

Forward

The Student Handbook which follows will provide the information needed for success. The program guidelines are given. The student's responsibilities are explained, as are those of the advisor. Relevant university policies are listed. A discussion of post-graduation options is provided.

This handbook is a supplement to the current university Undergraduate Catalog. All questions regarding university academic policies should be investigated in that publication. It is available both in print and online.

Professional Studies is an interdisciplinary degree program that empowers the student to "create" their own major program of study. It gives the student a chance to craft a curriculum that meets their unique educational needs. It is by necessity a very flexible program. Students must give careful consideration to the creation of their academic plan, being mindful of the connections between the various disciplines they choose to include in the plan.

With that empowerment comes a great deal of individual responsibility. General Education requirements must be met. Two minors, at least one of which must be from a professional college, must be earned. Various major requirement categories must be fulfilled. Information will be made available via this handbook, the program website and other online information sources and through frequent consultation with the program director/academic advisor to enable the student to make informed decisions about their academic plan.

Yes, there are guidelines to follow when planning the academic program. But the flexibility provides ample opportunity to make this program your own.

Ultimately, it is up to the student to understand the requirements for the degree, the specific requirements for each of their minors, and then, to meet or exceed each requirement.

Spend some time reviewing this handbook. You should re-read sections that may seem unclear. Every attempt was made to make the language as specific as possible. Above all else, ask questions if you have any doubts.

Thanks for your interest in the program. Enjoy the journey.

January, 2012

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Welcome

Welcome to the student handbook for majors in the Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies: Professional Studies degree program. This handbook is designed to be a useful resource as you navigate your way through the various decision points of this program.

Because of the unique nature of this major, the student has a great deal of power in the creation of their individualized program of study. With that power, there is increased responsibility. It is essential that the student understand the requirements of the program. The student must consult regularly with the academic advisor for the degree program, as well as the advisors for each of their academic minors. The student who earns the degree is the student who has taken ownership of the program, assumes the responsibility to make informed, intelligent decisions about their academic plan, and asks what may have seemed at the time to be a “dumb question.”

The university undergraduate catalog states: “The ultimate responsibility for satisfying all graduation requirements is the student’s.” (pg. 38) It is critical that you completely understand the specific requirements for each of your academic minors, as well as how those courses fit into the Professional Studies major program you have created.

This student handbook is designed to serve as one of your primary sources of information on all aspects of the program. I have made every effort to be current and factual. Updates will be provided as needed to reflect changes in curriculum and/or academic policy. When in doubt, students are urged to consult with me or the academic advisor for the minors for clarification.

In the final analysis, your successful completion of your degree requirements is the real measure of the success of the program. This handbook, as well as other resources available to you from the university, provides you with tools that you can use to assist you in achieving your degree. Please make good and frequent use of them.

With sincere wishes for your success,

Bruce Norris
Director, Professional Studies
January, 2012

Professional Studies Program Overview

The Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies: Professional Studies (LSPS) is an interdisciplinary degree program that enables and encourages students to explore the connections and relationships that exist between different areas of study and to pursue their own unique interests. The program affords students the capability to create an individualized academic program of study that will prepare them for a wide variety of future opportunities.

Students in the major must create a curriculum that includes the general education requirement (48 credits), a major breadth/distributive component (15 credits), and major electives (57 credits, at least 30 of which must be taken at the 300/400 level). Students are required to earn two academic minors, at least one of which must be from one of the University's four professional colleges. The required minor courses will be incorporated into the major elective course component.

Students who are interested in becoming LSPS majors must have earned at least 30 credits, and have a West Chester University-earned cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or higher. All prospective LSPS majors must complete an intake interview with the program director and submit a "Statement of Purpose" prior to filing their change of major paperwork. The statement must indicate why the student is opting for Professional Studies and how the degree will serve them as they complete their undergraduate studies and in their life after graduation. Transfer students must have completed at least 30 college credits and at least one semester at WCU.

Students in the LSPS program work closely with the program director (who serves as the academic advisor for these students) as they develop their customized curriculum. The students must also consult the advisors assigned by the minor departments to assure that all requirements for these programs are understood and completed.

LSPS is a potentially good fit for the following student cohorts:

- Students who are looking for a major, but cannot find a "good match,"
- Students who think "outside the box,"
- Students who are more interested in what is IN the major, not what the major is called,
- Students with high number of credits earned who are not enrolled in a major, and
- Students who are presently enrolled in a major but will not be able to (or choose not to) complete the requirements for that degree.

As of January, 2012, approximately 1600 students have earned this degree. That is a phenomenal number of graduates, considering the program started in the summer of 2002. LSPS is now one of the largest majors on campus. Approximately 450 students are presently pursuing the degree.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN LIBERAL STUDIES: PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Values, Vision and Mission Statement

The Professional Studies Program Values:

- *Student Individuality and Creativity* in the development of their unique program of study;
- *Interdisciplinary Study* which emphasize the everyday connections between fields of study;
- *Student Responsibility and Independence* in taking ownership and responsibility of their academic experience; and
- *Development of Transferable Skills* that will enable students to succeed in their future endeavors, whatever they may be.

Professional Studies Program Vision:

The Professional Studies Program will maintain and ensure a quality educational experience as developed by each of its students. It will be responsive to the needs of the university and its students. Matriculation through the program will be an empowering experience as students assume greater control of their academic plan.

Professional Studies Program Mission Statement:

The Professional Studies Program at West Chester University enables students to create a unique, individualized academic program of study leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. The process through which the program is created encourages students to critically assess their personal skills and abilities, strengths and weaknesses, and personal values and priorities as they plan their educational experience. The skills and abilities that are developed during the student's matriculation through their program of study will benefit them in their professional and personal lives.

How to Apply for Admission to the Professional Studies Major

Current West Chester University Students:

Eligibility requirements for Admission to the program: Students who wish to gain admission to the Liberal Studies: Professional Studies (LSPS) program must meet the following standards:

- Have earned a minimum of 30 GPA credits
- Have completed at least one semester at WCU
- Have earned a current cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or better.

Students may begin the process of applying to the LSPS major at anytime during the academic year, including the summer months when the office is open for business. Students must meet the eligibility requirements outlined above at that time.

Initial Intake Interview: Current WCU students who are interested in changing their major to the LSPS program must schedule an appointment for an initial intake interview to begin the change of major process. This should take approximately 30 minutes. Students should call the program office at 610.436.3548 or stop in the program office in Rm. 144 Main Hall to arrange the appointment. Appointments will not be scheduled online or via email. During the appointment, the student will be expected to articulate the reasons for the change of major decision and discuss the selection of minors. The advising sheet for the program will be filled out with the student's completed courses as well as courses that the student is presently taking. A list of remaining requirements will be created.

Change of Major/Minor Application Paperwork: At the conclusion of the meeting, forms will be issued to the student to change the major and apply for selected minors. The student must secure the necessary signatures from the appropriate departmental offices and return the signed forms to the program office. **PLEASE NOTE** that the signed forms are NOT to be taken to the office of the Registrar, but returned to the program office.

Statement of Purpose: Within 30 days of the initial intake interview, students who wish to enter the LSPS major must submit a statement of purpose. This statement must be submitted electronically as an MS Word document. Detailed instructions for this statement will be issued during the initial intake interview. In this statement, the student must:

- clearly articulate the reasons why the LSPS program is a good major choice for them,
- indicate why their current major no longer meets their needs,
- provide a rationale for their planned program of study, including the selected minors,
- list at least three learning outcomes they expect to attain as a result of completing their program of study,

- identify how these outcomes could be assessed to determine if they have been met, and
- list their goals/plans for life after graduation.

Statements that do not adequately address the specified prompts will be returned for revision. The statement should be carefully considered and worded, as it will become the basis for a final program evaluation that will take place in the student's graduation semester or summer term. Students should feel free to consult the program director for assistance if needed.

The change of major process will not be completed until this statement is submitted and accepted.

Student Handbook Receipt Acknowledgment Form: Upon acceptance into the program, the student will be issued a student handbook. Students will be asked to sign a form through which the student acknowledges the receipt of the handbook and assumes their responsibility to review and become familiar with its contents.

