

# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

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The departments and programs of the College of Liberal Arts explore what it means to be human, how people construct identities and institutions, and how individuals and groups interact over time—in communities, in cultures, and in nations. The college includes those disciplines customarily identified as the humanities and those generally identified as the social sciences, with each departmental discipline having a developed set of questions, methods and results. The College of Liberal Arts also hosts a variety of interdisciplinary programs that frame their studies not by discipline but by topic, bringing to bear the insights of multiple disciplinary tools and perspectives. Because it contains many of the fundamental disciplines of higher education, the college contributes heavily to the Core Curriculum course offerings of Towson University.

Study in the College of Liberal Arts develops those abilities and habits of mind associated with a liberal education. Students learn how to examine evidence carefully, how to represent ideas fully and fairly, and how to analyze information and construct claims. They learn to express themselves clearly and creatively, to weigh complexities of argument and circumstance in reaching informed judgments, and to appreciate the rich diversity of human culture. The cultivation of such abilities prepares students for richer lives both personally and professionally and equips liberal arts graduates to meet the highest tests of democratic citizenship.

The College of Liberal Arts limits the size of its classes whenever possible to allow greater faculty-student interaction, an emphasis on writing and constructive feedback, and responsiveness to individual students. Learning may take place in many settings and through varied forms of interaction. The college supports exploration of different teaching formats, creative uses of technology, experience beyond the classroom, and work with peers as important bases for the expansion of student learning.

Faculty are active scholars who participate in professional meetings, publish articles and books, conduct seminars or workshops, collaborate with community organizations, and engage in research and intellectual exchange regionally, nationally and internationally. Such work not only invigorates the classroom but also helps to create opportunities for students. More advanced students may undertake work under the guidance of or in collaboration with faculty on campus, perhaps as part of a grant project, as an independent study, or as a senior thesis. Internships or service-learning opportunities also reflect arenas of faculty engagement. Students join travel programs led by a faculty member or Study Abroad & Away Office because of opportunities created through faculty contacts. The college seeks to build an intellectual and civic life that encompasses students and faculty alike.

Employers often list among the traits they most desire in their employees the ability to write clearly and effectively, the ability to analyze a problem and to pursue solutions with good judgment, the ability to work with others in groups, and the ability to understand and to appreciate cultural differences. Democratic government requires a citizenry that is able to engage in civil discourse, to understand and evaluate ideas, and to make choices in an environment of complexity. Individual appreciation of much that surrounds us in American and global culture flourishes through a

recognition of pattern, precedent, reference and meaning. The demands of all of these spheres are addressed by an education in the liberal arts. In both its undergraduate and graduate programs, the College of Liberal Arts seeks to convey knowledge and to sharpen the tools of thought to aid students in constructing their personal, professional and civic lives. We invite you to join us in this voyage of creation and discovery.