Proposal to Allow Full Time Students in the Master of Liberal Studies and Diploma in Liberal Studies Programs

Approved by the Faculty Senate
January 29, 2020
Rice University

Proposal to Change an Existing Degree

Master of Liberal Studies and Diploma in Liberal Studies

Glasscock School of Continuing Studies
Revised 11-5-2019
The Glasscock School of Continuing Studies requests Graduate Council endorsement for an administrative change to their existing part-time Master of Liberal Studies and Diploma in Liberal Studies to allow full-time course of study for students admitted to these programs. The admissions, curriculum, and graduation requirements for both degrees will not change.

**Rationale for Full-Time Course of Study**

In order to advance the Rice University Vision for the Second Century, Second Decade, the Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) and Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) programs aim to *Expand Access, Diversity and Inclusiveness*. Therefore, we seek support from the Rice Graduate Council to make a minor administrative change to allow a full-time course of study for our Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) and Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) programs.

Historically, our MLS and DLS programs have attracted non-traditional graduate students who work full-time, are retired, or have busy personal lives. Recently, at Rice and at our peer institution programs, we have begun to attract a younger student demographic who are more recent graduates. These students are more interested in career entry or early career advancement and desire a full-time course of study to complete their degree requirements in a more accelerated plan of study. Additionally, we have begun to attract more students who need a master’s degree to satisfy career advancement, but have flexibility of choice in the type of masters they seek.

Because we currently do not offer a full-time plan of study, we lose these prospective students to other universities who can offer a more expedited route to degree completion. Additionally, current students who wish to enroll in more than 6 credit hours in any given semester are constrained from doing so.

Allowing the program to offer both part-time and full-time plans of study will broaden our student market. This will allow our non-traditional students the opportunity to continue on their current part-time paths which works well with their career schedules. Additionally, it will allow our more traditional students an accelerated route to degree completion. With the recent adoption of the standard Rice academic calendar, full-time students would gain access to the full benefits of federal financial aid.

This minor change to our administrative structure will allow us to attract a more diverse student population into our programs. Should the change also increase the size of our student body, it would also allow us to offer more courses per semester while maintaining our small class sizes. A small class size (8-12) is imperative for rich discussion and student engagement.

**Comparable Programs**

All local and most peer institution Graduate Liberal Studies Programs offer both part-time and full-time courses of study for their students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>GRE Required</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Full/Part Options</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice University</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>PT only</td>
<td>Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University St. Thomas</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>PT, FT</td>
<td>Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Baptist University</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>PT, FT</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMU*</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>PT, FT</td>
<td>Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>PT, FT</td>
<td>Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning
The curriculum, student learning outcomes, and program assessment plans will not be affected by this minor administrative change.

Faculty and Courses
Faculty and courses will not be affected by this minor administrative change. The program recruits faculty from the Rice academic departments, Rice emeriti professors, and visiting professors from other universities.

Resources, Financial Support and Administration
Because we do not expect an overwhelming number of current students to take advantage of a full-time study option, no new or additional resources will be required to support students. The part-time study option will still be available and we expect most students to take advantage of the flexibility that part-time study offers. On average, we expect no more than 5 new students each year into our program who wish to study full-time.

This change is not expected to impact other professional master's or MA programs at Rice because of the nature of the students that each of these programs attract. Our students are interested in liberal arts curriculum because of the diversity in coursework, interdisciplinary nature of the classes, and the general professional skills that they develop, including research methodologies, oral and written communication, and analytical thinking. These skills can benefit any professional, regardless of their career path. Other professional and MA programs at Rice attract students with very content-specific professional goals and aspirations whereas the MLS and DLS students have very broad interdisciplinary interests.

The GLS Director, who has over 25 years of experience in higher education program and student management, advises prospective students. Most applicants attend an information session where program goals, learning objectives, degree requirements, curriculum, and admissions requirements are reviewed in detail. Prospective students are invited to visit a current class to ensure that the applicant has a solid understanding of the course and degree expectations. This also gives the student an opportunity to meet faculty and current students in the program.

According to data from Rice University Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website, students enrolled in the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies make up only 4% of the total master’s degree student population at Rice University. This data also includes students enrolled in the Glasscock School’s Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program, so the MLS numbers are actually lower. We do not expect this percentage of overall master’s students to change significantly with this administrative change.
Tuition for both MLS and DLS is comparable to other professional master’s programs at Rice. In addition to tuition, MLS and DLS students pay a Student Activity Fee ($50) and the Graduate Student Association (GSA) fees ($22) each semester.

