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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 various 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.”

Beyond the courses required for the major, minors and general education requirements, this major also places an emphasis on the development and/or enhancement of what is currently referred to as “transferrable skills.” Effective professionals need to communicate clearly, think critically, look outside the ordinary disciplinary lines, appreciate diversity, and make informed decisions and ethical choices.

Ultimately, it is the student’s responsibility to make sure that all graduation requirements are met in order to earn their degree. 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. Regular consultation with your academic advisor is vitally important to that end.

This student handbook is designed to serve as one of your primary sources of information on all aspects of the program. Every effort has been made 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 their major and/or minor academic advisor(s) for clarification and guidance.

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.

## 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 professional areas of study. Most of the professional minors come from Colleges of Business and Public Management, Education and Social Work, and Health Sciences. However, there are several "professional" minors in the Colleges of Arts and Humanities and the Sciences and Mathematics. 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. Transfer students are welcome to apply for program admission, provided they have completed at least 30 credits of study. All prospective LSPS students must complete an initial intake interview with the Program Director prior to being approved to change into the Professional Studies major.

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 (and the skill set they can develop and hone while pursuing their curriculum), 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, 2018, over 3,100 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 larger majors on campus. Approximately 350 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 currently attending WCU 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 earned a current cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or better.

Students may begin the process of applying to the LSPS major at any time 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.

## Incoming Transfer Admission Candidates:

Transfer Student applicants interested in being admitted to WCU as a Professional Studies major should apply for the major on their admissions application. These students will be contacted by the Professional Studies office to schedule an initial intake interview. If the student is deemed to be a worthy candidate for admission, the Program Director will notify the Office of Undergraduate Admissions of that recommendation. Please note that the Office of Undergraduate Admissions has the final say on admissions decisions with any recommendation made by the Professional Studies office used as part of the overall admissions process.

**Initial Intake Interview:** **Current WCU students as well as Transfer Admission Candidates** 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, email the current office manager (cpistritto@wcupa.edu) or stop in the program office in Rm. 222 Lawrence Center to arrange the appointment. 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 Application Process:** **Current WCU students** may apply to change their major through the myWCU portal. Students who have not participated in the Initial Intake Interview will be contacted and asked to schedule that interview. Change of major applications submitted by students who do not submit to the interview process will be denied. **Incoming Transfer Students** who are accepted into the program will be placed directly into the Professional Studies major.

**Academic Advising Syllabus:** Upon acceptance into the program, the student will be given an Academic Advising Syllabus. In the same vein as a traditional classroom course syllabus,

the Academic Advising Syllabus is an introductory document that lays out basic information that enables the student to become oriented to how the academic advising process works within the major, as well as providing other useful information that enables the student to become familiar with the essentials of the major. Students will be asked to sign a form through which the student acknowledges the receipt of the syllabus and assumes their responsibility to review and become familiar with its contents.

## 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” areas of study.

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. Some minors may have cumulative grade point average requirements that are higher than 2.0. That becomes the minimum CGPA for Professional Studies students who are attempting to earn those minors. It is the student’s responsibility to understand the graduation requirements for the major as well as each of the minors, and to be aware on where they stand as far as completing them.

### 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)
  - Students coming from or having attempted to gain admission to an EGP or MGP program may use MAT 101 or MAT 102 for this requirement. All other students will take MAT 103 or higher.
- 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), Geology and Astronomy (ESS), and Physics (PHY). Courses must be selected from the approved list. Please refer to the current academic advising sheet for the list of approved courses.

- **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). Courses must be selected from the approved list. \*
- **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). Courses must be selected from the approved list. \*
- **The Arts** (3 credits)  
Select one course from the following disciplines: Art (ARH/ART/MDA), Cinematography/Film (FLM), Dance (DAN), Languages and Cultures (EGE/ESP/GER/SPA), Music (MHL/MTC), and Theatre (THA). Courses must be selected from the approved list. \*

\* Please refer to the current academic advising sheet for the list of approved courses.

### **Diverse Communities Requirement:**

Students must take a 3 credit diverse communities course from the list of courses approved for that purpose. The course is identified with a “J” attribute on the transcript and display-all. The course must be approved as a diverse communities course at the time it is taken. That course may simultaneously fulfill another appropriate requirement. If this is possible, then an additional 3 credits major elective is added to the program. If the diverse communities course may also fulfill a minor requirement, that is allowed.

