

# LIBERAL ARTS: GENERAL STUDIES

## **Why Choose a General Studies Degree?**

The Liberal Arts General Studies degree is designed for students who find that the degrees offered by CMU do not meet their specific academic interest or career needs. Students can customize their education by designing an interdisciplinary major to serve specific and well-articulated educational goals.

## **The Process**

As the General Studies program sheet explains, “Before declaring a Liberal Arts—General Studies major, the student must have the permission of an academic advisor, who will also work with the student in constructing an appropriate course of study and Capstone Experience.” To facilitate the discussion with your academic advisor or supervising professor, please follow this process:

1. Access a copy of the Liberal Arts program sheet available on the CMU website (Select “Academics” then select “Academic Programs” then find “Liberal Arts,” then choose “General Studies Concentration.”)
2. Write a proposal which includes the following elements:
  - Describe your career/academic goals as well as the key intellectual and applied skills you desire to acquire.
  - Explain why no other CMU major helps you achieve those goals or acquire the skills, abilities, or knowledge base you describe above.
  - Declare your desired major or field of study. Give it a name. For example, some students have created majors like “International Marketing,” “Gender Studies,” “Criminal Psychology,” “Studies in Pop Culture,” “Biological Illustration,” etc.
  - Describe how this new major will help you acquire the skills/knowledge described above.
3. With this proposal in hand, choose a supervising professor in your primary area of study. This professor will help you choose appropriate courses that cohere and contribute to your career/academic goals, advise you until you graduate, and guide you through the capstone experience. Confer with your supervising professor when you make changes to the plan.