Liberal Studies Master of Arts Program

Student Handbook

American Studies  Jewish Studies
East Asian Studies  Modern European Studies
Islamic Studies  South Asian Studies

Spring 2012

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Columbia University
This booklet is designed to supplement the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Student Bulletin, Essential Policies for the Columbia Community, Liberal Studies M.A. website, and other information on GSAS and Columbia University websites. Please use those sources to inform yourself of GSAS policies and procedures other than those contained in this booklet. While every effort has been made to ensure that this booklet is accurate and up to date, it may include inaccuracies or outdated information due to changes that have been implemented after publication. To verify any of the information contained in this booklet, please contact the Liberal Studies Program office.

All LSMA students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and complying with the regulations of the University, of the Graduate School, and of the LSMA program. Please be aware that lack of knowledge about GSAS and/or departmental rules and policies cannot excuse students for failure to comply with these regulations.

Liberal Studies Program Office
109A Low Memorial Library
535 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027
http://lsma.columbia.edu

Telephone: 212-854-4933
Fax: 212-854-4912

The office is open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Appointments: For meetings at times other than those listed below and for meetings regarding complex matters, please contact the LSMA office at least a day in advance to make an appointment.

Staff
Darice Birge, Ph.D. deb3@columbia.edu
Associate Dean for M.A. Programs 212-854-5972
Dean Birge is available by appointment.

Program Coordinator, Liberal Studies M.A. Program TBA

Valerie Watkins-Causwell vw2@columbia.edu
Administrative Assistant 212-854-4933
I. ID Card, access to the computer network, and ID security

Set up your University Network ID (UNI) and password right away; you use them on SSOL to register for classes and to pay your tuition bills online. To activate your UNI and Columbia e-mail account, go to http://uni.columbia.edu.

Remember that Columbia sends its bills electronically to your Columbia email address.

After you have registered for at least one course, the Columbia Card office in 204 Kent can issue you your ID card.

**DO NOT GIVE** your UNI password, your registration PIN, or your 9-digit Columbia ID number (C00XXXXXX) to anyone. There is a real risk that someone can use one of these numbers to gain access to your confidential information and to make changes to your university record.

**DO NOT USE** your Social Security number as an identifier – Your Columbia ID number is your ID number for administrative offices at Columbia. It is a good idea to memorize your Columbia ID number as you will be writing it on many forms and papers throughout your time as a student.

II. Academic Program

A. Degree Requirements
Liberal Studies Master of Arts programs require 36 points, of which at least 30 must be at the graduate level. Courses numbered 4000 or higher are graduate courses.

There is no language requirement, but up to six credit points in courses at the 3000-level or higher in an appropriate language may be credited toward the degree in East Asian Studies, Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, Modern European Studies, and South Asian Studies. Some programs (American Studies, East Asian Studies, and Islamic Studies) begin with a required introductory course. All programs have an exit requirement of a final thesis.

**Full-time** students take at least 12 credit points (usually four courses) per term. **Part-time** students may take less than 12 points per term. All students must complete the requirements for the degree within five years of entering the program.

B. Courses
The pre-approved course listing for each Liberal Studies M.A. program is generally compiled from graduate-level courses selected from GSAS departments in the humanities and social sciences and the School of International and Public Affairs. No more than six credits of 3000-level courses may count toward an LSMA degree. Students may, with approval from the Program Coordinator, take one additional 3000-level course in the History Department. LSMA students may not enroll in courses whose numbers begin with V- or BC-. Independent study courses and practica also do not apply toward the LSMA degree.

Select courses with an eye toward your requirements as well as your interests, and discuss your choices with the Program Coordinator. The online Directory of Classes indicates whether
permission is needed to register. Instructor permission is usually required when the class size is limited or when the course requires a specialized background or advanced preparation. Each LSMA program has mandatory degree requirements. Checklists for your program are available from the LSMA office and website. It is important to use them—in conjunction with visits to the LSMA office for consultation and approval—in order to keep track of your degree progress.

C. Transfer Credit
LSMA students are allowed up to 6 transfer credits if the courses transferred are at the graduate level, have a specific relationship with the program of study, have been complete at the time of enrollment in the program, and have not been used toward the fulfillment of requirements for another degree. No credit is given for "life experience" or for correspondence courses. A maximum of 12 points in graduate courses taken at Columbia’s School of Continuing Education as a non-matriculated student may be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree for all LSMA programs if the courses are applicable to the program of study. Transfer credit must be approved by the LSMA office. Once students are enrolled, they must complete all courses at Columbia.

