



Start Here. Go Anywhere.

TRANSFER TIMES

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2

APR/MAY 2008

WHY STUDY LIBERAL ARTS?

Students are very concerned that their course of study leads to a specific career. In many instances, the relationship between academic program and profession is obvious (e.g., A.A.S. in nursing). In the case of liberal arts this relationship is not as apparent. A liberal arts program does not prepare you for one specific occupation; instead it gives you the necessary skills for an unlimited number of possible careers. These skills include the ability to think independently, to analyze and solve problems, and to communicate effectively. Most importantly, studying liberal arts lays the foundation for lifetime learning. However, if your goal is a specific technical career, an A.A.S. program may be the right choice for you. For most other careers, from **architect** to **zoologist**, the associate's degree in liberal arts is the first step on the educational pathway to the bachelor's degree and graduate study.

What do you study ?

You take general courses across a wide-range of disciplines including: mathematics, sciences, humanities (English literature, history, modern languages, and philosophy), social sciences (anthropology, economics,

psychology, sociology), and the arts (art history, music, theater, speech). This diversity exposes you to the development of ideas, philosophic traditions, technological innovations, and scientific methodology. It broadens your perspective, gives you a better understanding of yourself, and an appreciation of and respect for different ideas, peoples, and cultures. On the whimsical side, the knowledge gained from a liberal arts program could make you a viable Jeopardy contestant or a whiz at Trivial Pursuit. On the more practical side, the knowledge gained in your courses will make you a more interesting conversationalist with peers, colleagues, and clients alike.

What will you get out of it?

You will gain highly marketable skills and abilities including:

- ◆ Analytical and critical thinking skills
- ◆ Effective oral and written communication skills
- ◆ Problem solving abilities



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ◆ Liberal Arts at BMCC
- ◆ The Title V Program
- ◆ Educational Pathways: Forensic Science
- ◆ Important Dates: Spring 2008



Continued on next page

- ◆ Computational skills
- ◆ The ability to learn how to learn
- ◆ Time management skills
- ◆ The ability to meet goals and successfully complete projects



Do employers value a liberal arts education?

The answer to this question is a resounding, “Yes!” Companies that recruit college graduates know that they need to train new employees. Many have specially designed training programs for this purpose. A liberal arts degree gives employers the assurance that you are educable and that you have the basic repertoire of skills which you can apply regardless of the industry. So, if a friend or relative asks you, “What can you do with a liberal arts degree?”, you can say with confidence “Anything I want!”

What you need to do!

- ◆ Become as computer literate as you possibly can. Take advantage of the computer labs on campus and any opportunity to improve your skills
- ◆ Become an active participant in your educational planning
- ◆ Visit the Career Development Office, S-368, and use the *Career Zone* software for career exploration
- ◆ Attend the senior college transfer fairs held at BMCC 6 times a year
- ◆ Visit the Academic Advisement & Transfer Center, S-763, early in your career at BMCC

LIBERAL ARTS AT BMCC

The Liberal Arts program at Borough of Manhattan Community College provides each student with a well-rounded background in the sciences, humanities, mathematics, and languages. The program also allows students to transfer to four-year colleges after successful completion of the Associate Degree . In addition, BMCC offers students the opportunity to complete the Associate in Arts degree (A.A.), by attending classes exclusively on Friday evenings and on weekends.

THE TITLE V PROGRAM

Title V is an academic advisement program at BMCC exclusively for liberal arts students who have earned fewer than 30 academic credits. Students who participate in this program are assigned a faculty advisor and an educational planner. The Title V faculty advisor assigned to each student is selected based on career, academic, and scheduling compatibility. The Educational Planner facilitates meetings and serves as a liaison between students and their faculty advisor. The Title V program offers BMCC students:

- ◆ The opportunity to register early (for students in good academic standing)
- ◆ An advisor who will assist and guide participants throughout their career at BMCC
- ◆ The opportunity to cultivate a relationship with a professor who shares academic and extracurricular interests
- ◆ Flexibility in the delivery of advisement services. Academic advisement is offered by appointment and can be in-person or online

For more information about this program, please come to the Academic Advisement & Transfer Center, S-763, and ask to speak to a Title V representative.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS:

FORENSIC SCIENCE, CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION & CRIMINALISTICS

Television has both popularized forensic science and created confusion about the nature and scope of this profession. What many students fail to realize is that forensic science is **SCIENCE**. At the core of all academic forensic science programs are courses that are classified as *hard science*, e.g., chemistry. This focus is well removed from the action and drama associated with this profession on television. To begin, let's define some terms.