### **Interdisciplinary Course:**

Students must take a 3 credit interdisciplinary course, selected from the list of courses approved for that purpose. The course is identified with an “T” attribute on the transcript and display-all. The course must be approved as an interdisciplinary course at the time it is taken. If the interdisciplinary course may also fulfill a minor requirement, that is allowed.

### **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. The

number of writing emphasis courses required for a student may be reduced depending on the number of transfer credits accepted by the university.

#### **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 that did not exist when previously enrolled. Please review this issue with your academic advisor.

#### **Academic Foundations:**

- *ENG 150 and WRT 200+*
  - Students who are required to take ENG 150 will be able to use those credits to fulfill an elective requirement in either the general education or major distributive elective requirements
  - Students who are waived out of WRT 120 (due to SAT-W scores and/or writing placement assessment) 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 and do not have the required “W” attribute.***
- *Math Requirement*
  - Any 100 level + Math class will fulfill this requirement.
  - Students placed in any of the MAT Q courses will earn a grade(s) that will be applied to the student’s CGPA. However, the credits earned from the course(s) will not be applied to the student’s graduation credit count (Minimum 120 adjusted 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, interdisciplinary, 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 and have the “J” designation 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 or foreign language culture cluster requirements.
  - A course must be designated as an interdisciplinary course and have the “I” designation 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. Courses used must come from the approved list for each category.
- *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 the writing emphasis 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. Also, some minors have a foreign language requirement.

## **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, MAT  
PHY, SCB, SCE, SCI

#### Behavioral and Social Science:

Select one course, 3 credits

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

#### Humanities:

Select one course, 3 credits

Prefixes include: AMS, CLS, COM, CRW, ENG, HIS, JRN, LIT,  
PHI, WRH 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:*** courses taken to fulfill the major Breadth/Distributive Requirement may NOT be used to meet minor requirements. Those courses are used elsewhere. In addition, these courses may NOT be used to complete General Education requirements (exception may be the diversity requirement: consult your academic advisor on this issue).

### **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 a Professional area of study.

The current list of academic minors:

Professional minors: Accounting; Art History; Autism Education; Business Geographics Information Systems; Business Law; Civic and Professional Leadership (Honors College); Coaching; Contemplative Studies; Criminal Justice; Dance; Deaf Studies; Early Childhood Education; Economics; Elementary Education; Environmental Health; Exercise Science; Finance; Geography and Planning, Health Science, International Business, Jazz Studies, Law, Politics and Society; Mathematics: Grades Pre K – 8; Media and Culture; Music; Music History; Music Performance; Music Production; Nutrition; Physical Education for Individuals with Disabilities; Political Science; Professional Education; Reading; Science Education; Special Education; Studio Art; Theatre; White Collar Crime; and Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies.

Humanities and Sciences minors: African/African American Literature; African American Studies; American Studies; Anthropology; Applied Ethics; Applied Statistics; Arabic; Astronomy; Biology; Business and Technical Writing; Chemistry; Communication Studies; Computer Science; Creative Writing; Digital Humanities and New Media; Earth Sciences; Ethnic Studies; Film Criticism; French; Geology; German; History; Holocaust Studies; Information Technology; Italian; Journalism; Latin; Latin American/Latino Studies; Linguistics; Literature; Mathematics; Peace and Conflict Studies; Philosophy; Physics; Psychology; Religious Studies; Russian; Russian Studies; Sociology; Spanish; Web Technology and Applications; and Women's and Gender Studies.

Please refer to the current online undergraduate catalog for updated list of minors, as well as requirements. LSPS students are required to consult with the advisors for each of their minors to identify the precise requirements that must be met to earn the minor upon graduation.

## **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. Of course, internships may be pursued that do not have credits associated with them. Please discuss any internship ideas and questions with the Program Director.

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

**(insert the current syllabus here, followed by the Acknowledgement page)**

## 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: always discuss future course selection plans 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.

## What should guide the creation of your academic plan and your course selection?

Beyond the obvious, as stated above, Professional Studies students should be excited about the possibilities of having so many options available to you to use as major and minor requirements and electives. When choosing electives, look for courses that complement the minors and other interests you have. What can the course do for you to enhance your skill set, broaden your knowledge base, or create new experiences that can benefit you. The beauty of the Professional Studies program is that you may have a broad choice of electives at your disposal which can be turned into valuable assets. What you can potentially do in creating this degree program may be

quite attractive to potential employers who are looking not so much at the degree title, but what you have packed into this educational experience you have created while earning that degree. So, think of your electives as opportunities, not just an elective you gotta fill somehow. Make it work for you!

