrs) is not available for waiver or substitution by other courses (transfer or otherwise). Students may register for and complete extra Liberal Learning Seminars beyond the 18 credit hour minimum required within the Liberal Learning portion of the MAEA Program. Such extra LL study might qualify as a learning activity in relation to a MAEA elective with the approval of one’s faculty mentor. [The same LL seminar cannot serve to fulfill both the LL requirement and a learning activity for the focus area.]
Domains of Applied Effectiveness

Each year, SNL’s Graduate Programs offer an array of Liberal Learning Seminars within each domain below. These are listed within the current Liberal Learning Planning Schedule. See Index—Calendar & Planning Schedules.

Personal Effectiveness *(sections of LLS-410)*
This domain includes the physical, cognitive and spiritual dimensions of personal development and performance. Central questions include: Who am I and what should I become? What habits of mind, attitude, and behavior might I improve upon? How can I construct personal meaning and inform future actions from my experiences? Embedded in these questions are the core concepts of learning and change, choice and consequence, identity, and various dimensions of self. Seminar sections in this domain might include such topics as awareness, agency, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, motivation, reflection, resilience, self-discipline, etc.

Interpersonal Effectiveness *(sections of LLS-420)*
This domain includes the ability to both communicate effectively and understand the meaning of others' communications. To develop interpersonal effectiveness, one must overcome the barriers that result from differences in culture, race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, and socio-economic status. Interpersonal effectiveness requires self-awareness, cultural competence, and skills in active listening, building trust, dialogue, collaboration, and conflict resolution. Central questions include: How can we improve interpersonal relationships in both personal and professional domains? How can we make decisions and solve problems together? What are the dynamics of and processes for collaboration? How do we understand and use the human/computer interface as tool to enhance communication? Seminar sections in this domain might include such topics as intercultural communication, valuing human similarities and differences, interpersonal communication, 21st century human-computer interfaces and interactions, etc.

Organizational Effectiveness *(sections of LLS-430)*
This domain includes the larger systemic contexts within which individuals function. As the world grows increasingly complex and interconnected, the ability to understand and navigate people-in-groups (organizational, societal, and global) becomes increasingly critical. In this domain, students broaden and deepen their capacity to make a difference at ever-widening levels of system. Central questions include: How do we engage as organizational resources, community participants, members of society and global citizens? How do we get along? How do we get work done? How do we both fit-in and remain unique? Seminar sections in this domain might include such topics as project management, leadership, organizational culture, career management, performance improvement, context scanning, global citizenship, trend analysis, cross-cultural agility, future visioning, etc.

Values Effectiveness *(sections of LLS-440)*
This domain includes the ability to recognize and analyze one's values and those of others in order to find effective ways to translate beliefs into effective action. When individuals expand awareness of their own choices and recognize the choices of others, they can live their own lives more effectively and successfully mediate conflicts with others. Central questions include: What should I do in this situation? Why did he/she/they decide to do things that way when it seems so clearly wrong to me? Seminar sections in this domain might address topics such as ethical reasoning, decision-making, values-clarification, priority setting, courage in action, etc.

Inquiry Effectiveness* *(sections of LLS-450)*
This domain includes methods and processes of systematic inquiry regardless of domain. Adults must be able to engage in self-directed inquiry in order to understand and act effectively in their personal, professional, social, and civic lives. In this domain, students learn methods for systematically and strategically exploring questions, problems, ideas, and experiences. Central questions include: How do I formulate viable questions? What information do I need to understand a problem and what is the best way to obtain it? What are different ways to analyze an idea? How can I make sense of what I have experienced? Seminar sections in this domain might address topics such as strategies and methods for generating and utilizing primary research, gathering and managing information, analyzing and presenting data, pursuing targeted methods of inquiry, etc. [*NOTE: LLS-450 Finding & Assessing Information is required—at minimum—in this domain.]
SEEKING FEEDBACK---from Self & Others

While students' performance in the Liberal Learning Seminars is assessed in terms of each seminar's content (per syllabus), students are encouraged to return periodically to the overarching skills listed on page E-2 to both: (a) gauge their own ongoing practice; and, (b) plan steps for ongoingly taking that practice "up a notch." In this regard, students are encouraged to seek feedback and suggestions from themselves (via targeted reflection) and from others. Regarding the latter, seeking feedback from "others" might include requesting input from individuals within the program (fellow students, seminar faculty, faculty mentors, professional advisors, etc.) as well as from those beyond the program (work/professional associates, supervisors, community colleagues, family members, friends, etc.)