

**LIBERAL STUDIES 4960: SENIOR SEMINAR  
FALL 2013, EILEEN KERR - INSTRUCTOR**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**TEXTBOOKS**

The two books that are RECOMMENDED for the course are:

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition

*Cliff's Test Prep CSET Multiple Subjects*, 2nd edition

**PREREQUISITES**

The prerequisites for this course are:

- A passing grade in Liberal Studies 3000 as evidenced by Portfolio Evaluation Form (if you don't have a portfolio form from 3000, please check with me so we can determine your eligibility for the course)
- Successful completion of all subject matter courses or concurrent enrollment in final courses

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

Liberal Studies 4960 is the capstone course in the Liberal Studies major, and provides students with the chance to reflect on their liberal arts education. Students will be required to demonstrate both their ability to integrate studies across disciplines as well as their competencies within those disciplines. It also provides the opportunity for senior liberal studies majors to demonstrate their learning and growth, and to reflect on their educational experiences and their futures as teaching professionals. Competency in all subject matter areas is required to pass this course.

Through this course, students will:

- demonstrate subject matter competency
- demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize information that connects two or more subject matter areas
- demonstrate information gathering and research skills by utilizing multiple print and electronic sources in preparation for oral and written work
- apply proper supporting materials and adequate detail for clarification of ideas in oral and written presentations
- demonstrate effective oral presentation skills, including skill in creating and appropriate use of multimedia aids and appropriate language
- demonstrate effective interviewing skills

**GENERAL POLICIES**

*Academic Integrity*

I expect that all work you submit will be your own. Your name on an assignment is taken as assurance that the work in that assignment reflects your own thoughts and study, and was produced without outside assistance. When you use another's ideas or words (as when you quote from an article or a textbook), you must acknowledge your source. Any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will mean an immediate "0" on the assignment and possibly an "F" in the course.

*Due Date Policies*

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated on the schedule. All written assignments must be turned in as hardcopy; no email submissions will be accepted unless specifically indicated on the schedule.

Points will be deducted for late work. Assignments more than a week late will not be accepted. Presentations MUST be completed on the date assigned. No late presentations are allowed.

*Attendance*

Part of your semester grade is based on your participation in class. Participation includes being prepared for class, careful listening, and engagement in the subject under discussion. In order to participate, you must be here, so attendance is required. Absence for any reason will lower your attendance grade. Tardy students and those leaving class early will lose attendance credit. I expect you to be on time and present for the entire class. On days when you meet in groups, if you are absent you must arrange an alternative meeting time with your group members. Attendance on presentation days is mandatory; it is important that you be present to serve as an involved audience and evaluate your classmates. All cellphones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class.

## **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS**

The main purpose of this class is to assess your subject matter competency and readiness to enter the credential program as a graduate student. To that end, you will be completing several major projects that will demonstrate your competencies. In addition, you will participate in a formal interview that takes the place of an entrance interview into the CSU Stanislaus credential program.

### ***Subject Matter Competency***

There are two major assignments that will demonstrate your subject matter competency: completion of your portfolio and your integrative research project and presentation.

#### *The Portfolio*

The portfolio in 4960 involves completion of the portfolio that you have been working on throughout your liberal studies major. The sections that are still outstanding are the final elements of the tab, Personal Identity as a Teacher, the tab, Subject Matter Competency, the tab, Technology, and Integrated Learning. You will also complete and update your portfolio introduction, table of contents and title page.

The sections in the portfolio that will demonstrate subject matter competency is the Subject Matter Competency tab and the Integrated Learning tab. A full description of this assignment is attached to the back of the syllabus.

PLEASE NOTE: Some of you may not have a physical portfolio, or only portions of a completed portfolio. If this is the case for you, please notify me and we will work out the specifics of how you will complete the course requirements in a way that is most effective for your learning and completion of the course.

#### *Research Project and Presentations*

You will also engage in a group project with up to two other class members on an integrative research project and presentation which will also demonstrate your subject matter competency. In this project you will demonstrate your ability to integrate three different subject areas into a comprehensive and coherent 40 minute presentation. A full description of this assignment is attached to the end of the syllabus.