### Rice University Graduate Tuition 2019-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Per Course</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Annual</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition for Graduate Programs</td>
<td>8055</td>
<td>24,165</td>
<td>48,330</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Architecture</td>
<td>5394</td>
<td>16,180</td>
<td>32,360</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GEORGE R. BROWN SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering Professional Master’s</td>
<td>8001</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shepherd School of Music</td>
<td>4809</td>
<td>14,425</td>
<td>28,850</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WIESS SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Cost 1</td>
<td>Cost 2</td>
<td>Cost 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Science Master’s*</td>
<td>6333</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>57,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Science Teaching**</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Energy Economics</td>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>58,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Human-Computer Interaction &amp; Human Factors</td>
<td>17,500</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Global Affairs***</td>
<td>6168</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>74,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JONES GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>MBA for Professionals (evenings)</td>
<td>26,937</td>
<td>53,875</td>
<td>107,750</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GLASSCOCK SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Teaching</td>
<td>2900</td>
<td></td>
<td>34,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Liberal Studies (FT option)</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td></td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in Liberal Studies (FT option)</td>
<td>3100</td>
<td></td>
<td>31,000</td>
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</table>

https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/student-services-organizations/tuition-fees-expenses/
https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-opportunities/degree-chart/

* Three-semester program per Dagmar Beck
* * According to the MST student handbook, Rice offers a special discounted teacher tuition rate - only $1200 plus fees for each 3-hour class. http://space.rice.edu/MST/links/MST_Handbook.pdf

*** One year program per Abbey Godley

**Admission**
Admission to the Master of Liberal Studies and Diploma in Liberal Studies programs will remain the same and are comparable to other graduate degree programs at Rice University and peer institution graduate liberal studies programs across the country (See Appendix A).

The MLS program requires the following for admission:

- Completion of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education with a 3.0 GPA
- Completed Application for Admission (Slate)
- $85 non-refundable application fee
- Current resume
- Official transcripts from all previous colleges or universities attended
- Two letters of recommendation
- Personal statement outlining academic and/or professional objectives in applying to the MLS program at various influences that have been important in the applicant’s intellectual development
- Writing sample that demonstrates the applicant’s ability to think and write critically; demonstrates coherent and concise arguments; provides support for assertions made; leads to a logical, meaningful and clearly stated conclusion; and properly credits all ideas and quotes from sources. Applicants are given three essay topic choices (one each in humanities, social sciences and natural sciences) and must choose one topic and prepare a four to five page essay
- Application interview
The DLS program requires the following for admission:

- A 3.5 GPA in successfully-concluded postgraduate degree work from the Rice MLS program; or a liberal arts/liberal studies graduate degree program at an Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs (AGLSP) member institution; or other post-graduate degrees that are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Completed Application for Admission (Slate)
- $85 non-refundable application fee
- Current resume
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- Two letters of recommendation
- Personal statement describing what the applicant considers the most important steps in their life that have prepared them for the study of the two focus disciplines chosen for DLS study and interdisciplinary research. The applicant must include the course background in each of the two focus disciplines chosen, including courses taken in each discipline in the MLS program. The applicant will discuss also examples of any interdisciplinary research (or teaching or reading, etc.) already done involving the two focus disciplines.
- Proposal for DLS study describing how the applicant plans to integrate the focus disciplines chosen in an interdisciplinary way.
- Writing sample which provides solid evident of writing ability by submitting one of the following:
  - An interdisciplinary paper from a post-baccalaureate program, e.g. MLS/MALS;
  - An interdisciplinary research paper not from a post-baccalaureate program;
  - A single-discipline research paper from a post-baccalaureate program, e.g. MLS/MALS;
  - A single-discipline research paper not from a post-baccalaureate program.
- Admission interview

All applications are reviewed by the GLS Faculty Steering Committee (See Appendix B for committee membership) which makes all admissions decisions for both programs.

Degree Requirements
Degree requirements for the Master of Liberal Studies and Diploma in Liberal Studies programs will not be affected by this administrative change.

Launch
Since no new faculty, courses, or resources will be required, current students and newly admitted students will immediately be able to take advantage of flexible course of study if approved by the Faculty Senate.

Support
Letters of support expected from the following MLS teaching faculty and will be forwarded upon receipt:

- Matthias Henze, Isla Carroll & Percy E. Turner Professor of Biblical Studies, Director of the Program in Jewish Studies, Member of the Graduate Liberal Studies Faculty Steering Committee.
- Alma Novotny, Lecturer of Biochemistry & Cell Biology, BioSciences.
History of Graduate Liberal Studies @ Rice University

The Rice Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) program was developed in consultation with a group of distinguished Rice faculty members. Following full approval by the Rice Faculty Council, the MLS program began offering courses in fall 2005. Since that time, the program has admitted more than 260 students, developed more than 95 courses, recruited more than 40 faculty members and graduated 150 students.

Based on alumni requests for advanced or continued study beyond the MLS, the post-master's Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) was developed and approved by the Rice Faculty Senate in spring 2017. DLS admitted its first class of students of 6 students in fall 2017 and currently has 9 active students. DLS gives our alumni an opportunity to take advantage of their academic investment in the MLS program and allows those individuals and other well-prepared applicants to deepen their knowledge in a more limited interdisciplinary area, hone their research and writing skills further and thus lay the foundation for a potentially richer contribution to their community.