**Refer to Advising Sheet at the end of the document.**



## 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:**

You may receive emails from either the program director ([bnorris@wcupa.edu](mailto:bnorris@wcupa.edu)) or the office manager ([cpistritto@wcupa.edu](mailto:cpistritto@wcupa.edu)). Please open these emails immediately upon receipt. We will not send an email that is not important in some way, so please take the time to read them immediately upon receipt. 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.** Please note that I will not send any confidential information through an email.

### **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 350 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, Academic advising syllabus, program website or other readily available university resources, 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.

## **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. Today's employers are less interested in the name of your degree, but VERY interested in how a prospective employee can "add value" to their firm. So, the name of the major is, usually, not as critical as how you can articulate what you got out of the pursuit of that degree, in terms of the transferrable skills.

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.

**Here is a small sample of the types of jobs for which Professional Studies graduates have been hired in recent years (please note that this is not a complete list, just a small representative sample)**

**(insert page 2 of the 2 pg. program description sheet)**

## Academic Policies of Interest to Professional Studies Students

**University Repeat Policy:** Students are allowed a total of six repeat opportunities during their undergraduate career at WCU. Within those six 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). The petition must include a letter explaining why an additional repeat should be given. There is no guarantee that the extra repeat opportunity will be granted. 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. Student should treat their repeat opportunities as valuable assets not to be squandered. A conversation with the student's academic advisor is suggested prior to scheduling the repeated 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.

Please bear in mind that some minors will not allow additional repeats of courses in their program.

**Academic Probation and Dismissal:** General summary: 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 and will be documented on their myWCU home screen. 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 notification letter. Until the Academic Recovery Plan is completed and submitted electronically, an Academic Recovery Plan hold will be placed on the student's account which will prevent the student from performing ANY course registration function.

If the student fails to return to good academic standing (CGPA greater than or equal to 2.00) within a reasonable period of time, usually 12 credits after going on probation, the student will be dismissed from the University. The dismissal may be appealed, but there must be a reasonable mathematical chance of recovery in order for that appeal to be heard and/or the appeal is successful.

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 have a minimum WCU cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or above. Students wanting to take an overload who are below a 2.75 CGPA may file an appeal for permission for the overload. A letter will be needed to justify the overload request. 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. **Most importantly, courses used for any major requirement and/or elective, and for minors may NOT be taken on a pass/fail basis.** 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. The pass/fail option cannot be reversed once the application is approved. 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 by the deadline.

**Taking Courses Off-Campus:** Students are permitted to take certain types of courses at other institutions and transfer the credit for those courses to WCU under advisement. Generally, we are talking about electives. Usually, minor courses cannot be taken off-campus, unless approved in advance by the minor department. Also, courses you have already taken at WCU and have earned a grade may not be taken at another institution. 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 prior to registering for any course off campus with the intent of transferring back to WCU.

**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

### College of Business and Public Management

Accounting: minors in *Accounting* and *White Collar Crime*. Room 408 Business and Public Management Bldg.

Criminal Justice: minor in *Criminal Justice*. Room 508 Business and Public Management Bldg.

Economics: minors in *Economics* and *Finance*. Room 406 Business and Public Management Bldg.

Geography and Planning: minors in *Business Geographic Information Systems* and *Geography and Planning*. Room 505 Business and Public Management Bldg.

Management: minor in *Business Law* and *International Business*. Room 404 Business and Public Management Bldg.

### College of Education and Social Work

Early and Middle Grades Preparation: minors in *Early Childhood Education* and *Elementary Education*. Room 106B Recitation Hall

Educational Foundations and Policy Studies: minor in *Professional Education*. Rm 936 Wayne Hall

Literacy: minor in *Reading*. Rm. 108-B Recitation Hall

Special Education: minor in *Autism Education* and *Special Education*. Room 309 Recitation Hall

In addition, the following interdisciplinary minor is offered by the College of Education and Social Work:

*Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies*. Room 109 Main Hall

### College of Health Science

Health: minors in *Contemplative Studies*, *Environmental Health* and *Health Science*.

