The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, established in 1900, is the largest of the 11 colleges that comprise the University of Iowa, with 37 departments spanning the visual, performing, literary, and cinematic arts; humanities; natural and mathematical sciences; social and behavioral sciences; and communication disciplines. Throughout CLAS departments and programs, professors are at the forefront of their disciplines. They bring their world-class research and artistry into their classrooms, studios, and labs, giving students the unparalleled opportunity to learn right from the source of the latest innovations in knowledge and practice.

Graduate students and many undergraduates work side-by-side with faculty members, conducting breakthrough research that advances understanding of ourselves and the complex, ever-changing world in which we live.

Faculty members help students discover their individual talents and passions, mentoring students about research opportunities, internships, and career choices. Professional academic advisors encourage students to create unique academic portfolios that help them stand out among their peers, with students developing creative strategies to combine majors, minors, and certificates—a common practice in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, where all work together to support students’ diverse interests and goals.

CLAS students can choose from almost 70 undergraduate majors, 70 minors and 21 interdisciplinary certificate programs, with choices that particularly focus on applied skills helpful in a chosen profession that encourage students to pursue intellectual and artistic interests along with pragmatic preparation for a first career. Students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences have many opportunities to shine beyond the classroom: honors programs, faculty-mentored research, study abroad, community engagement, and internships, to name a few. Students respond to these opportunities in exciting and innovative ways.

Office of Academic Programs and Student Development

Located in Schaeffer Hall and at the center of campus on the Pentacrest, the Office of Academic Programs and Student Development is an integral part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The office, led by the associate dean for undergraduate education, welcomes undergraduate students who have questions or who need more information about the many CLAS resources that support student learning and achievement. Staff also is available to talk with students.

Any questions concerning academic requirements and programs of study are addressed by staff who frequently meet with students about requirements, collegiate policies that affect students, and a range of other issues, including successful completion of a degree.

Students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences may petition for exceptions to CLAS requirements, deadlines, or procedures in the Office of Academic Programs and Student Development and are invited to discuss their questions and the petition process in person.

The Office of Academic Programs and Student Development helps to resolve any student complaints swiftly while ensuring needed changes are made. All students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are encouraged to engage with the academic community by exercising their rights and responsibilities.

GE CLAS Core

Students entering the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences who wish to earn a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), or Bachelor of Music (B.M.) degree must complete the requirements of the General Education CLAS Core in addition to the requirements of a major and other UI and CLAS graduation requirements.

The GE CLAS Core encourages students to explore beyond familiar topics, helping students to discover intriguing majors, minors, and certificates while challenging students to embrace personal transformation by expanding their core knowledge and perspectives. For this reason, the GE CLAS Core is framed by the overall concept that General Education (GE) courses also teach students "to learn how to learn," with this foundation fostering success in the major, in a first career, or in professional or graduate school while preparing students for life-long learning.

For GE CLAS Core requirements, related academic policies, and lists of approved courses, see the GE CLAS Core and related GE courses in the Catalog.