What is forensic science?

Forensic science is the application of the physical and biological sciences to issues in criminal justice. The field is necessarily interdisciplinary in nature and includes pathology, dentistry, physical anthropology, entomology, toxicology, and engineering.

What does a forensic scientist do?

Here we need to distinguish between a crime scene investigator and a criminalist. Crime scene investigators are usually police officers who typically are not educated or trained as scientists. Crime scene investigators work in the field rather than the laboratory. Criminalists are involved in the laboratory testing of the evidence collected by police officers at crime scenes. Television tends to blur this distinction. A forensic scientist, who may be a criminalist, examines and tests biological evidence (including DNA), trace evidence (such as glass, soil, and paint), and chemical and drug evidence. Robert Gaensslen, Director of Graduate Studies in Forensic Science at the University of Illinois says that, "... crime scene investigation should be the responsibility of trained criminalists." This is the ideal situation and this is the way things are unfortunately portrayed on TV. In reality, Gaensslen reports that this situation is atypical. The people who gather the evidence are not the scientists trained to analyze it. The message

for students: decide early which part of the process interests you in order to prepare academically.

What is the educational pathway?

If your interest is in crime scene investigation you need to become a police officer. Requirements differ depending on where you live, but typically police officers need either military experience or some number of college credits. If your interest is in the scientific examination of evidence you minimally need a bachelor's degree: usually a B.S. in chemistry, biochemistry, or biological science. Many students then go on to a master's degree in forensic science.

An alternative pathway is to pursue an undergraduate degree in forensic science. Within CUNY, John Jay College of Criminal Justice offers a B.S. degree in forensic science. The educational requirements for some specialty areas are more rigorous: some specialties require a medical degree (forensic pathology or dentistry), or a doctorate (forensic psychology).



What to do if you want a career in forensic science

- ◆ Do your research. Start with the articles below and read everything you can find about forensic science
- ◆ Get a solid background in chemistry and biology
- ◆ Start investigating graduate programs and schools
- ◆ Start reading the professional journals, e.g., Journal of Forensic Science. The best way to become a professional is to start thinking like a professional
- ◆ Visit the websites of the professional organizations:
 - American Academy of Forensic Science
 - American Board of Criminalistics
 - American Academy of Forensic Psychology
 - American Academy of Forensic Anthropology
- ◆ Join a professional organization
- ◆ Do more research

References:

- Gaensslen, R. (2003) How do I become a forensic scientist? Educational pathways to forensic science careers. *Anal Bioanal Chem*, 376.
- Gaensslen, R. (2002). Forensic science education and educational requirements for forensic scientists. *The Neact Journal*, 21 (1).



Don't Be Late

**EARLY ADVISEMENT FOR SUMMER & FALL 2008
BEGINS MARCH 30th.**

IMPORTANT DATES

- ◆ Web registration using PANTHER begins Monday, April 28th
- ◆ Early in-person registration begins Monday, May 5th
- ◆ Summer Session I registration May 28-29th (Wednesday & Thursday)
- ◆ Summer Session II registration Thursday, July 10th

Complete instructions for advisement and early registration are available at:
<http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/registrar/> or visit the AATC in S-763

Do You Have a Transfer Question



Submit your questions to:

**[http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/
transfrcntr/eadvisement/
index.html](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/transfrcntr/eadvisement/index.html)**

ABOUT THE AATC

The Academic Advisement & Transfer Center provides students with comprehensive one-on-one academic advisement and transfer services to facilitate well-informed decisions about appropriate senior college choices after graduation. Additionally, the AATC

- ◆ Administers the Title V Program for liberal arts students and the Out-in-Two Scholarship Program
- ◆ Houses and maintains a transfer library with both print and electronic resources
- ◆ Offers eadvisement, distance learning advisement and non-traditional career advisement
- ◆ Sponsors 6 senior college transfer fairs annually

**We are open 7 days a week:
M-Th 9-8; Fri 9-7; Sat 10-6; Sun 11-4**