Students are encouraged to request possible transfer credit early in their studies so they may plan their program requirements and courses accordingly.

D. Special Courses for LSMA Students
RSRH G4001 Scholarly Research and Writing (three credit points)
This course introduces Liberal Studies Master’s students to theoretical approaches and to resources in print and electronic formats that are fundamental to advanced research. The course also reviews academic writing skills necessary to produce scholarly papers. Class meetings include weekly writing tutorials and lectures by the library staff on reference tools and services. Participation is strongly recommended for students who wish to renew or increase their familiarity with the conventions of academic research and writing or who wish to pursue a doctoral degree in the future. This course is taken pass/fail.

RSRH G4990 Liberal Studies Research Seminar (two or three credit points)
This course is designed for Liberal Studies students writing the thesis. The seminar provides a structured opportunity to do research and write in stages, to review and discuss one’s work, and to receive constructive advice on writing. Students must submit the proposal for their final thesis to the LSMA office in order to be registered in the course. This course is only available in the spring term.

E. Thesis
All LSMA programs require a final thesis, a work of substance and length (approximately 50 pages not counting bibliography and notes) requiring research that draws together ideas developed in the course of a candidate's interdisciplinary studies. Students should begin thinking about their topic early in the program. Further course work and research will develop, improve, and probably alter the original concept by the time one begins to write. The thesis is written either as supervised independent research (G4999) under the guidance of a faculty member or as part of the thesis-writing seminar (G4990). A written proposal is submitted to a professor who must approve the topic and agree to serve as a supervisor before the project can begin. The proposal—about 1,000 words long—should contain a statement of the problem, the nature of the resources to be used,
plans for analysis, a bibliography, and a timetable for the project's completion. Proposals may be altered as required during the process. Once the thesis is completed and evaluated by the faculty supervisor(s), a final copy is deposited in the LSMA office.

Thesis guidelines, including proposal and final thesis deadlines and requirements, are available from the LSMA office and website. Theses of LSMA graduates are also available in the LSMA office, and students are encouraged to look through them for insight and inspiration on the thesis-writing process.

F. Academic Progress and Special Marks
Academic progress is determined by the successful completion of courses required for the degree. Liberal Studies M.A. candidates must maintain an average of B (3.00) or better and make continual progress toward the completion of the degree to remain in good standing. Academic records are reviewed each term to determine whether candidates are making satisfactory progress.

Those who do not maintain a satisfactory average or continued academic progress may be placed on probation or dismissed from the program.

Students who receive a grade of Incomplete (IN) have one calendar year to complete work in the course and receive a letter grade. After one year, the IN becomes an F.

G. Academic Integrity and Responsible Research
Students should be aware that academic dishonesty (for example, plagiarism, cheating on an examination, or dishonesty in dealing with a faculty member or other University official) or the threat of violence or harassment are serious offenses and will be dealt with severely (see http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/sub/bulletin/policies/conduct/discipline.html). Graduate students are expected to exhibit the high level of personal and academic integrity and honesty required of all members of an academic community as they engage in scholarly discourse and research. Scholars draw inspiration from the work done by other scholars; they argue their claims with reference to others’ work; they extract evidence from the world or from earlier scholarly works. When a student engages in these activities, it is vital to credit properly the source of his or her claims or evidence. To fail to do so would violate one’s scholarly responsibility. In practical terms, students must not cheat on examinations, and deliberate plagiarism is prohibited. Plagiarism includes buying, stealing, borrowing, or otherwise obtaining all or part of a paper (including obtaining or posting papers online); hiring someone to write a paper or complete research; copying from or paraphrasing another source without proper citation or falsification of citations; and building on the ideas of another without citation. Students also should not submit the same paper to more than one class.

Students are responsible for proper citation and paraphrasing, and must take special care to avoid even accidental plagiarism. The best strategy is to use great caution in the handling of ideas and prose passages: take notes carefully and clearly mark words and ideas not your own. Failure to observe these rules of conduct will result in serious academic consequences, which can include dismissal from the university.

Students engaging in research must be aware of and follow university policies regarding intellectual and financial conflicts of interest, integrity and security in data collection and
management, intellectual property rights and data ownership, and necessary institutional approval for research with human subjects and animals.

H. Research with Human Subjects
All proposals for research by graduate students that involve human subjects, including surveys and interviews, must be submitted for review to Columbia’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), whether or not the student believes that approval will be necessary. The IRB encourages consultation at all stages of the research process. For an appointment, please call 212-851-7040. For more information, visit the IRB website at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/irb/.

III. Registration

You can register for many of your classes online. You should register as early as possible to get the widest selection of courses. See below for directions on how to pick courses.