Room 207 Sturzebecker Health Science Center

Kinesiology: minors in *Coaching*, *Deaf Studies*, *Exercise Science*, and *Physical Education for Individuals with Disabilities*. Room 206 Sturzebecker Health Science Center

Nutrition: minor in *Nutrition*. Room 222 Sturzebecker Health Science Center

## College of Visual and Performing Arts

Art and Design: minors in *Art History* and *Studio Art*. Rm. 133 E.O. Bull Center  
Theatre and Dance: minors in *Dance* and *Theatre Arts*: Rm. 119 E.O. Bull Center

### School of Music

Applied Music: *Jazz Studies and Music Performance*. 110 Swope Music Building  
Music Theory, History and Composition: minors in *Music*, *Music History* and *Music Production*.  
Rm. 330 Swope Music Building.

## College of Arts and Humanities

Anthropology/Sociology: minors in *Anthropology* and *Sociology*. Room 102-A Old Library  
Communication Studies: minors in *Communication Studies* and *Media and Culture*. Room 512  
Main Hall  
English: minors in *African/African American Literature*, *Business and Technical Writing*,  
*Creative Writing*, *Digital Humanities and New Media*, *Film Criticism*, *Journalism*, *Linguistics*  
and *Literature*. Room 531 Main Hall  
Languages and Cultures: minors in *Arabic*, *French*, *German*, *Italian*, *Latin*, *Russian*, and  
*Spanish*. Room 224 Mitchell Hall  
History: minor in *History*. Room 702 Wayne Hall  
Philosophy: minors in *Applied Ethics*, *Philosophy* and *Religious Studies*. Room 510 Business  
and Public Management Bldg.  
Physics: minor in *Physics*. Room 127 Merion Science Center  
Women's and Gender Studies: minor in *Women's and Gender Studies*. Room 736 Wayne hall

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

*American Studies*: Room 216 Main Hall  
*Ethnic Studies*: Room 201 Old Library  
*Holocaust Studies*: Room 409 main Hall  
*Latin American and Latino/a Studies*: Room 129 Mitchell Hall  
*Linguistics*: Room 126 Mitchell Hall  
*Peace and Conflict Studies*: Room 103 Main Hall  
*Russian Studies*: Room 114 Main Hall



## **College of the Sciences and Mathematics**

Biology: minors in *Biology*, 175 Schmucker Science Building North

Chemistry: minor in *Chemistry*, 119 Schmucker Science Building South

Computer Science: minors in *Computer Science*, *Information Technology* and *Web Technology and Applications*. Room 150 25 University Avenue

Geology and Astronomy: minors in *Astronomy*, *Earth Sciences*, *Geology* and *Science Education*. Room 221 Merion Science Center

Mathematics: minors in *Applied Statistics*, *Mathematics* and *Mathematics: Grades Pre-K - 8*. Room 101, 25 University Avenue (UNA)

Political Science: minors in *Law*, *Politics and Society* and *Political Science*. Room 205 Ruby Jones Hall

Psychology: minor in *Psychology*. Room 505 Wayne Hall

## **School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies:**

African American Studies Program: minor in *African American Studies*: 432 Wayne Hall

Honors College: *Civic and Professional Leadership*. 703 S. High Street

## Graduation Checklist for Professional Studies

**Please print this page for your records**

\_\_\_\_\_ A student may apply for graduation when you have earned approximately 90 credits. This is done through the myWCU portal system. It is recommended that you consult with your major academic advisor prior to applying for graduation. Students may apply for Graduation in the following terms: January (Winter), May (Spring), August (Summer) and December (Fall). You will receive a confirmation message confirming successful completion of the process. 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. **Total Adjusted Credits must be at a minimum 120.**
2. **Cumulative Grade Point Average must meet or exceed 2.00 (may be higher for some minors)**
3. **General Education Requirements**  
Please check with your academic advisor, as well as the Degree Progress Report found on your myWCU portal page.
4. **Major/Minor Requirements**  
Please make an appointment with your academic advisors to review your major/minor requirements
5. **Graduation Fee**  
Payment may be accepted through the online portal or in person at the Registrar's office. (fee will be posted within 24 ours of your submission of your application for graduation). Please check the Registrar Graduation webpages for the current 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 adjusted 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.

\_\_\_\_\_ Submitted your Graduation Portfolio to the Program office by the announced deadline.

\_\_\_\_\_ Successfully completed at least two academic minors (at least one of which is from a Professional College).

\_\_\_\_\_ Satisfied any outstanding obligations to the university.

\_\_\_\_\_ Completed 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 February 2018, there are over 380 students pursuing the Professional Studies degree.

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

As of February 2018, approximately 3,200 students have earned the Professional Studies degree.

