

DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES

Location: TAGS 118

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Department Mission

The Department of University Studies is dedicated to advancing the academic and professional goals of our students. We offer unique and innovative degree plans that allow our diverse student body the ability to customize their coursework, acquire advanced interdisciplinary knowledge, cultivate critical thinking skills, and establish a pathway toward lifelong learning. Through our portfolio courses, faculty help students discover, refine, and market their strengths for career success. Our team of advisors draws from a wealth of knowledge and experience to guide students toward academic and professional achievement. University Studies graduates are ready to meet the challenges and needs of today's workforce and are prepared for advanced degree programs.

Overview and History

The Department of University Studies houses the University Studies bachelor's degree program. Offered as both a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Arts, University Studies is an innovative and marketable multidisciplinary program of study with various concentrations. The program was implemented for the Spring 2021 semester during the 2020-2021 catalog year and consolidated the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) and Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) programs under the Multidisciplinary concentration, which was made available to students immediately. Additional concentrations are currently available and in development so that our students will have many opportunities to select the best degree for their personal, academic, and career goals. Students who were under the then BAAS and BGS programs were encouraged, but not required, to transition to the University Studies program. The degree is offered both online and on-campus through the Departmental program and entirely online through the LU Online program.

Academic Policies

Graduation Requirements

In addition to the degree requirements stated in the Lamar University catalog (<https://client-snap.dev8.leepfrog.com/lamar/www.lamar.edu/catalog/undergraduate-academic-policies/>), University Studies students must satisfy the following for graduation:

- a. Earn a C or better in any course applied to the advanced electives block; earning a C or better in ENGL 1301 Composition I and ENGL 1302 Composition II in the core is strongly encouraged.

- b. Earn at least 12 hours of senior-level credit within the advanced electives block.

ENGL 3311 Exceptions

Any University Studies senior may, at the discretion of their academic advisor, substitute one of the following courses for ENGL 3311 Professional Writing^{1,2}:

- ENGL 3310 Technical Report Writing^{1,2}
- ENGL 3326 Advanced Expository Writing²
- BCOM 3350 Business Communications
- COMM 3301 Intercultural Communication
- COMM 3315 Advanced Public Speaking²
- COMM 3320 Communicating in Families
- COMM 3340 Interviewing
- COMM 3390 Conflict Management and Small Group Communication²
- COMM 4302 Exploring and Communicating Forgiveness
- COMM 4365 Social Media Campaigns
- COMM 4381 Political Communication

Any student changing to University Studies who has already completed one of the following courses with a C or better may use that completed course in lieu of ENGL 3311 Professional Writing^{1,2} to satisfy University Studies degree requirements:

- ENGL 3310 Technical Report Writing^{1,2}
- ENGL 3326 Advanced Expository Writing²
- BCOM 3350 Business Communications
- COMM 3301 Intercultural Communication
- COMM 3315 Advanced Public Speaking²
- COMM 3320 Communicating in Families
- COMM 3340 Interviewing
- COMM 3390 Conflict Management and Small Group Communication²
- COMM 4302 Exploring and Communicating Forgiveness
- COMM 4365 Social Media Campaigns
- COMM 4381 Political Communication

1 ENGL 3310 Technical Report Writing and ENGL 3311 Professional Writing cannot both apply to a degree in order to satisfy degree requirements.

2 Has pre-requisites.

AASC Course Waivers

The AASC courses prepare students for their academic and professional careers in different ways. AASC 3301 Lifelong Learning and Portfolio Development, which requires a D or better in both ENGL 1301 Composition I and ENGL 1302 Composition II, best benefits a student when taken early in the student's advanced coursework study while AASC 4301 Senior Seminar serves as both a degree capstone and a career preparation course. Thus, students take AASC 4301 Senior Seminar the semester of their planned graduation (if the student intends to graduate after successful completion of a mini term, s/he will take 4301 the semester immediately before the mini term as AASC 4301 Senior Seminar is not offered during mini terms). Additionally, the nature of these 2 courses necessitates that they be taken separately.

The AASC 3301 Lifelong Learning and Portfolio Development course may be waived, however, for any student who has, at the time of the student's

entrance into the University Studies degree program, 15 or fewer hours remaining for degree completion; in lieu of AASC 3301 Lifelong Learning and Portfolio Development, the student can select an appropriate junior or senior level, 3-credit hour course to fulfill degree requirements.

Finally, for a student changing to University Studies, AASC 3301 Lifelong Learning and Portfolio Development, AASC 4301 Senior Seminar, and ENGL 3311 Professional Writing may be waived **only if** the student can graduate the current semester. Courses currently in-progress can be used to obtain this waiver. However, if in-progress courses are not successfully completed, this waiver may be rescinded; any decisions regarding this waiver will be determined by the Department of University Studies on a case-by-case basis and is final.

Minors

A minor cannot be declared under any University Studies concentration.

Business Coursework Credit Limit

University Studies will honor the following College of Business policy regarding excessive Business hours (<https://www.lamar.edu/business/undergraduate-degrees/minor-program-in-business.html>).

"In keeping with the spirit of a Minor, you must have less than 25 percent of their total curriculum in Business subjects. This 25 percent restriction also applies to all students who are not registered for a major in the College of Business but wish to have any business emphasis or concentration."

Business courses that are not subject to this limitation are those Business courses applied to the student's general core curriculum and FINC 3306 Personal Finance, and BCOM 3350 Business Communications.