Registration dates:
November 21-23 and January 10-12 for Spring 2012: All students have specific appointment times online each day. During this period you need to register for at least one course in order to avoid a late registration fee. New students register during orientation.

January 17-27 for Spring 2012: Change of program (or add/drop) period. You may add, drop, or change courses during this period without an additional fee. If you register for the first time during this period, you will be required to pay a late registration fee.

After the add/drop period, you will be charged full tuition for any course dropped.

A. Getting ready to register
Complete registration information can be found at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/registrar/. Students can register online at Student Services Online (SSOL) or in person at the Registrar’s office (205 Kent Hall).

- Find a course on the web
A list of pre-approved courses for the Liberal Studies M.A. programs is distributed at orientation. It is also available on the web at http://lsma.columbia.edu/content/pre-approved-courses. These are only some of the courses available to you. Use the Directory of Classes (at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/) to supplement this course list, to look for more options, and to check for last-minute changes.
- Note the call number (5 digits long) for each course for which you wish to register.
- Contact the LSMA office to discuss your courses. Without prior approval from the Program Coordinator or Associate Dean, you may not get credit toward the degree for a course.
- Obtain signatures on an add/drop form from the department or the instructor for courses that require permission. Students may also receive permission in writing via email.
- Find your appointment time to register online (not everyone registers at the same time) on Student Services Online (SSOL).
Note: Students may count no more than six credits of 3000-level courses toward the LSMA degree. With LSMA office approval, students may take one additional 3000-level course in the History Department (for up to nine 3000-level credits total).

B. To register for a course online
You need your UNI, UNI password, PIN, and 9-digit Columbia ID number to register. You can find your PIN at Student Services Online (https://ssol.columbia.edu).

During your appointment time, go online to Student Services Online (SSOL). If you go online before your appointment time, the system will remind you of your next appointment.

NOTE: LSMA students DO NOT register for Residence Units. Register ONLY for the classes you are taking.

C. To register for a course that requires instructor/department permission
To register for courses in departments other than History or English, bring the add/drop form with the appropriate signatures to the Registrar’s office in 205 Kent Hall to be registered in the course in person during the week prior to term. Add/drop forms are available in the LSMA office, the Registrar’s office, and online at http://registrar.columbia.edu/registrar-forms/adddrop. Students may also obtain written permission from the instructor or department via email and register for the course online via SSOL. It is advised that students print and file permission-granting emails or signed add/drop forms as supporting documentation for registration.

The Departments of History and English require applications for particular courses (4000-level in History and 3000-level in English). Students accepted into such courses register through the department offices. For more information about the seminar application and registration process, please contact the Departments of History or English.

D. Directory of Classes
Much course information is available in the online Directory of Classes at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/. The fields “Approvals Required” and “Note” tell you whether permission is required. To read a description of a course or for information on permissions, click on the link to the department and follow the listed instructions. Note that 4000-level courses may be listed on department websites under undergraduate courses, but they are open to graduate students as well as undergraduates and are considered graduate-level courses by the university.

E. REGISTRATION and ACADEMIC CALENDAR

**Spring 2012**
- January 10-12: Regular registration
- January 17: First day of classes
- January 17-27: Late registration and change of program (add/drop) period; late fee for first registration
- January 26: Student account payment due
- January 27: Last day for full refund for dropped courses
- February 21: Last day to drop a course (with no tuition refund)
March 12-16  Spring recess
March 22  Last day to request pass/fail or R grades
Mid-April (dates TBA)  Regular registration for summer and fall terms
April 30  Last day of classes
May 1-3  Study days
May 4-11  Final exams

IV. Registration Policies and Procedures

A. Holds
If you cannot register for a course, it may be that an office has placed a hold on your record that prevents you from registering. The reasons for holds vary; financial holds (non-payment of bills), library holds, and dean’s holds are most common. Once you have determined which office placed a hold on your record (listed on SSOL), go to that office to resolve the matter; only the office that placed the hold can remove it.

B. Enrolling in a full course
If a course is full, it is listed as such under “Enrollment” in the online Directory of Classes. Attending a course without officially registering, whether the course is full or not, even if the instructor has given you permission to attend, DOES NOT constitute enrollment. Without the department’s permission, the Registrar cannot register a student in a full class.

C. Late registration and fees
A $100 late fee is charged to those who register for the first time after the regular registration period, during the first two weeks of the semester. A $150 late fee is charged to those who register for the first time after the first two weeks of the semester. To avoid late fees enroll in at least one course the week prior to term and then drop and add courses during the change of program period.