Students who have transferred to West Chester University:

Transfer students are not accepted directly to the LSPS program. These students must have completed at least one semester of study at WCU and thus establish a WCU cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 in order to be considered for admission to the program. These students would then follow the process as outlined above.

LSPS Program Admission Checklist:

- _____ Initial Intake Interview Scheduled
- _____ Program Advising Sheet Created
- _____ Change of major form returned to LSPS office
- _____ Minor Applications returned to LSPS office
- _____ Statement of Purpose submitted electronically to LSPS office
- _____ Student Handbook Issued, Receipt Acknowledgement Submitted
- _____ Academic Advisor Assigned by LSPS office (indicating completion of the process)

Degree Requirements:

The Professional Studies Degree Curriculum has two primary sections: General Education (48 credits) and Major Requirements (72 credits). Within the degree, a student must also complete at least two academic minors. One of those minors must be from one of our Professional Colleges. They are the Colleges of Health Science, Business and Public Affairs, Education, and Visual and Performing Arts.

In order to graduate the student must earn a minimum of 120 adjusted credits applicable to graduation, have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00, and must earn at least 2 Minors.

General Education Requirements (48 credits total)

The following requirements must be completed:

Academic Foundations (18 credits)

- WRT 120: Effective Writing (3 credits)
- WRT at 200 level: Select one course (3 credits)
Select from:
 - WRT 200 Critical Writing and Research
 - WRT 204 Critical Writing: Approaches to Popular Culture
 - WRT 205 Critical Writing: Investigating Experience
 - WRT 206: Critical Writing: The Multidisciplinary Imagination
 - WRT 208 Critical Writing: Entering the Public Sphere
 - WRT 220 Critical Writing: Special Topics
- Public Speaking (3 credits)
 - SPK 208 Public Speaking
 - SPK 230 Business and Professional Speech Communication
- MAT at 100 level or higher: Select one course (3 credits)
- Diverse Communities Course (3 credits) Identified by “J” attribute*
- Interdisciplinary Course (3 credits) Identified by “I” attribute*
 - * attribute must be affixed to the course when it is taken.

Distributive Requirements (21 credits)

- **Science:** (6 credits)
Select two courses. Courses must be from two different disciplines which are: Biology (BIO), Chemistry (CHE), Computer Science (CSC only), Earth and Space Science (ESS), and Physics (PHY)
- **Behavioral and Social Science:** (6 credits)
Select two courses. Courses must be from two different disciplines which are: Anthropology (ANT), Economics (ECO), Geography (GEO), Political Science (PSC), Psychology (PSY) and Sociology (SOC)

- **Humanities:** (6 credits)
Select two courses. Courses must be from two different disciplines which are: Literature/Comparative Literature(LIT/CLS), History (HIS), and Philosophy (PHI)
- **The Arts** (3 credits)
Select one course from the following disciplines: Art (ARH/ART), Cinematography/Film (FLM), Dance (DAN), Music (MHL or MUE), and Theatre (THA)

Student Electives (9 credits)

Select three courses. These courses may not be used to meet other General Education requirements (except for writing emphasis) nor may they be used to fulfill minor requirements.

Writing Emphasis Requirement (3 courses)

Students must take three courses during their academic career that have a writing emphasis designation. These courses may be used simultaneously to fulfill other general education, major or minor requirements. At least one of these courses must be taken at the 300 or 400 level of study. These courses are identified by the “W” attribute. The “W” attribute must be affixed to the course when it is taken.

Notes on General Education:

- For discussion and more detailed explanation of the general education requirements students should refer to the current university undergraduate catalog.
- **Readmitted Students:** If a student is formally readmitted (meaning the student was inactive at WCU for a least two consecutive semesters) they must follow the general education program that is in place at the time of their readmission. This may bring about new requirements from their previous enrollment. Please review this issue with your academic advisor.

Academic Foundations:

- *WRT 120 and WRT 200+*
 - Students placed in ENG Q20 will earn a grade that will be applied to the student’s cumulative grade point average (CGPA). However, the credits earned in the course will not be applied to the student’s graduation credit count (minimum 120 adjusted credits).
 - Students who are waived out of WRT 120 (due to SAT-W scores) will take one of the 200-level WRT courses. Another three credits of electives will be taken in place of the credits from WRT 120. These students will see the designation of “WRT 100” on their record. This is the indication that the student is WRT 120-exempt. WRT 100 bears no credit.
 - If a student takes one of the 200 level WRT courses beyond the required one, it can be applied as an elective in either the general education or major elective categories.
 - WRT courses cannot be used as writing emphasis courses; they have different objectives. Only courses with the “W” attribute at the time they are taken may be applied to the writing emphasis requirement.

- *Math Requirement*
 - Any 100 level + Math class will fulfill this requirement.
 - Students placed in MAT Q00 and/or MAT Q01 will earn a grade(s) that will be applied to the student's CGPA. However, the credits earned from this course(s) will not be applied to the student's graduation credit count (Minimum 120 credits).
 - Additional math courses taken may be applied in one of the elective categories (general education or major).
- *Diverse Communities*
 - Only courses taken at West Chester University may fulfill this requirement, unless the course is accepted with diversity status as a result of an articulation agreement between the community college and WCU, or has been submitted for approval to the Diverse Communities Subcommittee of the Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee prior to matriculation. Check with your academic advisor to review this.
 - A diverse communities course may simultaneously fulfill another degree requirement such as a general education distributive, major distributive or major elective requirement. If the "J" course is used in this fashion an additional three credits of electives must be taken as compensation.
 - If the diverse communities course also has writing emphasis designation it may fulfill that requirement as well.
 - A course must be designated as a diverse communities course at the time it was taken in order for it to fulfill this requirement.
- *Interdisciplinary Requirement*
 - Interdisciplinary courses may not be used to fulfill the general education distributive, diverse communities or foreign language culture cluster requirements.
 - A course must be designated as an interdisciplinary course at the time it is taken in order for it to fulfill this requirement.
- *Student Electives*
 - Courses used to fulfill the student elective category are the only general education courses that may be taken pass/fail.
- *Distributive Requirements*
 - For the Sciences, Behavioral and Social Sciences and Humanities, students must take courses from two different disciplines.
- *Writing Emphasis Courses*
 - Students who begin their studies at WCU as first year students OR transfer less than 40 credits must take at least three approved writing emphasis courses at WCU.
 - Students who transfer 40-70 credits must take at least two approved writing emphasis courses at WCU.

- Students who transfer 71 or more credits must take at least one approved writing emphasis course at WCU.
 - ALL students must take at least one writing emphasis course at the 300/400 level.
 - WRT courses do NOT fulfill this requirement.
 - Writing emphasis courses may simultaneously fulfill another degree requirement.
 - The writing emphasis designation may NOT be transferred to WCU.
 - The course must be designated as Writing Emphasis at the time it was taken in order for it to fulfill this requirement.
- *Foreign Languages*
 - Please note that there is no foreign language requirement in Professional Studies. Students are encouraged to refer to the university Undergraduate Catalog for specific information about fulfilling the General Education Requirement. Any foreign language/culture cluster courses taken will be applied to other major and/or elective categories where appropriate. Courses should be scheduled in consultation with the academic advisors in the major and minors. Of course, students have the option of pursuing a minor in a foreign language.

Major Requirements (72 credits total)

Breadth/Distributive Requirements (15 credits)

Science:

Select one course, 3 credits

Prefixes include: BIO, CHE, CSC, CST, CSW, ESS, ENV, IND, PHY, SCB, SCE, SCI

Behavioral and Social Science:

Select one course, 3 credits

Prefixes include: ANT, ECO, EDP, GEO, PMG, PSC, PSY, SOC, SSC, WOS

Humanities:

Select one course, 3 credits

Prefixes include: AMS, CLS, COM, CRW, ENG, HIS, JRN, LIT, PHI, or any prefix within the Languages and Cultures department, including culture cluster courses

Additional Distributives

Select two courses, 6 credits

Prefixes may include those found above in Science, Behavioral and Social Science and Humanities or those with Arts Prefixes: ARH, ART, DAN, FLM, MHL, MTC, MUE, THA

Please note: none of the courses taken to fulfill the major Breadth/Distributive Requirement may be used to meet minor requirements. Those courses are used elsewhere. In addition, these courses may not be used to complete General Education requirements.