### ***Oral Defense/Interview***

Each student will participate in an interview for a hypothetical elementary school teaching position. The interview will be conducted by classmates and the instructor. Students will be expected to prepare for the interview and also act as a member of the interview committee. A full description of this assignment is attached to the end of the syllabus.

## **GRADING POLICIES**

This course is graded on a standard point scale with 90% of 500 points an A, 80-89% a B and so forth. Your semester grade will be determined by successful completion of the following elements of the course. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class.

Class Attendance and Participation	100 points
Subject Matter Preparation	50 points
Peer Evaluations	50 points
Interview	50 points
Portfolio	
subject matter competency	60 points
project presentation	150 points

other (on time/completeness) 40 points  
**TOTAL POINTS** **500 POINTS**

### **EXIT SURVEY**

Midway through the semester, you will be invited to complete an online survey about the Liberal Studies program as a whole. Your responses are anonymous. I will get a list of the students who completed the survey, but will not see your specific responses. You will receive 10 extra credit points for completing the survey. The Liberal Studies department gathers this information in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

## THE PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENT

The portfolio in 4960 is due at two points in the semester. You will first turn in the tab for Subject Matter Competency (at approximately the fourth week of the semester - see schedule for due date). The completed portfolio is due at the end of the semester (see schedule for exact due date). The following **MUST** be included in your portfolio. Most of these sections were completed in previous LIBS classes. **New material is underlined.**

PLEASE NOTE: If you were not required to complete a portfolio for LIBS 3000, please see me so we can arrange appropriate requirements for completion of your assignment.

### **Title Page**

**Introduction** to the portfolio (needs to be revised to reflect new elements)  
*(overview of portfolio development and compilation)*

**Table of Contents** (revision to reflect new elements)

The table of contents needs to be as complete and specific as possible. List each document by its specific title. Identify each section with a labeled tab.

### **Personal Identity as a Teacher**

- (1) personal identity assignment (3000)
- (2) Individual Education Plan (IEP) (updated)
- (3) Letter of application to the "Recruitment Committee" (used for oral defense/interview)
- (4) personal curriculum vitae

**Content Standards for California Public Schools** (1000, 2000, 3000)

(Do NOT include the actual text of the standards!)

- (1) History and Social Science (3000)
- (2) Language Arts (1000)
- (3) Mathematics (2000)
- (4) Science (2000)
- (5) Visual and Performing Arts (1000)

### **Subject Matter Competency**

- (1) Language and Literature
- (2) History and Social Science
- (3) Mathematics
- (4) Science - physical, life and earth
- (5) Visual and Performing Arts - art, music, theater and dance
- (6) Physical Education, Human Development and Health

**Field Experience** (1000, 2000, 3000)

Review and Reflection on field experiences in elementary classrooms

**Diversity** (3000)

### **Technology**

### **Integrated Learning**

Presentation bibliography, outline and grade sheet

**The California Teaching Performance Expectations** (3000)

List of papers from 3000

**Summary of Main Ideas** (revise if needed)

## RESEARCH PROJECT AND PRESENTATION

The research project and presentation is a group project. You will be working in a small group (2-3 people) on developing a research project that integrates three subject matter areas. After researching and reviewing the conceptual foundations and values of the different disciplines, you will discuss how new ideas and knowledge are created in each subject matter area. You will also compare and contrast the disciplines' 'ways of knowing, experiencing and understanding' an object, theme or phenomenon through an activity such as writing, drawing, speaking, etc. Projects must include:

- the language of each discipline
- disciplines from at least three subject matter areas
- demonstration of the uniqueness of each discipline
- a skills based activity that demonstrates understanding of the common core skills for one grade level (K-6)
- more than one methodology
- use of effective communication skills
- peer evaluation

Each student will be assigned (or select) a group. Together you will select a topic **appropriate for a college level audience**, identify the three subject matter areas that will be integrated and gain approval from the instructor. No two groups may address the same topic. Each student will select their own 'focus discipline' for the topic. The topic/theme/object must show how the three disciplines are connected in concepts, principles, and applications. This assignment should be seen as preparation for your future teaching and as a demonstration of your own understanding that all learning is connected.