### ***5. How would you briefly describe the Professional Studies degree?***

The Professional Studies degree is an interdisciplinary degree program that allows students to create an individualized program of study tailored to the unique interests and needs of the student.

### ***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, often 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 and the value that prospective employee can add to their company.

Searching for the right vocation of the “perfect job” can be challenging. The University Counseling Center provides vocational testing, at no charge to the student. A trained

professional will review the results of the testing with the 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: [https://www.wcupa.edu/\\_services/stu.cou/](https://www.wcupa.edu/_services/stu.cou/)

Twardowski Career Development Center: [http://www.wcupa.edu/\\_services/STU.CAR/](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. He has been the director of the program since it began accepting students in the summer of 2002.

### **8. *Where is the program office located?***

The Professional Studies program office is located in Room 222 in the Lawrence Center. We share space with the Exploratory Studies Center. Students need to schedule appointments to meet with the Director. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 610-436-3548 or through emailing the office manager at [cpistritto@wcupa.edu](mailto:cpistritto@wcupa.edu).

During the first week of each semester, students are seen on a walk-in, first-come first-served basis (no appointments needed). Hours of availability for that week are sent to the majors via email and will also be posted on program social media sites.

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

<http://www.wcupa.edu/viceProvost/interdisciplinaryStudies/professionalStudies/>

## **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 or choose not to complete the requirements for that major for various reasons.

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

**Current WCU Students:** 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 will be expected to articulate the reason they feel Professional Studies is the best choice of major and how it will help them meet their educational and post-graduation goals. Once the intake interview is completed, students wishing to be admitted to the Professional Studies program must submit an application to change their major through the myWCU portal.

**Transfer Students:** Students applying to WCU as a transfer student from another accredited college or university may choose to apply for direct admission to the Professional Studies Program on the online application. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will notify the program of the application. A representative of the program will contact the student to arrange an intake interview. During the interview, the student will provide a rationale why they have chosen the Professional Studies major, what their ultimate post-graduation goals are and how the major will help them accomplish those goals. A review of their academic record will take place and a discussion of the direction the student wishes to go will serve as a framework for identifying areas of study and potential minor options. The program director will then make a recommendation on their admission to the Office of Undergraduate Admission, who make the final determination on acceptance. Offers of acceptance to WCU will come from Undergraduate Admissions only. Professional Studies may only make recommendations which are not binding on Admissions. Transfer applicants who do not take part in the intake interview process will not be admitted to the program.

## **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 refer to their Degree Progress Report on the myWCU portal and 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. These course categories mirror, to a great degree, the categories in the general education requirement. Courses taken to fulfill the general education requirement cannot also be used to meet the major breadth requirement.

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

- Science and Math (3 credits), from the following prefixes: BIO, CHE, CSC, CST, CSW, ESS, ENV, IND, MAT, PHY, SCB, SCE, SCI.
- Behavioral and Social Science (3 credits), from the following prefixes: ANT, ECO, EDP, GEO, PAX, PSC, PSY, SOC, WOS
- Humanities (3 credits) from the following prefixes: AMS, CLS, COM, CRW, ENG, HIS, JRN, LIT, PHI, WRH, 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 and math, 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. At least 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 selected from a list of “Professional” minors. The second minor may be from any academic program on campus.

Students will need to apply for each of the minors they wish to pursue, using the process available on the myWCU portal, similar to applying for the change of major. 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. The Professional Studies office maintains a current list of the minors, their advisors and contact information.

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

It is important to note that, for most minors, students must have a minimum cumulative grade point (CGPA) of average of 2.00. Many minors have requirements that exceed that 2.00 minimum CGPA and may also have other prerequisite course requirements. Some minors have pre-admission requirements that must be met before gaining admission to the minor. This reinforces the need to students to adequately research the minors they are considering and meet with the appropriate faculty member in the minor before choosing that minor. Students should understand the precise entry and graduation requirements for any minor chosen.

### ***18. What is a “Professional Minor?”***

At the time the Professional Studies Program was approved, professional minors came from what was then considered to be the professional colleges. 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 2116, the academic units were reorganized to more accurately reflect the institution’s mission, philosophy and strategic plan. All departments are part of one of five Colleges (Arts and Humanities, Business and Public Management, Education and Social Work, Health Sciences, and the Sciences and Mathematics.), and some departments were moved into a new college. In addition, there is the School of Music (part of the College of Arts and Humanities), which houses the various music minors. Some interdisciplinary minors are also located in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, a free standing academic unit which is also the current academic home of the Professional Studies program. Professional minors are aligned with the previous listing along with recent additions. A comprehensive, current list of all minors, listed by college and department, is found elsewhere in this handbook, and may also be accessed through the current online version of the undergraduate catalogue.