Major Electives, 57 credits total (typically)

Upper Level: Students must complete at least 30 credits at the 300 or 400 level. These may include courses taken to fulfill one of the required academic minors.

Students must complete additional credits, usually 27, at any level of study 100-400 to bring the total adjusted credit count to at least 120. These may include courses taken to fulfill one of the required academic minors.

All course selections should be made with consultation with the student's major and minor academic advisors.

Academic Minors:

Students must earn two academic minors as part of the degree requirements for the Professional Studies program. At least one of those minors must be from one of the four Professional Colleges.

Professional College Minors for 2011-2012 academic year are: Accounting, Art History, Athletic Coaching, Business Geographics and Information Systems, Criminal Justice, Dance, Early Childhood Education, Economics, Elementary Education, Environmental Health, Exercise Science, Finance, Geography and Planning, Health Science, International Business, Jazz Studies, Music, Music History, Nutrition, Physical Education for Individuals with Disabilities, Political Science, Professional Education, Public Management, Reading, Special Education, Studio Art, and Theatre.

College of Arts and Sciences Minors for 2011-2012 academic year are: African and African American Literature, African American Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Astronomy, Biology, Business and Technical Writing, Chemistry, Communication Studies, Computer Science, Creative Writing, Earth Science, Elementary School Mathematics, Ethnic Studies, Film Criticism, French, Geology, German, History, Holocaust Studies, Information Technology, Italian, Journalism, Latin, Latin American Studies, Linguistics, Literature, Mathematics, Peace and Conflict Studies, Philosophy, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Russian, Russian Studies, Science Education, Sociology, Spanish, Web Technology and Application, and Women's Studies.

Internships:

At the present time, Professional Studies students who wish to pursue internship credits must do so through their academic minors. Internships are not a requirement for the Professional Studies major. However, they may be a requirement for a minor and/or be used as elective credits.

The Academic Advising Syllabus
B.S. Liberal Studies: Professional Studies Program
West Chester University

Advisor/Director: Bruce Norris
Office: 144 Main Hall
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

Phone: 610.436.3548 (office)

E-mail: bnorris@wcupa.edu

Website: http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/sch_cas/psp

Other resources: Undergraduate Catalog
Student Handbook
myWCU portal
University Website
Desire2Learn page: WCU Professional Studies Program

Office Hours: Appointments are required unless otherwise announced.
Monday - Thursday 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., 1 – 2:30 p.m.
Other times may be available for appointments.

University Mission Statement for Academic Advising

The West Chester University community embraces the concept that effective academic advising is a collaborative teaching and learning process between the student and the faculty advisor. Effective advising should assist the student in achieving their academic, professional and personal goals. Faculty advisors will strive to provide accurate, timely and current information, thus establishing the framework around which students will construct their academic program of study.

Academic Advising Description/Definition

Academic advising is an educational process that, by intention and design, facilitates students' understanding of the meaning and purpose of higher education and fosters their intellectual and personal development toward academic success and lifelong learning. (NACADA, 2004)

Academic Advising for the Professional Studies Program

Academic Advising is a critical component in the successful completion of any degree program. The Liberal Studies: Professional Studies program of study is as unique and varied as the individual students who pursue the major. As a result, regular consultation with your academic advisor becomes essential.

The academic advisor's role is to make certain that the requirements for the major are clearly explained to the student. However, the academic advisor's role goes beyond this simple function. Your advisor:

- serves as a sounding board for the student as they prepare and execute their academic plan;
- serves as a source of information about university academic policies and procedures; and
- serves as a resource to discuss and investigate options available to the students after graduation.

As a result of successful academic advising and the student's active involvement in the process, the student is empowered to make informed decisions about their program of study and their academic plan. In essence, the student takes ownership of his or her educational experience. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all requirements for the degree are met in order to graduate.

Responsibilities of the Academic Advisor:

- Assist the student as they develop their academic program of study by:
 - Exploring with students their individual interests, abilities and goals;
 - Aiding students in the creation of an academic plan;
 - Counsel students in the selection and sequencing of courses that meet the various degree requirements;
- Identify university resources that may be of value to the student and make appropriate referrals; and
- Be aware of university academic policies and procedures as they relate to the needs of the student.

Responsibilities of the Student in the Academic Advising Relationship:

- Meet with your advisor at appropriate times during the semester;
- Be aware of important, relevant deadlines and then meet them;
- Complete all forms and submit them to the appropriate offices;
- Review university policies and procedures as needed;
- Develop and clarify the values and goals that impact your academic decisions;
- Create an academic plan for your remaining semesters;
- Understand the requirements for the major and minors;

- Understand the university general education requirement;
- Have knowledge of the undergraduate catalog and the information in the Undergraduate Course Schedule;
- Examine your academic record for accuracy on a regular basis;
- Save all academic advising and course registration related documents;
- Be aware of prerequisites for the course you plan to take;
- Provide to the Registrar's office the official transcripts for courses taken at other institutions in a timely manner; and
- Recognize the need for student resources and services on campus and use them.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes for the Advising Experience

Through the academic advising experiences in this program,

- Students will demonstrate the ability to make effective decisions concerning their degree and career goals.
- Students will develop an educational plan for successfully achieving their goals and select courses each semester to progress toward fulfilling that educational plan.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the value of the general education requirement.
- Students will utilize the resources and services on campus to assist them in achieving their academic, personal and career goals.
- Students will make use of referrals to campus resources as needed.
- Students will graduate in a timely and efficient manner based upon their educational plan.

Demonstrating Your Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes

In order for you and your advisor to accurately measure and document that you have achieved the learning outcomes listed above, the advisor and student will collectively contribute to the student's major file, to be maintained by the advisor. This file will include a variety of documents such as the educational plan for the student, semester schedules and displays of academic progress, information regarding usage of campus resources, copies of relevant correspondence and other documents of note.

Major Academic Advising

Academic advising for the Liberal Studies: Professional Studies student begins at the initial meeting between the student and the Program Director. At that time, the program will be explained and the courses taken by the student will be incorporated into the program advising sheet. There will be a discussion about the need for two academic minors, and options for these will be explored. The advisor and student will also discuss the student's short-term and long-term goals. Change of Major and Minor Application forms will be issued at that time.

Students are expected to use the information they receive at this meeting to develop an academic plan. The plan should include the minors they wish to pursue, the courses they want to take, and a tentative timeline to degree completion.

The student should meet with their advisor at least once a semester. Ideally, that meeting should take place before the student's enrollment appointment for the upcoming semester. At that meeting, the student's progress toward degree completion is evaluated, the student's academic plan is reviewed and modified as needed, and their proposed course selection is examined.

Students are encouraged to consult their advisor at any time they have a question, or want to address an issue of concern. That consultation may take place via telephone, email or office visit. Please note that email communications should not be considered as confidential. Please exercise appropriate levels of caution. Do not include information such as identifying numbers (social security #, etc.), grades, GPA, etc.

The Interdisciplinary Degree

The Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies: Professional Studies is an interdisciplinary program. Interdisciplinary degrees have grown in popularity across American higher education over the past decade. Typically, the student is charged with developing a rationale that delineates the relationship that exists between the minors, and how the pursuit of the degree will serve the student during their undergraduate career and beyond the walls of the university. This will be included in the Statement of Purpose submitted upon entry into the major.

Minor Advisors

Students in the Liberal Studies: Professional Studies major are required to earn two academic minors as part of the degree requirements. Students must submit an application to each minor they wish to pursue. Upon acceptance to the minor, students should request an appointment to discuss minor requirements and course options. Every department is different; however, a minor advisor should be officially assigned to the student. If you are unsure who your minor advisor is, contact the department chair and ASK. Often, the department chair will serve in this capacity. *It is the student's responsibility to meet with the minor advisors.* The student is responsible for completing all minor requirements. Students who fail to consult their minor advisors are accountable for any mistakes made in pursuing that minor.