The chosen specific disciplines must come from three different categories, as listed below:

- (1) language and literature
- (2) history and social science
- (3) mathematics
- (4) science
- (5) visual and performing arts
- (6) physical education, health and human development

The written component of this project will be an annotated bibliography, prepared by all presenters together. Each source entry should include a an APA formatted citation, a summary of the source, a description of how you plan to use the source and where you found it. At least one print source must be used for each discipline, Wikipedia may not be used as a source, and all web-based sources must be from legitimate, high quality sites. Don't use a website from a 5th grade class for a discussion of the American Revolution! The instructor will approve sources and assist in finding material, if needed. The bibliography will be due at the second instructor-group conference as noted on the schedule.

You will present your research to your peers through a class presentation, at least 40 minutes in length. This activity provides the class with the opportunity to identify and share the foundations and values of different disciplines and to focus on commonalities and connections between disciplines.

*Required elements of presentation:*

- discussion of fundamental values of the subject areas considered
- demonstrated higher level thinking skills in analysis and integration
- clear purpose and structure
- a research base of AT MINIMUM 9 sources
- at least 15 vocabulary terms (5 from each discipline) used in the proper context (these should not just be given to the class as a list but integrated into the presentation)
- visual aids integrated throughout
- creative and engaging audience involvement during the presentation
- connections to at least one skill-based element of common core standards for one grade level
- equal involvement of partners with integrated presentations
- all students in the class will be provided with handouts

Speakers should plan their time wisely and carefully develop the introduction, body and conclusion of the presentation with audience interest and comprehension in mind. Delivery of presentation should be extemporaneous and conversational (you are teaching not giving a speech); notes are encouraged, but presenters should not simply read from a script. Presenters must provide the instructor with a set of the speaking notes prior to presentation.

Presenters are responsible for distributing handouts to students in the classroom prior to the beginning of the presentation. The handout should include:

- a topical outline
- a glossary of vocabulary terms
- a reference list (does not need to be annotated)
- a brief discussion of common core standards as it relates to the presented material
- and the peer evaluation form used for each presentation

The presentation grade will be based on both the class's and the instructor's assessment.

### **ORAL DEFENSE/INTERVIEW**

Each student will be interviewed for a hypothetical elementary school teaching position. The interview will be conducted by members of the class and the instructor. We will discuss preparation techniques during class as we get nearer the scheduled interviews. Students will participate in the interview process by developing interview questions, participating on the interview committees, and evaluating the performance of 'interviewees'.

The interview is allotted a total of 50 points. Forty points comes from the actual interview itself (divided between your performance in the interview (30 points) and your participation as a committee member (10 points). Students have the option to record their interview, review it and write a one page reflection on their performance. The reflection is worth 10 points. In the reflection, evaluate your interview as seen on the video. Summarize what you learned from the experience of interviewing. Questions you might consider are: Would you modify your answers? Would you change your non-verbal behaviors? The reflection is due the class meeting after your interview.

Students will be given an Interview Evaluation Form to be submitted to the Credential Program and CSU Stanislaus. This form will be signed by the LIBS 4960 instructor and will waive the interview required for admittance into the Multiple Subject Credential Program. This form will not suffice for the Exceptional Children and Youth Credential Program, or the Credential Program at any other school. **It is the student's responsibility to submit the form to the Credential Program; the department and instructor do not keep copies of the Evaluation Form.**

## SUBJECT MATTER SECTION OF THE PORTFOLIO

The Liberal Studies major is a state-approved Subject Matter Preparation program. As such, we must meet the standards of 'quality and effectiveness' put in place by the state of California. One of these is summative assessment. To quote the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2001):

"The subject matter program includes a summative assessment of the subject matter competence of each prospective multiple subject teacher during one or more program capstone experiences...The assessment includes two or more assessment methods such as performance, portfolio, presentation, research project, field experience journal, work sample, interview, oral examination and written examination."