### ***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 current 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.

The Professional Studies office maintains a current list of the minors, their advisors and contact information.

***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 home 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 prospective minor department office, and that department's web page.

***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 to fulfill the minor requirement.

## **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.

*Ultimately, 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 are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor whenever they feel a need to do so.

Students are expected to 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 hold 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. Consultations with minor advisors prior to meeting with your major advisor is also wise. In addition, they should prepare a list of questions to be discussed at the session. Students should bring their Professional Studies folder with them to each advising meeting. That folder is issued to the student at the first meeting following submission of the formal change of major request online.

## **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 and is accessed through the myWCU portal. 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. The DPR will be reviewed with advisees at least once a semester during their academic advising sessions, usually prior to course enrollment for upcoming semesters and terms.

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.

For most Professional Studies majors, it effectively and accurately reflects progress to degree completion.

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 some Professional Studies major students. The DPR is useful and effective in the information it provides for the general education requirement, total adjusted credits, and cumulative grade point average for our major students. However, it is strongly recommended that students 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. For Professional Studies clearance, the Program Director will refer to the advising sheet and file notes to make the clearance determination.

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 KEEP ALL MATERIALS FROM ADVISING SESSIONS WITH ALL ADVISORS. DO NOT THROW ANYTHING OUT! USE THE FOLDER ISSUED BY YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISOR FOR THIS. REMEMBER TO BRING THE FOLDER WITH YOU TO EVERY ADVISING SESSION.**

## 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. Most Professional Studies majors wait to apply for graduation once their courses are scheduled for their final semester at WCU. Students should consult their major academic advisor on when it is best to submit the application.

Graduation applications are submitted online, via the myWCU portal. An email confirmation of the receipt of the application will be sent. The charge for the fee will be posted to the student's account online. A Bursar hold will also be posted on the account, which may create scheduling problems if not remedied.

Students must bear in mind that there are deadlines by which you must access the online graduation application. If that deadline is missed, students must then appear at the Registrar's office to apply in person, as the portal application is unavailable after the

deadline for that semester. Specific deadline dates are available in the Graduation section of the Registrar's website.

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 the graduation notes section of your Degree Progress Report on my WCU. The reasons will be identified along with contact information to address the deficiencies. Students who receive this graduation note notification should act quickly to address the deficiency. 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 earn their academic minors. The completed clearances are then submitted electronically. Once the list is submitted, all graduation notes will be added to the student's DPR.

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 School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies. Prior to the ceremony, students should

assemble at the location identified for SIGS majors. When SIGS 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 SIGS 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 the Degree Progress Report on 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. At that time, you will be able to order official transcripts reflecting your degree status. Any transcripts provided after this time will also reflect the awarded status. The diploma will be sent to you shortly after final clearance is granted. Please allow 3-4 weeks following your finals for your final term for your degree to be awarded. (for August graduates, 3-4 weeks following the first week of the fall semester for the process to run its course (may be longer following December graduation, due to the closure of the university for mid-year break)). Diplomas will take an additional 4-6 weeks from that date. If your degree is not awarded by 6 weeks following the completion of your final semester (or after the final day of the last summer session for August graduates), and the reason for the issue is NOT listed on your degree report, please contact the graduation analyst that handles the Professional Studies program clearances. *Please make sure your current mailing address is listed on MyWCU because this is where your diploma will be mailed. If this information is not up-to-date, then contact the Registrar's Dept.*

### ***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. Some useful links are: <https://www.wcupa.edu/registrar/graduation.aspx> and <https://www.wcupa.edu/registrar/Commencement/>

### ***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 current professional resume;
- A writing sample, which shows your best writing production. Ideally, this should be from a minor course, although it may come from any course you have taken at WCU.
- A reflection paper, through which you will tell your story of your college journey. Prompts will be provided for guidance.

The portfolio is due by the end of finals week for your graduation term. Summer graduates' portfolios are due by the end of finals for the third summer session. Portfolios are submitted electronically, via email attachments.

## **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 may also be sent via email to [cpistritto@wcupa.edu](mailto:cpistritto@wcupa.edu)

### ***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](mailto:bnorris@wcupa.edu).

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

### ***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 them 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.

### About the Program Director:

Bruce Norris is presently serving as the Director of the Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies: Professional Studies program. He has served as the director since the program's inception in the summer of 2002.