Safe Zone

The faculty and staff of the Professional Studies program are committed to providing an environment which is inclusive of, open to, respectful and supportive of all students. We are pleased to provide our services to students of all ages, genders, races, cultures, abilities, sexual orientations, religious backgrounds and socio-economic statuses.

Assistance with Issues of Disabilities.

West Chester University will make every effort to assure students with disabilities access to all classes required for their program of study and will endeavor to remove any and all obstacles to a fulfilling, comprehensive university experience. This policy extends to the academic advising process. Students with unique needs should discuss those needs with their academic advisor.

Students should contact the Office for Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 223 Lawrence Center to arrange suitable accommodations. They can be reached at 610.436.2564.

How to Complete the Academic Advising Sheet

The Academic Advising Sheet which follows this section is a very important tool for you to monitor your progress and identify your remaining unmet requirements. It will be updated during each of your academic advising sessions. However, as you create your academic plan, you may need to determine where a particular course you plan to take would be listed on the advising sheet. The following are some helpful tips on doing so:

When evaluating courses already taken:

Does the course fulfill a:

1. General Education requirement?
2. Major Breadth/Distributive requirement?
3. Major Elective, including requirements for your Academic Minor?

When selecting courses for future semesters:

What courses do you need?

1. To complete General Education requirements?
2. To complete Minor requirements?
3. To complete Major Breadth/Distributive requirements?
4. To complete any remaining unmet Major Electives?

Remember: when in doubt, always check with your Academic Advisor.

The Academic Plan:

Students are encouraged to review their Academic Advising sheet frequently. With the knowledge gained from that review, a general plan should be developed in which the student identifies the courses needed to complete all degree requirements and minor requirements, and plots those courses over the remaining semesters of study. This plan should be shared with the Academic Advisor for feedback and suggestion. The plan will likely be somewhat tentative, based upon course availability, the need to repeat courses, and other possible unforeseen variables. Students should create the plan in writing and update their plan every semester.

Sample Academic Advising Sheet

General Education Requirements for students admitted to the University Fall 2002 or later

The following course is required by every student: WRT 120 ____ - ____

The following are required courses with the designated variables:

Pick one: WRT 200, WRT 204, WRT 205, WRT 206, WRT 208, ____ - ____
WRT 220

Pick one: SPK 208 or 230 ____ - ____

Pick one: MAT 101 or higher ____ - ____

Science: Select courses from at least two of the following areas. Courses must be selected from outside the student's major department. *Recommended* courses are listed below:

BIO 100 or BIO 110, ____ - ____
CHE 100 or CHE 103 or CHE 104 or CHE 107, ____ - ____
CSC 110 or CSC 115 or CSC 141, ____ - ____
ESS 101 or ESS 111 or ESS 170, ____ - ____
PHY 100 or PHY 105 or PHY 130 or PHY 140 or PHY 170 or PHY 180

Behavioral & Social Science: Select courses from at least two of the following areas. Courses must be selected from outside the student's major department. *Recommended* courses are listed below:

ANT 102 or ANT 103, ____ - ____
PSY 100, ____ - ____
SOC 200 or SOC 240, ____ - ____
ECO 111 or ECO 112, ____ - ____
GEO 101 or GEO 103, ____ - ____
PSC 100 or PSC 101 or PSC 213

Humanities: Select courses from at least two of the following areas. Courses must be selected from outside the student's major department. *Recommended* courses are listed below:

LIT 165 or CLS 165 or CLS 260 or CLS 261, ____ - ____
HIS 101 or HIS 102 or HIS 150 or HIS 151 or HIS 152, ____ - ____
PHI 101 or PHI 180

Arts: Select three credits from the following areas: art, cinematography, ____ - ____
dance, music, photography and theatre.

All students are required to take a Diversity Course and an Interdisciplinary Course. For descriptions of these, refer to page 38 in the Undergraduate Catalog. Diversity Courses may be used to meet other requirements but the student must still complete the required number of total credits to graduate. Interdisciplinary Courses may *not* fulfill any other requirement simultaneously except writing emphasis.

J course ____ - ____ I Course ____ - ____

The general education requirements also specify 9 semester hours (3 courses) of electives. These elective credits cannot fulfill either Major or Minor Requirements.

____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____
Students are required to choose three writing emphasis courses; one must be at the 300-400 level. Writing emphasis courses are designated with a W. These courses may be used to fulfill other requirements as well as writing emphasis. *WRT 200 level courses do not fulfill this requirement.*

W course ____ - ____ W course ____ - ____ W course ____ - ____

There is no Language Requirement for BS Liberal Studies – Professional Studies

B.S. Liberal Studies-Professional Studies Major Requirements

In addition to the general education requirements, students within the major are required to fulfill the following Distributive Requirements. None of these may be used to fulfill General Education or Minor Requirements:

Science

Select any three credit course with one of the following prefixes:

BIO, CHE, CSC, CST, CSW, ESS, ENV, IND, PHY, SCB, SCE, SCI ____ - ____

Behavioral & Social Science

Select any three credit course with one of the following prefixes:

ANT, ECO, EDP, GEO, PMG, PSC, PSY, SOC, SSC, WOS ____ - ____

Humanities

Select any three credit course with one of the following prefixes:

AMS, CLS, COM, CRW, ENG, HIS, JRN, LIT, PHI, or Languages & Cultures ____ - ____

Additional Distributive Requirements

Select any **two** courses (totaling six credits) from the sciences, behavioral & social sciences, humanities or one of the following prefixes:

ARH, ART, DAN, FLM, THA, MUE, MHL MTC ____ - ____ ____ - ____

Major Electives: Courses taken in fulfillment of each of your required academic minors may be included as part of these electives. Those minor requirements are established by the minor departments; students must consult their minor advisors to clearly identify all requirements for completion of the minor.

No entries on this Professional Studies Advising Sheet should be construed to imply that a student has met academic minor requirements. Only the academic department offering the minor can establish that a student has satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of a minor.

30 Credits of Electives at the 300-400 Level:

____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____
____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____

27 Credits taken at the 100 level or higher:

____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____
____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____ ____ - ____

Please remember to make an appointment with your Major Advisor *prior* to your enrollment appointment (scheduling date) each term. Call (610) 436-3548 to schedule.

http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/sch_cas/psp

Using your Campus Email Account: Why is it Important?

Each student at WCU is assigned a campus email account. As a member of the WCU community, the student is expected to make full and regular use of the campus email system. It is the primary means of communication of this academic community. A number of important notifications are sent exclusively through the WCU campus email system. This includes all emails and program newsletters sent from the Professional Studies program office. Students should check their WCU email on a daily basis.

The bottom line: it is about being informed and current. The campus email system is a critical way to make that happen.

Emails you receive:

In the past, many students have missed important emails that contained information critical to some aspect of their academic program. That will not be a sufficient excuse if the result is a delay in graduation or other significant consequence.

Students may opt to have their WCU email forwarded to a non-WCU email account of their choice. This function must be carried out on one of the computers housed in the Anderson Hall Academic Computing labs. Instructions on how to accomplish this may be obtained at the Student Help Desk in Anderson Hall. One important note: deleting a WCU email from your personal account does not delete it from the WCU account. You still need to get into the WCU account and delete these emails there, or your campus mailbox will become full. Important messages can be missed as a result.

Emails you send:

If a student sends an email to the Program Director/Academic Advisor through their non-WCU email account, it will be opened, read and answered, but only if the student's name is clearly in the email address or in the subject of the letter. In the interest of online security, emails that cannot be directly attributed to an individual will be deleted unopened.

An important note: The program director receives hundreds of emails every month from students who are in the program or who wish to join the program. Given that there are over 400 students in the program who will be meeting with the program director each semester, there is precious little time to respond to emails. Students are asked to refrain from sending emails asking to schedule appointments; please call the program office to do this. Students are also asked to refrain from asking questions that can be easily answered by consulting the student handbook, program website or other readily available university resource, or that can be delayed until the students advising meeting has taken place.