Do you recognize elements of your portfolio here? The portfolio is designed to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your competencies in many of the areas above. Much of the work you have done in earlier LIBS courses are already in your portfolio.

### *Overview of Subject Matter Competency Section*

One of the main elements of your portfolio that you need to complete is the subject matter competency section. This is where you demonstrate what you have learned in the college classes you have taken as a liberal studies major. Successful completion of the course is dependent on proof of subject matter competency, and this section will provide you the opportunity to demonstrate your competencies.

This section consists of two elements - the artifact and the introduction to that artifact. An artifact is a physical item created by you in a course you have taken in one of the subject matter areas. You will need one artifact for EACH of the subjects in your liberal studies program. An artifact can be:

- papers/items submitted in courses, that include instructor comments/grade
- documentation of oral presentations or projects completed
- written exams (a scantron by itself is not sufficient)
- If you do not have artifacts from a particular area or course, write a 1-2 page summary (described below)
- Ultimately, you will turn in 14 artifacts with introductions for the portfolio

### *Organizing Materials*

- Use the Subject Matter list completed in our first days of class to organize your materials. You must be able to fully cover each of the subject areas. For example, it is not sufficient to provide one artifact for science. Science includes physical science, biological science, earth science and computer science - so you will need four artifacts for this area.
- Use your IEP to help you figure out which courses fit each subject area. Some courses may provide evidence for more than one subsection. For example, LIBS 3000, included both a research paper and a presentation. These could be used to demonstrate your written and oral communication skills.
- Start gathering your artifacts. Except for Physical Education, you should avoid artifacts that focus on elementary school teaching. This is about YOUR understanding of subjects at a college level, not on how to teach these subjects. If you don't have an artifact for an area, you will write a more lengthy introduction in order to demonstrate your competency.
- Don't put in every document you have. If you have three exams from one class, include the one you think demonstrates your understanding of a concept best. When in doubt about an artifact's usefulness, check with the instructor to see what will work.

### *Dividing Subject Areas in the Portfolio*

Within the Subject Matter Competency tab you will need to provide a clear division between each subject matter area so a reader can quickly turn to that section and find the material. Each subject matter area (i.e. Language and Literature) should have a title page and tab marker. **Within each section, place the artifacts/introductions in the order listed on the planning worksheet provided in class.**

### *The Artifact Introduction*

Within each section, each artifact will have a separate introduction. The introduction is the way that you demonstrate how the artifact from the course relates to your understanding of that subject. Here are the guidelines for formatting and writing an introduction. We will examine artifact introductions at length in class, which will help you see what a 'good' intro is versus a 'bad' intro.

At the top of the page:

- Identify the specific subject matter requirement
- Identify the specific course, date and grade earned
- Identify the artifact

The text of your introduction follows. It should be double-spaced, standard font size, and should be between 1/2 and 1 page in length. This isn't a formal essay, so there is no need for a separate introduction and conclusion paragraph.

Content Included the Introduction

- In your introduction, cover three (3) major concepts from the course, one of which should be drawn from the artifact.
- Summarize the artifact and the concept it demonstrates from the subject - no more than three sentences.
- Discuss the other two concepts using specific vocabulary, with definitions and examples. Avoid parentheses; write complete sentences as you define terms and discuss concepts.

What Not to Do

- Don't include descriptions of assignments or class activities (except in computer science or art, where process was the point of of the class)
- Don't include how you will apply this information in the future, or how much you enjoyed the class.
- Do NOT use "about" or "how". Both of these words lead to sentences that are vague about your learning:  
vague: I learned about the Constitution.  
specific: I learned that the Constitution lays the foundation of the three branches of government in the United States: the legislative, the executive and the judicial branches. (continue with details about these branches of government)

Writing a Summary (without an artifact)

The summary, which must be at least one full page, should address a specific subject and should focus on one course. Effective summaries will include what the learning goals of the class were, three specific concepts learned in the class, descriptions of the methodologies used and vocabulary learned from the course.