

APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCE, BLS

Admissions to the Applied Social Science, BLS have been suspended as of fall 2024 and will be discontinued as of fall 2032. If you have any questions, please contact the department.

The Major in Applied Social Science (MASS) is completed with the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree. The BLS and MASS are offered fully online and are ideal for returning students with some college credit. UW-Madison Online programs are designed with adult students in mind; they give students the flexibility to earn their degree while still meeting obligations at work and home.

Students in the MASS program will learn about how Social and Behavioral Science apply to their own lives and the world around them. BLS and MASS students will learn about world language study and global issues; understanding and engaging with diverse communities; ethical communication; and broader social issues that shape current events. Applied Social Sciences explores systematic and evidence-based study of the social world, encompassing all of the political, economic, legal, technological, and cultural ideas, structures, and processes that humans create to live together as a society. Social science data, methods, and theories help students understand how social life works to help social life work better.

Applied study across the social sciences, combined with integrated study of the liberal arts and sciences, is an ideal framework for identifying issues, questions, and opportunities that are important to humans, groups, institutions, and society. Students in this program will improve their skills as communicators and as knowledgeable participants in a civil and just society. They will increase their skills and develop their abilities to create and support more effective and equitable solutions to social problems.

For more information, visit the UW-Madison Online admissions website or email a UW-Madison Online enrollment coach. They are here to help you navigate the application process.

HOW TO GET IN

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REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition

to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (<http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatetext>) section of the *Guide*.

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| General Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits • Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits • Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits • Communication Part A & Part B * • Ethnic Studies * • Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B * |
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* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: BACHELOR OF LIBERAL STUDIES (BLS)

BACHELOR OF LIBERAL STUDIES DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Breadth in the Complete:

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| Degree | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 credits of Humanities breadth; and • 9 credits of Social Science breadth; and • 9 credits of Biological, Physical or Natural Science breadth. |
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| BLS Broad Field Requirement | <p>Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 credits of Beyond US: Global & Language Study; and • 3 credits of Data Science & Digital Communication; and • 3 credits of Race, Diversity, & Global Issues in Context. |
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| Integrating College, Career, and Liberal Studies | Complete at least 6 credits of Integrating College, Career, and Liberal Studies coursework. |
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| Depth of Intermediate/Advanced Coursework | Complete at least 30 credits at Intermediate or Advanced level. |
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| Major | Declare and complete at least one major within the BLS degree program. |
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| Elective | Complete elective credits to reach 120 total credits for the degree. |
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| Total Credits | Complete at least 120 credits. |
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| UW-Madison Experience | Complete both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 credits in residence, overall; and • 30 credits in residence after the 86th credit. |
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| Quality of Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.000 GPA in all coursework at UW-Madison • 2.000 GPA in Intermediate/Advanced level coursework at UW-Madison |
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Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eligible courses may apply to multiple requirements unless specifically noted otherwise.• Pass/Fail courses do not meet requirements, but may count as Electives.• Courses with multiple breadth designations may only be used to meet one breadth requirement.• Courses used to meet Communication A and Quantitative Reasoning A may not also be used to meet Breadth Requirements.
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BLS Broad Field Requirement

Code	Title	Credits
Beyond US: Global and Language Study (complete at least two):		6
GEOG 340	World Regions in Global Context	
LINGUIS/ ANTHRO/ FOLKLORE/ INTL ST 211	Global Language Issues	
Data Science and Digital Communication (complete at least one):		3
COM ARTS 325	Media and Human Behavior	
JOURN 175	Media Fluency for the Digital Age	
L I S 351	Introduction to Digital Information	
L I S 407	Data Storytelling with Visualization	
L I S 500	Code and Power	
Race, Diversity, and Global Issues in Context (complete at least one):		3
HDFS 174	Introduction into Cultural Diversity of Families	
JOURN 162	Mass Media in Multicultural America	
L I S 500	Code and Power	
Total Credits		12

Integrating College, Career, and Liberal Studies

Code	Title	Credits
Complete at least 6 credits from:		6
INTER-LS 145	How to Succeed in College	
INTER-LS 210	L&S Career Development: Taking Initiative	
INTER-LS 215	Communicating About Careers	
INTER-LS 260	Internship in the Liberal Arts and Sciences	
Total Credits		6

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR

Complete 30 credits from the following:

Code	Title	Credits
Foundations (complete both):		6
INTER-LS 301	Methods in the Applied Social Sciences	
INTER-LS 302	Problems in the Applied Social Sciences	
Integrative Depth (complete 18 credits, including at least one course in each of the four areas below):		18

Ethical Communication (complete one):

PHILOS 243	Ethics in Business
COM ARTS 325	Media and Human Behavior
COM ARTS 371	Communication and Conflict Resolution
L I S 440	Navigating the Data Revolution: Concepts of Data & Information Science
L I S 661	Information Ethics and Policy