A final caution: email is not as secure as many people believe it to be. It would be prudent for you to be careful in what you choose to send in your emails. A good rule of thumb: if you would not discuss something in a normal speaking voice in a crowded elevator, then do not include it in

an email. I will try to do the same. If I feel that I cannot discuss something in an email, then I will suggest that you set up an appointment to discuss it in person.

By the fall of 2012 Professional Studies will establish a presence on the “Desire2Learn” (D2L) learning management system. The D2L replaces the “Blackboard” system previously utilized on campus. Students will receive information about the “page” in their campus email at the beginning of the semester.

What Can I Do with a Degree in Professional Studies?

Professional Studies actually opens more doors than a student might realize. The key element upon which a Professional Studies student should focus is the diversity of skills and abilities they develop while pursuing this major. Employers in today's job market are looking for job candidates who can work collaboratively, can think on their feet, look at a problem from different perspectives, analyze it and come up with solutions, communicate effectively in both oral and written form, and think critically. The current "in vogue" term for these qualities is "transferable skills". In short, it prepares students to face the ever changing and ever challenging demands of today's workplace.

Students who are not certain about possible career paths are often very surprised to learn of the various options which are available to them. The professional staff members of the Twardowski Career Development Center are adept at working with Professional Studies students in identifying career options, investigating them further, working with resume development and interview skills, and sponsoring on-campus interviews by area and national companies looking to hire our students. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this comprehensive service. You would pay a substantial sum of money for these services away from WCU; they are available to you at no charge, even after you graduate! The Career Development center is located in Room 225 Lawrence Center. Their phone number is 610.436.2501.

Students who wish to pursue graduate degrees or other post-baccalaureate degree opportunities, such as earning teaching certification, might need to take additional coursework either within the undergraduate degree or later, in order to meet the admissions requirements for those programs. When this is identified during advising sessions, the Program Advisor will assist the student in reviewing various options.

Students are also encouraged to consult their advisors and instructors in their academic minors for additional guidance in the area of future employment or graduate study.

An assessment of the program's graduates is presently underway. The results indicating where our graduates are employed and where they are going to graduate school is forthcoming and will be posted on the website and D2L page.

Academic Policies of Interest to Professional Studies Students

University Repeat Policy: Students are allowed a total of five repeat opportunities during their undergraduate career at WCU. Within those five opportunities, you may repeat a single course no more than twice. Said another way, you are allowed a maximum of three attempts at any single course. Should a student find themselves in a situation where they need a repeat in excess of the allowed maximum, they must file a Petition for Exception to University Policy with the Special Assistant for Student Policy, Academic Affairs located in Room 1, 25 University Avenue (UNA). Please note that repeat attempts may only be taken at WCU; you may not transfer that course to WCU from another institution. The grade from the second attempt will replace the grade earned in the original attempt in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade point average. Should a third attempt be made, the grades for both the second and third attempt will be calculated into the student's cumulative grade point average. The credits from the course will only be counted once toward the student's adjusted credit count for graduation purposes.

Students need to give thoughtful consideration to the decision to use a repeat opportunity. A conversation with the student's academic advisor is suggested prior to scheduling the repeat course. Over-reliance on repeats, particularly in the early years of the student's career, is not wise. The need to do so may indicate that a choice of major or minor might need to be revisited.

Academic Probation and Dismissal: A student is placed on academic probation when their cumulative grade point average (CGPA) falls below 2.00. The student will be informed via US mail when they are placed on probation. Probation will last for one full-time semester (12 credits). Notification also is placed on the student's transcript. Once notified, the student must meet with the Academic Advisor and develop an Academic Recovery Plan. It is the student's responsibility to contact the advisor and schedule the appointment. This must be done by the deadlines listed in the letter. Until the meeting and Academic Recovery Plan are completed the student will be forbidden to schedule courses for future semesters.

If the student fails to return to good academic standing (CGPA greater than or equal to 2.00) the student will be dismissed from the University.

Students should refer to the specific policy statements on Probation and Dismissal in the current copy of the university Undergraduate catalog.

Course Overload: A student who wishes to take more than 18 credits in a semester or more than six credits during a summer session must secure permission. Permission will not likely be granted if the student's cumulative GPA is less than 2.75. Students interested in taking an overload need to consult their Academic Advisor.

Taking a Course Pass/Fail: All students with 30 + earned credits in good academic standing (CGPA greater than or equal to 2.00) are eligible to take courses pass/fail. Only one course may be taken pass/fail in a semester. Only student electives in general education may be

taken on a pass/fail basis. Courses taken to meet specific general education content requirements cannot be taken pass/fail. Courses intended to meet interdisciplinary, diversity or writing emphasis requirements may not be taken pass/fail. A grade of pass carries credit value, but does not impact the GPA. A grade of fail is calculated into the GPA as would a grade of “F.” Once a course is contracted for pass/fail, no other grade than pass or fail can be awarded. This application process must be completed by the end of the ninth week of the semester. The appropriate form must be completed and filed with the Registrar’s office.

Taking Courses Off-Campus: Students are permitted to take courses at other institutions and transfer the credit for those courses to WCU. The student’s CGPA at the other institution must be at least 2.00 on a 4.00 grading scale. Grades earned in these courses are NOT transferred and are NOT calculated into the WCU GPA. Only the course and credit are transferable. Students are responsible for determining the “transferability of the course.” A transfer course equivalency feature of the Registrar’s webpage can assist with this. The appropriate form must be filed with the Registrar’s office before taking the course, and, upon the successful completion of the course, an official transcript must be sent from the other institution to our Registrar’s office. Students should consult their Academic Advisor and/or the university Undergraduate Catalog for additional details on this policy.

Leaving the University and Re-Admission: A student may take one semester off from university study without consequence. The student would need to schedule for their next semester as they normally would, meeting first with their Academic Advisor. If a student does not take courses for two consecutive semesters, the university will deactivate that student. In order to resume their university studies in this case, the student would need to contact the Undergraduate Admissions office to apply for re-admission.

Graduation Honors: They are:

Cum laude:	3.25-3.499 CGPA
Magna cum laude:	3.50-3.749 CGPA
Summa cum laude:	3.75-4.00 CGPA

These honors are based upon the student’s CGPA in the next-to-last semester of study before the student graduates and listed in the commencement program. A transfer student must have earned at least 60 credits at WCU by that semester in order to have honors listed in the commencement program. Students who do not qualify for honors until the posting of grades for their final semester will have that recognition posted on their official university transcript.

Student Privacy Rights and FERPA: The faculty and professional staff of the Professional Studies program is bound by, and will adhere strictly to the provisions of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 in our dealings with student, parents, prospective employers and educational institutions. Information beyond basic “directory” information will be held in confidence. Please consult the university Undergraduate Catalog for exceptions and the procedures that must be followed to allow for the release of information.

For detailed information on these and other university policies, please consult the current Undergraduate Catalog.