Professor Norris has been active as an academic advisor since he began his work in higher education in 1982. He is and has been involved in several initiatives to bring about an overall improvement in academic advising across the university. Currently, he is a member of the university's Committee for Advising Excellence. He was a member and Co-Chair of the former University Academic Advising Committee. He has given a number of presentations and workshops on academic advising issues to various constituencies on campus. In 2007, he was awarded a Diversity and Social Equity Grant from the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, funding a series of workshops to assist faculty academic advisors as they work with diverse groups of students on our campus.

Professor Norris has served on a number of university committees throughout his tenure at WCU. The most notable of these were the Strategic Planning and Accreditation Council (2 years), the Strategic Planning and Resource Council (served as co-chair for 5 years), Gender Equity for Athletics Committee (6 years), the Faculty Senate (3 years), as well as a large number of task groups, faculty and staff search committees. Presently, he is a member of the university's Athletics Advisory Board

Professor Norris is an active member of the National Academic Advising Association. He has attended several local, regional and national conferences and has made professional presentations at state, regional and national conferences. He has completed NACADA's Summer Academic Advising Institute (2002, in Colorado Springs), as well as the Advising Administrators Institute and Advising Assessment Workshop (both in St. Pete Beach, Florida in 2004). He served on the conference planning committee for the annual national conference in Baltimore in 2007, and has served on or assisted the planning committees for several regional conferences on academic advising. He coordinated the mentoring program for the Mid-Atlantic Region of NACADA, which also placed him on the Region Steering Committee. He currently serves as chair of NACADA's Annual Conference Advisory Board, and on the Administrative Division. His past service includes the Finance Committee, Faculty Academic Advisor Commission Steering Committee and their Awards Selection Committee. He is a current member of the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletes.

Professor Norris is part of a team which is developing and implementing the RAM Initiative (RAM: Real Achievement Matters) which will be housed in the Professional Studies Area. The Initiative is designed to provide access for individuals with mild intellectual disabilities to higher education. The team was awarded a grant for \$60,000 for start-up of the program, which plans to admit its first student cohort in Fall 2018. He is also a member of the Association for Interdisciplinary Studies.



Professor Norris joined the faculty of West Chester University in 1986. He was appointed to the faculty of the then Department of Physical Education (now Kinesiology) and taught in the Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training program. In 1992, he moved to the newly created Department of Sports Medicine. He taught various courses for Athletic Training majors, focusing primarily on the emergency management of athletic injury. In addition, he served as a clinical instructor for students during their athletic training clinical rotations and as an athletic trainer for a variety of university intercollegiate athletic teams. He was also an academic advisor for students in the Athletic Training major. He was a Certified Athletic Trainer through the National Athletic Trainers Association and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He is no longer active in the athletic training profession.

Among the highlights of his athletic training career was his involvement with the Sports Medicine Program of the United States Olympic Committee. He was appointed to serve as an athletic trainer to the United States Olympic Team for the 1992 Olympic Summer Games in Barcelona, Spain, the US team to the 1991 Summer World University Games in Sheffield, England, and the 1989 US Olympic Festival in Oklahoma City. During his experiences with the USOC, he provided athletic training support to men's gymnastics, men's field hockey, weightlifting, track and field, luge, ice hockey and canoeing teams.

Prior to coming to West Chester, Professor Norris was on the faculty of Towson State University (now known as Towson University) in the mid-80's and had also served as a health and physical education teacher and athletic trainer at Downingtown Senior High School (PA) in the late 70's.

Professor Norris is a proud alumnus of West Chester University. He graduated in 1978 (when the institution was known as West Chester State College) with a Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education, with a concentration in Athletic Training. While studying at WCSC, he was an active member of the Friars Society and of Alpha Phi Omega, the National Service Fraternity, as well as a four-year letterman on the track and field team. IN 1982, He earned a Master of Arts in Physical Education (Emphasis in Exercise Physiology) from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Away from WCU, Professor Norris is married and has three adult children. He is a former soccer referee through USSF and former youth soccer coach with the West Bradford Youth Association, where he also assisted in coaching baseball and basketball in the past. In his spare time, he and his wife love to go to the movies, watch English Premier League Football and to cycle on converted Rails to Trails throughout the region.