D. Dropping a course and deadlines for refunds
Mentioning to the instructor that you are dropping the course or ceasing to attend class DOES NOT constitute officially dropping a course, and it will result in a failing grade in the course. Also, you will remain responsible for all tuition charges and any related late payment fees.

For the first two weeks of classes, you may drop a course with full tuition refund online or by using the add/drop form. After the add/drop period you will be charged full tuition for any course you drop. The last day to drop courses (without a tuition refund) is February 21.

International Students dropping below 12 credit points will lose their student visa and will lose their right to apply for or remain in Columbia housing.

Domestic students dropping below 12 credit points will lose their right to apply for or remain in Columbia housing. In addition, you must be registered in at least six credits each term to be eligible for most Federal student loans. If you plan on going to school part-time, be sure to contact a financial aid officer in 107 Low Library.
E. Auditing courses and pass/fail
Audited courses are taken for a grade of R. Courses with a grade of R or Pass/Fail do not count toward the Liberal Studies degree. Only G4001 Scholarly Research and Writing may be taken for pass/fail and count toward the degree. To request a pass/fail, submit a signed add/drop form to the Registrar by the pass/fail deadline. To request a grade of R, submit a signed R form to the Dean’s office in 109 Low Library by the deadline. The deadline to request P/F/R grades is March 22.

F. Time conflicts
You cannot take two or more classes whose scheduled times are the same, or which overlap by as little as one minute, without the written permission of Dean Darice Birge.

G. Leaves of Absence
Many reasons may compel students to discontinue their studies temporarily. Students who wish to request a leave of absence must complete a leave of absence form and submit it to the Program Coordinator with any necessary supporting documentation. Please note that students should submit a leave of absence form for every semester they will be on leave, so students may be submitting multiple forms throughout their time away from Columbia. Time on official leave does not count toward the five years allotted to complete the degree.

Information on leave of absence and the corresponding form are available at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/sub/bulletin/policies/requirements/registration.html. When planning to return to Columbia, students on official leave should notify the Program Coordinator at least six weeks in advance of the term in which they wish to re-enroll. Students who have left without officially submitting leave of absence forms must apply for reinstatement.

Reinstatement forms are available online at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/pdf-files/ma-reinstatement.pdf. Leaves of absence carry a $75 processing fee, and tuition is refunded on a percentage basis depending on the week in which the official leave occurs.

H. Withdrawal
A student in good academic standing who is not subject to discipline will always be given an honorable discharge if he or she wishes to withdraw from the University. Withdrawal is defined as the dropping of one's entire program in a given term (so as to be enrolled in zero credit points) as opposed to dropping a course or two. To do this, you must fill out a withdrawal form available online at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/pdf-files/GSAS-withdrawal-form.pdf. Withdrawal carries a $75 fee.

Formal withdrawal is ordinarily allowed prior to the examination period only. Withdrawal means that courses and grades are not listed on the student's record and that the student does not receive any credit.

Any student withdrawing must notify the LSMA office in writing by completing a withdrawal form. The approval of the Associate Dean is required for all withdrawals. The student's responsibilities, academic and financial, continue in all courses for which the student has registered until the withdrawal has been approved and accepted. Tuition is refunded on a percentage basis depending on the week in which official withdrawal occurs (see http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/refund-rate-withdrawals). Application fees and late fees are
not refundable. For refunds related to health services and health insurance, students should contact Health Services.

V. MMR immunization and meningitis vaccination

All students are subject to two immunization requirements. See [http://health.columbia.edu/about/immunization-requirements#Immunization_Requirements](http://health.columbia.edu/about/immunization-requirements#Immunization_Requirements) for details and information on how to comply.

Measles, Mumps, and Rubella
New York State requires that all college and university students enrolled for six or more credits be adequately protected against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR). Students born on or after January 1, 1957 must provide documentation of immunity. Students born before January 1, 1957 are assumed to have had exposure and need not take further action. New students who cannot provide evidence of full compliance with this law at the beginning of the semester will be blocked from registering for their second semester until they comply.

Meningococcal Meningitis
By New York State public health law, all students registered for six or more credits must decide whether or not to be immunized against meningococcal meningitis and must provide formal certification of their decision. Proof of immunity is NOT required. For more information and to certify your decision, go to the Health Services meningitis website at [http://health.columbia.edu/about/immunization-requirements/meningitis](http://health.columbia.edu/about/immunization-requirements/meningitis).

After you have submitted your decision, you will be compliant with this public health law. As with MMR immunization, students who do not provide their meningitis vaccination decision certification at the beginning of the semester will be blocked from registering for their second semester until they comply.