Academic Minors, listed by College and Department

Professional Colleges

College of Business and Public Affairs

Accounting: minor in *Accounting*. Room 309B Anderson Hall
Criminal Justice: minor in *Criminal Justice*. Room 200 Ruby Jones Hall
Economics: minors in *Economics* and *Finance*. Room 309A Anderson Hall
Geography and Planning: minors in *Geography and Planning*, and *Business Geographics and Information Systems*. Room 103 Ruby Jones Hall
Management: minor in *International Business*. Room 312B Anderson Hall
Political Science: minors in *Political Science* and *Public Management*. Room 106 Ruby Jones Hall

College of Education

Early and Middle Grades Preparation: minors in *Early Childhood Education* and *Elementary Education*. Room 106B Recitation Hall
Special Education: minor in *Special Education*. Room 309 Recitation Hall
Literacy: minor in *Reading*. Room 108 Recitation Hall.
Professional and Secondary Education: minor in *Professional Education*. Room 206D Recitation Hall

College of Health Science

Health: minors in *Environmental Health* and *Health Science*. Room 207 Sturzebecker Health Science Center
Kinesiology: minors in *Athletic Coaching*, *Exercise Science*, and *Physical Education for Individuals with Disabilities*. Room 206 Sturzebecker Health Science Center
Nutrition: minor in *Nutrition*. Room 302 Sturzebecker Health Science Center

College of Visual and Performing Arts

Art: minors in *Art History* and *Studio Art*. Room 212 Mitchell Hall
Music: minors in *Jazz Studies*, *Music* and *Music History*. Room 11 Swope Music Building
Theatre and Dance: minors in *Dance*: 314 Sturzebecker HSC and *Theatre Arts*: Room 118 Anderson Hall

College of Arts and Sciences

Anthropology/Sociology: minors in *Anthropology* and *Sociology*. Room 102 Old Library
Biology: minors in *Biology* and *Science Education*. Room 175 Schmucker Science Center North
Chemistry: minor in *Chemistry*. Room 119 Schmucker Science Center South
Communication Studies: minor in *Communication Studies*. Room 512 Main Hall
Computer Science: minors in *Computer Science*, *Information Technology* and *Web Technology and Applications*. Room 150 25 University Avenue (UNA)
English: minors in *African/African American Literature*, *Business and Technical Writing*, *Creative Writing*, *Film Criticism*, *Journalism*, and *Literature*. Room 531 Main Hall
Languages and Cultures: minors in *French*, *German*, *Italian*, *Latin*, *Spanish* and *Russian*. Room 109 Main Hall
Geology and Astronomy: minors in *Astronomy*, *Earth Sciences* and *Geology*. Room 207 Boucher Hall
History: minor in *History*. Room 500 Main Hall
Mathematics: minors in *Mathematics* and *Elementary School Mathematics (K-8)*. Room 101, 25 University Avenue (UNA)
Philosophy: minors in *Philosophy* and *Religious Studies*. Room 103 Main Hall
Physics: minor in *Physics*. Room 127 Boucher Hall
Psychology: minor in *Psychology*. Room 48 Peoples Building

In addition, the following interdisciplinary minors are offered through the College of Arts and Sciences:

African American Studies – 500 Main Hall
American Studies: Room 216 Main Hall
Ethnic Studies: Room 201 Old Library
Holocaust Studies: Room 201 Old Library
Latin American Studies: Room 206 Ruby Jones Hall
Linguistics: Room 538 Main Hall
Peace and Conflict Studies: Room 103 Main Hall
Russian Studies: Room 114 Main Hall
Women's Studies: Room 144 Main Hall

Graduation Checklist for Professional Studies

Please print this page for your records

_____ Apply for graduation when you have earned approximately 90 credits¹. This is done through the myWCU portal system. The steps to apply for graduation are:

1. Log onto MyWCU and click on “Apply for Graduation”
2. Click on line for your Academic Program
3. Select the term and click on “continue”
4. Verify information and click on “submit application”

You will receive a confirmation message that looks something like this:
“You have successfully applied for graduation”.

If you are not able to apply online for graduation in the term of your choice you must apply in person at the Office of the Registrar.

Please follow the steps listed below to finalize your graduation.

1. **General Education Requirements**

Please check your WCU email account for notification in approximately 5-6 weeks.

2. **Major/Minor Requirements**

Please make an appointment with your academic advisor(s) to review your major/minor requirements

3. **Graduation Fee**

The graduation fee is \$82. Please make arrangements in the Bursars Office, located in the Kirschner Student Services Center, 25 UNA, to pay your graduation fee.

_____ Schedule the following meetings to review your progress and identify unmet requirements or other issues that may impact your graduation:

_____ Professional Studies Academic Advisor

_____ Minor Advisor 1

_____ Minor Advisor 2

(Continued on next page)

_____ Schedule the following meetings to review your progress and identify unmet requirements or other issues that may impact your graduation:

_____ Professional Studies Academic Advisor

_____ Minor Advisor 1

_____ Minor Advisor 2

_____ Be certain that, upon the completion of your final semester, you have accomplished the following:

_____ Earned a minimum of 120 credits applicable toward graduation
(Do not count developmental courses, repeated courses, etc.)

_____ Achieved a final Cumulative GPA of 2.00 or higher

_____ Completed ALL Major Requirements:

_____ 48 credits of general education

_____ Completed the required number of writing emphasis courses

_____ Completed the 15 Credits of Major Breadth/Distributive Courses

_____ Completed at least 30 credits of Major Electives at the 300 + level

_____ Completed additional credits, usually 27, of other major electives at any level of study 100-400 to bring the total adjusted credit count to at least 120. These may include courses taken to fulfill one of the required academic minors.

_____ Submit your Graduation Portfolio to the Program office by the announced deadline.

_____ Successfully complete at least two academic minors (at least one of which is from a Professional College)

_____ Pay off any outstanding debts to the university

_____ Complete all exit interviews and wrap-up activities associated with your financial aid.

Frequently Asked Questions About Professional Studies

Program Overview - Students - Programs of Study - Academic Advising
- Graduation - Communications - Other Issues

Program Overview

1. What is the degree called?

The Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies: Professional Studies

2. When was the Professional Studies Program established?

The Professional Studies major was created and approved during the 2001-2002 academic year. The first students were formally admitted during the summer of 2002.

3. How many students are presently enrolled in the program?

As of January, 2012, there are over 450 students pursuing the Professional Studies degree.

4. How many students have graduated with the Professional Studies degree?

As of January, 2012, approximately 1600 students have earned the Professional Studies degree.

5. How would you describe the Professional Studies degree?

The Professional Studies degree is an interdisciplinary degree program that allows students to create an individualized program of study not otherwise available at the university.

6. What can a student do after earning the Professional Studies degree?

Students who earn the professional studies degree have a surprising number of options available after graduation. Many go to graduate school or to post-baccalaureate certificate programs in a field of their choice. Others go on to entry level positions in business and industry in an area associated with one of their academic minors. Many discover that their skills, knowledge and experiences open doors in occupations they never considered. An increasing number of employers are less concerned about the title of a degree, and more concerned about the qualities a prospective employee brings in.

There are several offices on campus that provide students with assistance with career and vocational selection. The University Counseling Center provides vocational testing, at no charge to the student. A trained professional will review the results of the testing with student. The staff of the Twardowski Career Development Center provides a variety of services for students engaged in the search for a career path. Both offices are located on the second floor of the Lawrence Center. Or you may access their websites as follows:

The University Counseling Center: http://www.wcupa.edu/_services/stu.cou/

Twardowski Career Development Center: http://www.wcupa.edu/_services/stu.car/

7. Who is the director of the program?

Professor Bruce Norris currently serves as the Director of the Liberal Studies: Professional Studies degree program.

8. Where is the program office located?

The Professional Studies program office is located in Room 144 Main Hall. Students need to schedule appointments to meet with the Director. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 610-436-3548.

9. What is the website address for the Professional Studies Program?

http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/sch_cas/psp

Students

10. Who should consider entering the Professional Studies Major?

Professional Studies is a potentially good fit for the following types of students:

- Students who think “outside the box”
- Students who are interested in what is IN the major, not what it is called
- Students who are looking for a major, but cannot find a “good match” with existing campus programs
- Students with high credits earned who are not enrolled in a major
- Students who are enrolled in a major but will not be able to complete the requirements for that major for various reasons.

11. What are the qualifications for entry into the Professional Studies Program?

Students must be actively enrolled as an undergraduate at WCU, and have earned a minimum of 30 credits at the time of application. Students must have a WCU cumulative

GPA of 2.00 or better. Prospective students must have an intake interview with the Program Director to assess their qualifications. Students must submit a Statement of Purpose which explains their motivation for pursuing the degree. Once a student is deemed acceptable for the major, he/she must file a change of major form with the Office of Professional Studies. Changes will be made by the Professional Studies office and the original documents will be filed with the Office of the Registrar.