Physical Activity Credit Limit

At most, 6 hours of physical activity credits can be applied to a University Studies concentration. A physical activity course is one in which a student engages in the kinetic exercise only and no theory, history, or other academic knowledge is presented. Military basic training is not considered a physical activity course.

Effective until census day for Fall full term 2021, however, any BAAS student who transitions to the University Studies—Multidisciplinary concentration will be allowed to apply up to 8 hours of previously earned physical activity credit to the University Studies—Multidisciplinary concentration.

Technical and Prior Experiential Learning Credit

The University Studies bachelor's degree program can accept technical credit provided the credit satisfies the University's technical credit policy (<https://www.lamar.edu/catalog/undergraduate-admissions/index.html#transfereval> (<https://www.lamar.edu/catalog/undergraduate-admissions/#transfereval>)). Technical credit can be applied to the University Studies—Multidisciplinary concentration without review. However, technical credit applied to any other University Studies concentration is subject to departmental review and approval.

The University Studies program also allows students with substantial work experience the unique opportunity to potentially translate their knowledge into academic credit via prior experiential learning credit (PELC). In order to do so, students must enroll in and successfully complete AASC 3102 Narrative for Prior Experiential Learning Credit—Prior Experiential Learning. In this course, students are directed through the organization of a written portfolio that describes in detail what they have learned. Upon satisfactory completion of AASC 3102 Narrative for

Prior Experiential Learning Credit, students can submit their portfolios for credit evaluation (please note that PELC is not guaranteed). If a portfolio demonstrates a student's college-level learning, the evaluation committee will determine the number and level of credit hours to be awarded. The following applies for PELC awards:

- a. At most, 24 hours of PELC credit with a maximum of 12 hours of upper (3000) level credit can be awarded.
 - i. For students pursuing the Multidisciplinary track, advanced level PELC can apply to the general or advanced electives block
 - ii. For students pursuing a University Studies concentration other than Multidisciplinary, advanced level PELC can apply only to the general electives block since advanced PELC cannot apply to academic areas
- b. Credit is applied en bloc to the student's Lamar transcript.
- c. PELC can apply to any University Studies concentration.
- d. If credit is awarded, it will appear as transfer credit on a student's transcript; thus, the maximum amount of credit that can be awarded is further limited by a student's total transfer hours.
- e. The evaluation committee comprises the AASC 3102 Narrative for Prior Experiential Learning Credit course instructor, the University Studies Academic Advisory Committee (USAAC), and the University Studies Department Chair; thus, any PELC award is final and incontestable.
- f. AASC 3102 Narrative for Prior Experiential Learning Credit can be taken only once if a portfolio is submitted for evaluation.

Please note that PELC **cannot** be combined with technical credit; if a student has already applied technical credit toward a degree, s/he is ineligible for the PELC. Conversely, if a student receives a PELC award, no technical credit can be applied to her/his University Studies degree.

University Studies as a Second Degree/Major

A student may want to earn a University Studies concentration as a second baccalaureate degree or simultaneously with another major.

The following hold for any such student:

- a. Any student who has previously earned a BAAS, BGS, or their equivalents may not earn the BS in University Studies—Multidisciplinary as a second degree. The student may earn an alternate University Studies concentration if the declared concentration degree is "significantly different" from the student's previous BAAS, BGS, or BAAS/BGS equivalent degree(s).
- b. No student may declare the BS in University Studies—Multidisciplinary as her/his major simultaneously with another major; however, a student may declare a second major with another University Studies concentration provided the second degree is "significantly different" from the primary degree. At least 30 hours applied to the second degree must be exclusive to that concentration degree.
- c. No student may pursue and/or earn any two University Studies degrees of different concentrations simultaneously or separately as they are not "significantly different".

The University Studies Department will determine if a degree/major is "significantly different". In addition, a student must satisfy the requirements for earning a second degree/major as well as any requirements specific to the declared University Studies concentration. The University Studies - Multidisciplinary concentration does not have a minimum GPA requirement for entrance or matriculation purposes; however, all other University Studies concentrations require students to

have a cumulative Lamar University GPA of 2.0 or higher to enter and/or matriculate under the respective concentration. Any exception will be determined by the Department Chair or Director of Advising.

Programs

- University Studies (B.S.) Ethnicity, Race and Gender Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-ethnicity-race-gender-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Global Health Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-global-health-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Health Sciences Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-health-sciences-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Human Development Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-human-development-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Multidisciplinary Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-multidisciplinary-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Organizational Leadership Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-organizational-leadership-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Social and Behavioral Sciences Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-social-behavioral-sciences-concentration/>)
 - University Studies (B.S.) Supply Chain Management Concentration (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/university-studies-bs-supply-chain-management-concentration/>)
- **Director of Advising:** Rachel Klauss
 - **Faculty:** Mel Ervin, Theresa Mayper
 - **Department Senior Advisor:** Tina Rich
 - **Department Advisor:** Katherine McAfee
 - **Department Administrative Specialist:** Crystal Reed
 - **LU Online Academic Advisor Senior:** Stephanie Allen
 - **LU Online Academic Coordinator:** Joel Laningham
 - **UAC Academic Advising Team:**
 - University Studies Multidisciplinary - advising-multi@lamar.edu (<https://catalog.lamar.edu/college-arts-sciences/university-studies/advising-multi@lamar.edu>)
 - Organizational Leadership - advising-businessindustry@lamar.edu
 - Race and Gender, Global Health, Health Sciences, Human Development, Social & Behavioral Sciences - advising-publicservice@lamar.edu
 - Supply Chain Management - advising-stem@lamar.edu