

## 15.01 Rationale

At Western Carolina University, all bachelor's degree programs include courses in Liberal Studies designed to provide each student with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an educated person. These include the ability to think critically, to communicate effectively, to identify and solve problems reflectively, to use information and technology responsibly, to appreciate the creative and performing arts, and to seek personal development and lifelong learning.

Through a First-Year Seminar in Liberal Studies, first-year students begin to experience intellectual life at the university level. Through participation in an Academic Learning Community, students begin to experience the integration of knowledge. The Core provides students with the academic skills and intellectual habits needed throughout the undergraduate experience; therefore, it should be completed as soon as possible. The Perspectives component of the Liberal Studies program exposes students to important modes of inquiry, discovery, and interpretation through study of the concepts, principles, and theories of the Liberal Arts. Because all disciplines at the university can offer courses in the Liberal Studies program, the Perspectives provide a broadened worldview and knowledge base, with opportunities to take courses outside areas of familiarity or major interest. Students also take at least one three-hour course at the upper level (300 or 400 level) in a Perspectives area outside their major. It is a primary goal of the Liberal Studies program to promote a lifelong love of learning.