12. May transfer students be admitted directly into the Professional Studies Program?

Students who transfer to WCU from another accredited college or university are not allowed to apply for direct admission to the Professional Studies Program. These students should meet with Professor Norris after their admission to the university to discuss the program and make their academic plans accordingly, but will not be permitted to apply for the admission to the program until the completion of their first semester at WCU.

The Program of Study

13. What are the program requirements?

Students in the Professional Studies Program must complete a variety of credit/course requirements under the following categories:

- General Education – 48 credits
- Major Breadth (Distributive) Courses – 15 credits
- Major Electives
 - Upper Level Electives – 30 credits
 - Electives at any level – 27 credits
- Two Academic Minors (Credits included among Major Electives listed above)

14. Where can I find information about the General Education Requirement?

Students should consult the Undergraduate catalog for the year they first enrolled at WCU to determine their general education requirement. Students should consult their academic advisor for specific information about the general education requirement. The Program Director serves as the academic advisor for Professional Studies students.

15. What is the “Major Breadth” (Distributive) Requirement?

The Major Breadth (Distributive) Requirement consists of 15 credits of coursework in areas across the university curriculum. The requirement has its origin in the Liberal Arts/Liberal Studies tradition, where students pursue a curriculum that spans a variety of

academic disciplines. To complete this requirement, students must take courses in the following areas:

- Science (3 credits), from the following prefixes: BIO, CHE, CSC, CST, CSW, ESS, ENV, IND, PHY, SCB, SCE, SCI.
- Behavioral and Social Science (3 credits), from the following prefixes: ANT, ECO, EDP, GEO, PMG, PSC, PSY, SOC, SSC, WOS
- Humanities (3 credits) from the following prefixes: AMS, CLS, COM, CRW, ENG, HIS, JRN, LIT, PHI, or any prefix from a foreign language or foreign culture cluster.
- Additional Distributive courses (6 credits) from any of the prefixes listed above in science, behavioral and social science humanities, or the following Arts prefixes: ARH, ART, DAN, FLM, MUE, MHL, MTC, THA, or music organizations.

16. What are the major electives?

Students in the Professional Studies program must complete a total of 57 credits of major electives. 30 credits of these electives must be taken at the upper level (300/400 level). The remaining 27 credits may be taken at any level 100 or above. Courses that students are using to earn one of the required academic minors are to be included among these elective credits. The credits may be taken from any academic department on campus.

17. What is the Academic Minor Requirement for Professional Studies?

Students pursuing the Professional Studies degree must earn two academic minors. One of those minors must be from one of the four professional colleges. The second minor may be from any of the university's colleges.

Students will need to apply for each of the minors they wish to pursue. Each minor may have their own admission or selection criteria. It is the student's responsibility to consult with a representative of the minor department to determine these standards, as well as the specific requirements for the minor.

Verification that a student has earned the minor will be done at the time of final graduation clearance. Failure to earn two minors, as stipulated above, will prevent a Professional Studies student from graduating.

18. What is a “Professional College?”

At the time the Professional Studies Program was approved, the Academic Departments of the university were organized into the College of Arts and Sciences and four Professional Schools (Business and Public Affairs, Education, Health Sciences and Music). In the Fall of 2004, the academic units were reorganized to more accurately reflect the institution’s mission, philosophy and strategic plan. All departments are part of Colleges (Arts and Sciences, Business and Public Affairs, Education, Health Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts), and some departments were moved into a new college. The four current Professional colleges are: Business and Public Affairs, Education, Health Science and Visual and Performing Arts.

19. How do I find out what the requirements are for an academic minor?

Students should consult the chair of the academic department that owns the minor to determine the specific requirements, and options if any, for their minor. Many departments will assign a minor advisor to assist the student as they work to fulfill all minor requirements. If a minor advisor is not assigned, students should work with the department chair for that minor.

Departments may provide general information about their minors in the Undergraduate catalog, as well as on their departmental web page. However, students should check with their assigned minor advisor to be certain of the specific requirements that must be met. Failure to meet with your minor advisor could lead to misunderstandings about the minor requirements, and could ultimately delay graduation.

20. How does a student find out who is appointed to be their minor advisor?

The student may check with the minor department office. The minor advisor may also be identified on the myWCU portal, on the student’s log-on page.

21. What can a student do if they are having trouble selecting an academic minor?

The first step should be arranging a meeting with the Program Director to discuss this. Other steps will likely be identified during that meeting. Often, it is best to work from the perspective of identifying the minors that are of no interest, or for which the student is not eligible due to entry criteria. Caution should be employed with this method, as viable minors could be excluded prematurely. Students should research the minors available and of interest, using the Undergraduate catalog, the department office, and the department’s web page.

22. May I use two academic minors from the College of Arts and Sciences to meet the degree requirement for Professional Studies?

No, one of the minors must come from one of the Professional Colleges. Students may complete as many minors as they want and are able, provided that at least one of them is from a Professional College.

23. May I complete the “equivalent” of a minor to meet the minor requirements for the professional Studies degree?

No, only approved minor programs may be used.

Academic Advising

24. Why should I meet with my academic advisor?

While the flexibility and individualized nature of the Professional Studies Program is appealing, it also creates the potential for misunderstanding and mistakes in planning and executing the student’s academic plan. By meeting on a regular basis with your academic advisor, you reduce the likelihood that these mistakes will occur.

Students are responsible for developing an academic plan to complete all of the requirements for your program of study. The academic advisor is a good sounding board for your plan. In addition, students must meet with their academic advisor in order to have their advising hold lifted. That enables the student to enroll in courses at the appointed time.

Academic advisors are also interested in helping the student clarify their short-term and long-term goals. The selection of minors and of elective courses may depend to some degree on those goals.

In the final analysis, it is the student’s responsibility to know what the requirements are for earning their degree, and to then complete them. The academic advisor is an excellent resource to use to ensure that the student is on the correct path.

25. When should I meet with my academic advisor?

Students should meet with their academic advisor whenever they feel a need to do so.

Students should meet with their academic advisor at least once each semester to review their progress toward degree completion, discuss course selection for upcoming semesters, and address other important issues.

It is very important for students to meet with their academic advisor(s) before it is time to schedule for the next semester. After this meeting your advising flag is removed so you can schedule.

26. How should students prepare for an academic advising session?

Prior to the appointment, students should review the materials they received in previous sessions. They should be aware of outstanding requirements and, if possible, identify possible course selection options for the upcoming semester. In addition, they should prepare a list of questions to be discussed at the session. Students should bring their Professional Studies materials with them to each advising meeting.

27. What is the Degree Progress report and how does it impact me as a Professional Studies major?

The Degree Progress Report (DPR) is generated by the Registrar's Office through the myWCU system. It is designed to provide students with a snapshot of where they are in terms of completing degree requirements. The DPR includes the general education requirement, major requirements, total adjusted credit count and cumulative grade point average.

In a more traditional major, where most degree requirements are clearly identified and are taken by all students in the major, the DPR is an excellent tool for students and advisors.

Unfortunately, despite a laudable effort on the part of the programmers, it does not work quite so well in capturing the unique degree requirements for many Professional Studies major students. The DPR is useful and effective in the information it provides for the general education requirement, total adjusted credits, cumulative grade point average for our major students. However, it is strongly recommended that student follow the program advising sheet when working with their major requirements.

When it comes time for graduation, it is the program director, the minor advisors and the Registrar's office working in a coordinated fashion, that will review your record and render a decision on program completion and, ultimately, if you will graduate.

The best tool for monitoring your academic progress is regular consultation with your academic advisor and developing a clear understanding of your program (major and minor program) requirements. So, when in doubt, see your academic advisor.

STUDENTS SHOULD MAINTAIN A FILE WITH ALL MATERIALS FROM ADVISING SESSIONS WITH ALL ADVISORS. DO NOT THROW ANYTHING OUT!

Graduation

28. When should I begin the graduation process?

Students are encouraged to submit their application for graduation when they have approximately one academic year of courses remaining. Typically, this occurs when the student has earned 90 credits. This allows the student to identify any unmet requirements with ample time to take those final courses.