Diverse Communities (complete one):

COM ARTS 373	Intercultural Communication & Rhetoric
JOURN 162	Mass Media in Multicultural America
L I S 500	Code and Power

Research Tools (complete one):

STAT 301	Introduction to Statistical Methods
L I S 351	Introduction to Digital Information
LINGUIS 237	Language in Wisconsin
SOC/ C&E SOC 357	Methods of Sociological Inquiry
SOC/ C&E SOC 360	Statistics for Sociologists I

Social Issues (complete one):

L I S 440	Navigating the Data Revolution: Concepts of Data & Information Science
L I S 661	Information Ethics and Policy
GEOG 307	International Migration, Health, and Human Rights
LEGAL ST/ POLI SCI 217	Law, Politics and Society

Capstone (complete both):		6
INTER-LS 601	Applied Social Sciences Problem Proposal	
INTER-LS 602	Applied Social Sciences Problem Analysis	

Total Credits	30
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RESIDENCE AND QUALITY OF WORK

- 2.000 GPA in all major courses
- 15 upper-level credits, taken in residence¹
- 15 credit in the major, taken on campus

FOOTNOTES

¹ Upper-level courses in the major are course with the Intermediate or Advanced level designation

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Total Degree	To receive a bachelor's degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.
Residency	Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. "In residence" means on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.
Quality of Work	Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Recognize, reason with, and combine multiple forms of qualitative and quantitative information and data that are common to the social sciences, from diverse perspectives and sources.
2. Critically evaluate and analyze information using a variety of methods common to the social sciences, informed by diverse perspectives.
3. Approach complex social, interpersonal, and institutional issues and opportunities for innovation from multiple perspectives, understanding them in a variety of contexts and from different cultural lenses.
4. Use tools and techniques common to the social sciences to combine their rigorous analysis of relevant evidence to develop and defend creative insights and effective solutions concerning these important issues.
5. Based on an understanding of the varied ways in which people experience social life and social institutions, students will collaborate and communicate proposed solutions effectively and ethically with people from a range of perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

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This program is designed for transfer students, most of whom will enroll on a part-time basis. As such, there is not a four-year plan for this program. Please refer to the [Requirements](#) tab for more information about the curriculum and program plan.

ADVISING AND CAREERS

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ADVISING

Each UW–Madison Online student is assigned an academic and career (AC) advisor (<https://oss.wisc.edu/about-us/>).

Contact Information

Office of Online Student Success
 oss@advising.wisc.edu
 Ingraham Hall
 155 Observatory Dr., Madison, WI 53706

CAREERS

Completion of the BLS+MASS complements many career paths. Coursework designed around a liberal arts education provides students with critical thinking, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and communication skills needed in all industries. A focused study of social sciences helps graduates understand how:

- The social world can be understood and explored in a structured and guided way.
- The tools used in the study of the social world can help identify issues that need attention and problems that could be solved.

Active engagement in the career development process is a vital component of a student's personal growth in college and future success as a lifelong learner, professional, and global citizen. AC advisors help prepare students for life post-graduation through individual and group advising.

PEOPLE

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BLS+MASS PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Derek Bean, Faculty Associate (Statistics)
 Nina Valeo Cooke, Director of Curricular & Student Services (Gender & Women's Studies)
 Greg Downey, Professor of Journalism and of Information Studies, Associate Dean for the Social Sciences Founding Chair
 Amy Gangl, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Instructor (Political Science)
 Melanie Jones, Undergraduate Program Coordinator (Psychology)
 Rick Keyser, Senior Lecturer (Legal Studies)
 Lyn Macgregor, Academic Advisor & Curriculum Planner (Sociology)
 Sara McKinnon, Associate Professor (Communication Arts)
 James Messina, Associate Professor (Philosophy)
 Kris Olds, Professor (Geography)
 Greg Pac, Senior Lecturer (Economics)
 Rajiv Rao, Associate Professor (Language Sciences)
 Hernando Rojas, Professor (School of Journalism and Mass Communication)
 Dorothea Salo, Distinguished Faculty Associate (The Information School)
 Rebecca Shields, Instructional Administrator (Language Sciences)
 Michelle Szabo, Academic Department Manager (Geoscience)
 Benedek Valko, Professor (Mathematics)
 David Zimmerman, Professor (English)

EX OFFICIO

Kimbrin Cornelius, Assistant Dean for Teaching & Learning Administration
and Interim L&S OUD Coordinator

Elaine M. Klein, Associate Dean (Academic Planning)

Christopher Lee, Assistant Dean and Director, Academic Deans Services

Shirin Malekpour, Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning Administration)