## 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	Brandywine Hall, Ground Floor	610-436-3349
Bursar	25 UNA, Rm. 050	610-436-2552
Counseling Center	Lawrence Center Rm. 241	610-436-2301
Financial Aid	25 UNA Room 025	610-436-2627
Graduate Studies	McKelvie Hall	610-436-2943
International Programs	Mitchell Hall, Rm. 320	610-436-3515
Learning Assistance/ Resource Center	Lawrence Center, Rm. 223	610-436-2535
Off Campus and Commuter Services	Sykes Student Union, Room 250	610-436-2984
Pre-Major Advising Center	Lawrence Center, Rm. 222	610-436-3505
Public Safety	Peoples Building	610-426-3311
Registrar	25 UNA, Rm. 020	610-436-3541
Residential Life/Student Housing	Lawrence Center, Rm. 202	610-436-3307
Service for Students with Disabilities	Lawrence Center, Rm. 223	610-436-3217
Service Learning and Volunteer Programs	Commonwealth Hall, Lower Level	610-436-3379
Social Equity	13/15 University Avenue, Rm. 100	610-436-2436
Student Affairs	Sykes Union, Rm. 238	610-436-3301
Student Conduct	Ruby Jones Hall, Rm. 200	610-436-3511

Student Health Services	Commonwealth Hall, Ground Floor (enter at Student Health Center)	610-436-2509
Student Leadership and Development	Sykes Student Union, Rm. 238	610-436-2117
Twardowski Career Development Center	Lawrence Center, Rm. 223	610-436-2501
Veteran Center	624 South High Street	610-436-2862
Center for Women and Gender Equity	Lawrence Center, Rm. 100	610-436-2122
Writing Center	Francis Harvey Green, Rm. 251	610-436-5664

## Notes

## General Education Requirements

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 \_\_\_\_\_

**All students are required to take a Diversity Course and an Interdisciplinary Course.**

For descriptions of these, see 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. (See back for list of classes.)

J Course \_\_\_\_\_

I Course \_\_\_\_\_

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

BIO 100	CHE 100, CHE 103	CSC 110	ESS 101, ESS 111	PHY 100, PHY 105	_____
BIO 110	CHE 107, CHE 160	CSC 115	ESS 112, ESS 130	PHY 123, PHY 130	_____
		CSC 141	ESS 170	PHY 140, PHY 170	_____
				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. **Approved courses are listed below:\***

ANT 101	ECO 111	GEO 101, GEO 103	PSC 100	PSY 100	SOC 200	_____
ANT 102	ECO 112	GEO 200, GEO 214	PSC 101		SOC 240	_____
ANT 103	ECO 200		PSC 213			_____

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

HIS 100, HIS 101, HIS 102	CLS 165, CLS 260, CLS 261	PHI 100, PHI 101, PHI 150	_____
HIS 150, HIS 151, HIS 152	LIT 100, LIT 165, LIT 219	PHI 180, PHI 206, PHI 207	_____
HIS 444	LIT 220	PHI 220, PHI 280, PHI 282	_____
		PHI 350	_____

**ARTS:** Select three credits from the following areas: art, cinematography, dance, music, photography and theatre. **Approved courses are listed below:\***

ARH 101, ARH 103	DAN 132, DAN 133	EGE 405	MDA 240	MTC 110	_____
ARH 104, ARH 210	DAN 134, DAN 135	ESP 305	MHL 121	SPA 313	_____
ARH 211	DAN 136, DAN 137	ESP 309	MHL 125	THA 101	_____
ART 106, ART 111	DAN 138, DAN 150	FLM 200	MHL 210	THA 103	_____
ART 113, ART 228	DAN 210	GER 405	MHL 312	THA 212	_____
ART 231			MHL 325		_____

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Transfer xxx199 courses may be used in the appropriate category.*

**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:

### **MATH, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY**

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

### **BEHAVIORAL & SOCIAL SCIENCE**

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

ANT, ECO, EDP, GEO, PAX, PSC, PSY, SOC, WOS

\_\_\_\_\_

### **HUMANITIES**

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Additional Distributive Requirements**

Select any **two** courses (totaling six credits) from the Math/Science/Technology, Behavioral & Social Sciences, Humanities or one of the following prefixes:

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

\_\_\_\_\_

**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.

**You must also take 30 credits of Electives at the 300-400 Level. These may include courses that satisfy a minor requirement:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**You must also take 27 Credits of Major Electives, 100 level or higher. These may include courses that satisfy minor requirements:\***

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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