

# College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

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[www.uis.edu/clas/](http://www.uis.edu/clas/)

Office Phone: (217) 206-6512

Email: [clas@uis.edu](mailto:clas@uis.edu)

Office Location: UHB 3000

**James Ermatinger, Dean**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences contains 20 disciplines, representing many of the fundamental building blocks of human knowledge. These disciplines are traditionally clustered into the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science, and the Natural Sciences.

What binds all of these varied ways of knowing together is the common intellectual skills they stress - the ability to think deeply and systematically about significant questions, to communicate well, and to reach well-researched and sustainable conclusions. The liberal arts and sciences also hold this central academic value: freeing the human mind from prejudice and parochialism through reasoned discourse. The college contributes many of the courses in the UIS general education curriculum. This curriculum offers many opportunities for personal enrichment and exploration, and contains as its organizing principle the concept of engaged citizenship, from local to global. Over one-third of the faculty have significant international experience and bring these perspectives to the classroom. College faculty are dedicated teacher-scholars. Teaching is a central concern and many have been recognized for their excellence in the classroom. Faculty have also produced many books and articles as well as exhibits and performances. They also are involved in mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students in research projects. The college offers some exceptional classroom, studio, laboratory, and field facilities. These include new state-of-the-art classrooms and computer labs in University Hall, two astronomy observatories, a biology field station on the Illinois River at Emiquon, and access to science lab equipment, such as a DNA sequencer, that is unusual in an undergraduate education.

In addition to its newest initiative in providing a first-class education to traditional-aged students, the college is proud of its long and innovative record in providing educational access for more mature students. In 1974, faculty were founding members of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning. The Liberal Studies Department gives students the opportunity to design their own degrees. Through Prior Learning Assessment, students can gain credit for college-level reasoning acquired through life experiences. The Prior Learning Assessment and Internship programs are national pioneers in linking the theoretical insights gained in the classroom with the world of work and service through internships (some of them paid) with businesses, state agencies, and community organizations. Our nationally-recognized online degrees, taught primarily by our regular professors, provide college access to time-and place-bound students, using the most modern technologies to continue our historical mission.

The college also supports co-curricular activities such as the Visual Arts Gallery, music and theater programming, the Verbal Arts Festival, field trips, and a variety of department-based student clubs and academic honor societies. The Learning Hub offers freshmen supplemental instruction in mathematics, English, biology, and

chemistry and academic assistance to all students in many subjects through one-to-one tutoring, workshops, presentations, and online tutoring. The Learning Hub holds its sessions one-to-one, in the classroom, and online through advanced computer technology.