Graduation applications are submitted online, via the myWCU portal. An email confirmation of the receipt of the application will be sent. A bill will be issued for the graduation fee, currently \$82.00. This fee should be paid by the application deadline for the semester in which graduation is planned.

Throughout this time, the student should be in regular contact (at least once a semester) with their major and minor academic advisors. Any unmet requirements should be identified and taken by the student. The Graduation analyst from the Registrar's office will invite the student to a meeting where a review of their general education requirements will take place.

If at any time there is a question about the process, the student should contact the Graduation Analyst in the Registrar's office or the major academic advisor.

29. What happens if I am not cleared to graduate when I had planned?

You will be notified via letter that you are not cleared. The reasons will be identified along with contact information to address the deficiencies. Students who receive this letter should act quickly in responding to that letter. All identified deficiencies must be rectified in order to earn your degree, no matter how long it may take.

30. How are Professional Studies Students cleared for graduation?

The final graduation clearance process is initiated by the Office of the Registrar. A list of all students who have filed their final application for graduation for the specific term will be sent to the Program Director. The Program Director will review the record of each student on the list and indicate if the student has completed the degree requirements. Typically, comments on the list will include the need for the student to successfully complete the courses they are taking in that semester, and that they must earn their academic minors. The list is returned to the Office of the Registrar.

The minor departments also receive a list for their major graduates AND students graduating with that department's minor. They must indicate if the student has earned the minor (or will do so upon successful completion of that semester's courses).

Finally, the graduation analyst in the Office of the Registrar will verify that the student has completed the appropriate general education requirement.

A “NO” from any one of these offices will prevent the student from graduating.

31. At the Commencement ceremony, students are called to the stage by their colleges. What college is the home for the Professional Studies Program?

The Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies: Professional Studies program is housed in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Prior to the ceremony, students should assemble at the location identified for CAS majors. When CAS students are called, Professional Studies students will walk across the stage.

In the event of inclement weather (spring commencement), it is necessary to hold two indoor ceremonies. Professional Studies students will attend and participate in the indoor ceremony specified for CAS students.

32. When will I be officially considered a graduate of West Chester University?

Final and formal awarding of your bachelor’s degree typically occurs 3-4 weeks after the conclusion of your final semester. For December graduation candidates, remember that the university is closed for approximately one week during the mid-year break, so that will delay the process somewhat. You can determine your status by monitoring your my WCU homepage. Your status will be updated there. Once your degree has been awarded, you may begin to order official transcripts that can be used for employment seeking and graduate school application purposes.

33. When will I receive my diploma?

Once you receive final clearance for graduation, your degree will be officially awarded. Your academic record will be amended to reflect the awarded status of your degree, along with the academic minors on your program of study. Any transcripts provided after this time will also reflect the awarded status. The diploma will be mailed to you shortly after final clearance is granted. Please allow 4-6 weeks for the process to run its course (may be longer following December graduation, due to the closure of the university for mid-year break). If you have not received anything from the Office of the Registrar after six “working “ weeks following graduation, please contact the graduation analyst that handles the Professional Studies program clearances.

34. Where can I find general information about graduation?

The Office of the Registrar’s website has a Graduation section that contains the information regarding graduation in general and about the ceremonies for the current

semester. *The Quad*, WCU's student newspaper, also presents information in a timely manner.

35. What is the graduation portfolio?

The graduation portfolio is a project that is requested of each Professional Studies major student during the final semester prior to their anticipated graduation. The portfolio as a whole is intended to provide information to the program director to be used in program assessment as required by the university. In addition, the process of developing and creating the portfolio is quite useful to the student in that it requires self assessment and reflection on their goals, the creation of their academic program, and their future plans.

The portfolio components are:

- A statement of personal and professional goal;
- A current professional resume;
- An example of their written work submitted for one of their courses that show, in the student's opinion an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of their program of study; and
- A statement of their future plans and intentions.

The portfolio is due approximately 2-3 weeks before the end of the semester.

Communications

36. How may a student schedule an appointment with the program director?

Students may schedule an appointment by calling the program office at 610-436-3548. If your call is put into voicemail, please leave your name and return number, and a contact will be made. Appointment requests sent via email will result in a response directing the student to call the office to arrange the appointment. ***Please do not request appointments via email.***

37. May I communicate with the program director through email?

Yes, students are encouraged to submit basic and simple questions (those requiring short answers) via email. Please submit these questions to bnorris@wcupa.edu.

Questions requiring longer, in-depth answers should be saved for face-to face meetings or phone calls.

Students should refrain from using email to schedule advising appointments. A phone call during normal university business hours is preferred.

38. Are there certain issues that cannot be addressed through email?

Yes, student grades, GPA, identifying information (such as WCU ID numbers and social security numbers) and personal information should not be included in any email communications, as privacy of emails cannot be assured. The rule of thumb is: if you would not discuss something in a loud voice in a crowded elevator, you should not cover it in an email.

Other Issues

39. May students participate in internship experiences and have then be used as partial fulfillment of major requirements?

Yes, Professional Studies students may (and are encouraged to) participate in internship experiences. Yes, credits earned through internship experiences may be applied to major electives. HOWEVER, there are presently no credits given directly through the Professional Studies program for internships. Students who want to earn credits for internships should check with their minor departments to see if it is possible to earn credits through that department. Professional Studies students interested in internships should consult the Program Director.

Student Handbook Acknowledgement of Receipt

Each Professional Studies student signs for and receives a student handbook. The “Acknowledgement of Receipt” is as follows:

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I received a copy of the Professional Studies Student Handbook. I understand that this handbook, along with other resources such as the WCU Undergraduate Catalog, is to be consulted whenever I have a question regarding my program of study or university academic policies.

Please initial each item after you read it:

- _____ I will review this handbook as soon as possible and will keep it for future reference.
- _____ I will maintain a file for all records related to my academic experience in the Professional Studies program.
- _____ I will consult my academic advisors for the Professional Studies program as well as for my academic minors whenever there is a question about my academic program.
- _____ I will meet with my Professional Studies Academic Advisor at least once a semester, once prior to your designated enrollment date, for the duration of my academic career in the major and at WCU.
- _____ I will submit the graduation portfolio by the designated deadline in the term in which I plan to graduate.
- _____ I accept responsibility for following the guidelines contained within and for the consequences for failing to do so.

This document is signed and dated by the student upon receipt of the handbook.

Student Signature

Date

Contact Information for Commonly Referred Sites

Academic Affairs Special Assistant to the Provost for Academic Policy	25 UNA, Room 001	610-436-3551
Academic Computing Student Help Desk	Anderson Hall, Ground Floor	610-436-3349
Bursar	25 UVA, Room 050	610-436-2552
Children's Center	McCarthy Hall	610-436-2388
Counseling Center	Lawrence Center Room 241	610-436-2301
Financial Aid	25 UNA Room 025	610-436-2627
Graduate Studies	McKelvie Hall	610-436-2943
International Programs	McKelvie Hall	610-436-3515
Judicial Affairs	Sykes Student Union Room 238	610-436-3511
Learning Assistance/ Resource Center	Lawrence Center Room 223	610-436-2535
Off Campus and Commuter Services	Sykes Student Union Room 116	610-436-2984
Pre-Major Advising Center	Lawrence Center Room 262	610-436-3505
Public Safety	Peoples Building	610-426-3311
Registrar	25 UNA Room 020	610-436-3541
Residential Life/Student Housing	Lawrence Center Room 202	610-436-3307
Service for Students with Disabilities	Lawrence Center Room 223	610-436-3217

Service Learning and Volunteer Programs	Killinger Hall Room B-19	610-436-3379
Social Equity	13/15 University Avenue Room 100	610-436-2436
Student Affairs	Sykes Union	610-436-3301
Student Health Services	Wayne Hall 2 nd floor	610-436-2509
Student Leadership and Development	Sykes Student Union Room 238	610-436-2117
Twardowski Career Development Center	Lawrence Center Room 223	610-436-2501
Veteran Affairs Dana Parker	25 UNA	610-436-2688
Women's Center	Lawrence Center Room 100	610-436-2122
Writing Center	Lawrence Center Room 214	610-436-5664

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