Governance of both programs is the responsibility of the Faculty Steering Committee which is responsible for overseeing all academic matters including admissions, curriculum and program policies. The program averages about 60-65 students each year along with several alumni who return each year to audit classes.

Graduate Liberal Studies is a full member of the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs (AGLSP) and, as of June 2018, hosts the National Office of this academic organization that has approximately 60 member institutions in the United States and Canada.

Graduate Liberal Studies contributes to the mission of Rice and the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies by providing rigorous academic degree programs for adults who, based on a love of learning, desire a graduate-level education in the liberal arts. The Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) program accomplishes this by offering students a broad education in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. The Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) program gives students an opportunity to build on their foundation of the broader perspectives, gained from the MLS or other graduate liberal studies program, to deepen their knowledge by means of more focused but still interdisciplinary research.
APPENDIX A: Peer Institution Graduate Liberal Studies Programs Admissions Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>GRE</th>
<th>Resume</th>
<th>Personal Statement</th>
<th>Essays</th>
<th>Letters of Rec</th>
<th>Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice University</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMU*</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown*</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johns Hopkins</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Chicago</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wesleyan</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Offers Doctoral program in Liberal Studies
APPENDIX B GRADUATE LIBERAL STUDIES FACULTY STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

BS (1968) University of South Alabama; MS (1970) University of New Mexico; PhD (1972) Florida State University

Barrett, Deborah.  Professor in the Practice, Rice University.
BA (1972) University of Houston; MA (1977) University of Houston; PhD (1983) Rice University

Bruce, Robert Gray Jr.  Dean, Glasscock School of Continuing Studies and Adjunct Professor of Humanities in English, Rice University

Campana, Joseph.  Alan Dugald McKillop Professor of English, Rice University.

Fleisher, Jeffrey.  Associate Professor of Anthropology, Rice University
BA (1992) University of Virginia; MA (1997) University of Virginia; PhD (2003) University of Virginia

Gigliotti, Jennifer.  Senior Associate Dean and Clinical Assistant Professor in Education, Glasscock School of Continuing Studies, Rice University.
BS (1997) Ohio State University; MEd (1999) Ohio State University; EdD (2010) University of Houston

Henze, Matthias.  Isla Carroll & Percy E. Turner Professor of Biblical Studies and Professor of Religion, Rice University.

Kemmer, Suzanne.  Associate Professor of Linguistics and Cognitive Sciences, Rice University.

Sanchez, Rebecca.  Director, Graduate Liberal Studies, Glasscock School of Continuing Studies, Rice University
BS (1992) Texas A&M University; MS (1998) Texas A&M University

Sass, Ronald.  Harry C. and Olga Keith Wiess Professor Emeritus of Natural Sciences, Rice University.
BA (1954) Augustana College; PhD (1957) University of Southern California

Stoll, Richard, Chair.  Albert Thomas Professor of Political Science, Rice University
A.B. (1974) University of Rochester; PhD (1979) University of Michigan
April D. DeConick  
Isla Carroll and Percy E. Turner Professor of Biblical Studies  
Chair, Graduate Council  
Rice University  
6100 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77005  

September 17, 2019  

Dear Dr. DeConick,  
For a number of years, I have been actively involved in the Master of Liberal Studies and Diploma in Liberal Studies programs at Rice's Glasscock School of Continuing Studies. It continues to be a great pleasure to teach in both programs: Students are highly motivated to learn, it is a pleasure to be with our students, and it is immensely meaningful to our students to be enrolled at Rice.  

I am writing to lend my support to a minor, administrative change: To add to the existing programs a full-time course of study (I confess that I was surprised to learn that we are not already offering this track as an option). This change will make our programs more accessible to our students, and it makes Rice more competitive with our peer institutions. I therefore fully support it.  

With kind regards,  

Matthias Henze  
Isla Carroll and Percy E. Turner Professor of Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism  
Founding Director, Program in Jewish Studies
September 23, 2019

Rice Graduate Council
Rice University
P. O. Box 1892
Houston, Texas 77251-1892

Dear Council Members:

It has been my privilege to have taught in Continuing Studies with the Master’s in Liberal Studies for over ten years. During that time I have continued to increase my admiration for the dedication of our students, faculty and staff.

I would like to support our students further by increasing the flexibility of their progress to the Master and Diploma degrees by permitting accelerated plans of study. In addition to the justifications provided in the proposal, I would like to add one more. Our students sometimes have their progress interrupted or complicated by family or job responsibilities that require them to move from the Houston area, either temporarily or permanently. The ability of students to make more rapid progress at times when they have the freedom to do so is likely to increase our graduation rates and facilitate more rapid career advancements of our students.

In addition to supporting the change in principle, I would also like to express my willingness to provide additional support through my own teaching, student engagement and the recruiting of additional highly qualified instructors as colleagues. Rice’s Liberal Studies program, with its unusual science component, provides a unique opportunity to educate a broad range of citizens and a well-deserved enhancement to Rice’s reputation for excellence and community service.

Sincerely yours,

Alma Moon Novotny
Lecturer