VI. Financial Aid

There are two partial scholarships available for Liberal Studies M.A. students. The One Point Tuition scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of need and merit. The 50% Tuition Reduction scholarship is available to full-time contracted primary or secondary school teachers in active service. Application forms for both scholarships are available online at [http://lsma.columbia.edu/content/financial-aid](http://lsma.columbia.edu/content/financial-aid). The deadline to apply for both scholarships is July 15. Teachers can apply for their tuition reduction after this deadline, but their award may be delayed, and they may find they cannot credit it toward the semester already in progress. Liberal Studies M.A. students who are New York State residents, who plan to be full-time students, and who meet New York State eligibility requirements may qualify for a New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grant. Students who are completing at least six credit points per term and who show need may qualify for the Stafford Loan program. Students may also be eligible for other loan programs with higher rates of interest. Students who need part-time work may qualify for the Federal Work-Study Program. Visit the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences’ Financial Aid Office in 107 Low Library for more information.
VII. Student Life

In addition to providing a set of rules and regulations for M.A. students, the web pages of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences include links to valuable information regarding various aspects of life at Columbia. Check them for information on everything from housing to late-night shuttle bus service on Morningside Heights.

Although many students spend only a few hours each week on campus, all are members of the Columbia University community and are encouraged to participate in University organizations and activities. We urge you to become involved in campus activities, and especially to help your Liberal Studies colleagues plan panel discussions, cultural events, off-campus trips, and other social activities.

Be sure to frequent the graduate student lounge in Philosophy 301 and meet other graduate students.

The Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) is a student government organization at Columbia University. Council membership consists of student-elected departmental representatives from the PhD and free-standing MA programs of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. For more information, please visit http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsac/.

VIII. Email and Student Services Online

A. E-mail
All students should create a Columbia e-mail account. Columbia e-mail policy specifies that Columbia sends official communication by email and that students should therefore read e-mail on a frequent and consistent basis. Please note that a student’s failure to receive and read University communications in a timely manner does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the content of such communications (see http://facets.columbia.edu/student-e-mail-communication-policy).

Your Columbia e-mail address is linked to your University Network ID (UNI) and password, which you will use often for a wide range of Columbia University digital services. Please familiarize yourself with Columbia’s IT policies available at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/policy/. Unauthorized attempts to gain access to any account or system not belonging to you on any University system or on any system outside the University network are not permitted. No University system or network may be used for any purpose or in a manner that violates University statutes or policies or federal, state or local law.

B. SSOL – Student Services On-Line
https://ssol.columbia.edu/

The Student Services On-Line system (SSOL) is a helpful information center for Columbia students. From the SSOL main menu, you can navigate to screens that allow you to view your grades, your schedule, your billing information, your registration appointments, and holds on your
record. You may also register for courses, pay your account, and change your contact information on SSOL.
## IX. Important office and contact information

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<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia University Information Technology (CUIT)</td>
<td>202 Philosophy Hall</td>
<td><a href="mailto:askcuit@columbia.edu">askcuit@columbia.edu</a> (212) 854-1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Education Center</td>
<td>Lower Level, East Campus</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cce@columbia.edu">cce@columbia.edu</a> (212) 854-5609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSAS Financial Aid</td>
<td>107 Low Memorial Library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scp3@columbia.edu">scp3@columbia.edu</a> (212) 854-6725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>John Jay Hall and Wien Hall</td>
<td><a href="mailto:health@columbia.edu">health@columbia.edu</a> (212) 854-2284 (general questions) (212) 854-3286 (insurance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Services</td>
<td>Lerner Hall, 7th Floor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dodge Fitness Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Institute</td>
<td>International Affairs Building</td>
<td><a href="mailto:europeaninstitute@columbia.edu">europeaninstitute@columbia.edu</a> (212) 854-4618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Columbia Card Center</td>
<td>204 Kent Hall</td>
<td><a href="mailto:isso@columbia.edu">isso@columbia.edu</a> (212) 854-3587</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)</td>
<td>525 Riverside Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Services Center</td>
<td>205 Kent Hall</td>
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See the Columbia University online directory and the GSAS web pages for additional offices and contact information.

The material in this handbook, which does not include all regulations and procedures pertinent to LSMA students, should be read in conjunction with

**Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Student Bulletin:**
http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/sub/bulletin/site/map/index.html

**Essential Policies for the Columbia Community:**
http://facets.columbia.edu/

**LSMA Website:**
http://lsma.columbia.edu/content/liberal-studies-ma-administration

And any other information on GSAS and Columbia University websites.