



The Independent: A Newsletter for Liberal Studies

Winter 2012

Courtney Blandford

The Liberal Studies Outstanding Senior



How did your program - Pre-Medical Studies and Preparation for Clinical Setting - come together? What have you learned?

I decided that I wished to pursue medicine during spring of my junior year. After spending over a year dedicated to a nursing degree, I was slightly worried about the logistics of completing the many natural science prerequisite courses for medicine while also graduating in a reasonable amount of time. Liberal Studies was the perfect solution and I am so thankful that my physics lab partner told me about the program. Once I applied for the Liberal Studies major, it wasn't difficult coming up with a program that was both meaningful and attainable. I incorporated my previous studies in Spanish, Nursing, and Philosophy with the Chemistry and Biology

Courtney Blandford—Pre Med required by medical schools to create a program that came to be the perfect fit for me.

Which courses were most meaningful?

Ironically, my nursing courses were the most meaningful and the ones that opened my eyes to what I truly wanted to do with my life. My enjoyment and natural ability in my Anatomy and Physiology courses, Pathophysiology, Pharmacology, and clinical courses were the most interesting courses I have taken in college, and pointed me in the direction that I am going in today.

You studied abroad; did that affect your program and if so, how?

My study abroad experience in Spain definitely influenced my program because it is there that I completed my Spanish minor. Almost every time I tell someone I studied Spanish and am also going into health care, they express what a good idea it is for me to incorporate the two. I believe my Spanish-speaking abilities will give me an edge in health care, a possible advantage I am happy to have due to the highly competitive nature of medical school admissions.

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Congratulations to our five December 2011 degree applicants!

For those of you planning to graduate in May 2012, please apply for your degree by February 2, online through ULink.

The Crow's Nest

John R. Hale



In Liberal Studies, we spend a lot of time seeking new ideas. One of my main sources is the “Exit Interview” with each of our graduating Liberal Studies seniors. It’s a chance for the student to turn the tables on the professor and program director (that’s me) – a chance for the student to judge, make recommendations, criticize, advise, and even, in a sense, grade the Liberal Studies program on its performance over the previous semesters. From our soon-to-be graduates, I receive new ideas about Liberal Studies facilities, procedures, requirements, coursework, and daily operations. And for all of these I am deeply grateful.

One of the questions that I always ask during each interview is: “How can we make Liberal Studies better known here at UofL?” I ask this question not only for the sake of the LBST major, which clearly requires a critical mass of student majors in order to survive, but also for you, the students. Many majors have told me of repeatedly having to explain, to friends, strangers, and family, exactly what Liberal Studies *is*. If the campus community at large knew more about Liberal Studies, and understood our interdisciplinary mission, it would be a good thing – good for the purpose of attracting more students to LBST who in fact would benefit from a self-selected interdisciplinary curriculum, and good for students who could then feel proud of their choice of a major with a proven reputation.

This December, I received an idea from a graduating student that was completely new. Previous ideas had included such innovations as creating an eye-catching Liberal Studies T-shirt, or placing LBST-related advertisements or articles in *The Cardinal*. The new idea was simple: other departmental majors and student organizations sponsor on-campus events, usually in a conspicuous spot on Belknap Campus, where for one day each year they raise their visibility through service events, staffed by the students themselves. These have included book sales (History Department majors), Russian food and hot drink concessions (Russian Studies majors), and even a Flu Shot Dispensary (staffed by students from a visiting university). This seems to me a great idea for Liberal Studies.

So, now that the idea has been planted, I am seeking advice from all Liberal Studies majors. What high-profile activity or service could LBST students and staff undertake as an annual event, helping the campus community (or the larger community) in some way, but also helping to spread an awareness of Liberal Studies itself? All suggestions will be gratefully received! Just send them to me at jrhale@louisville.edu.

Please see <http://www.louisvillecardinal.com/2011/11/profile-helen-hagg-pilots-humanitarian-aid-mission/> for LBST major **Rae Hodge's** Louisville Cardinal article featuring LBST major **Helen Hagg**.

Courtney Blandford, *cont'd from page 1...*

What's next?

I have submitted my application to several medical schools around the Midwest. I am pleased with the outcome of my application and am excited to see what happens next. I feel satisfied to have completed my Bachelor's degree and to have just started a new job at Jewish Hospital that I plan on having until I start school full-time again. It is also nice to still be around UofL this year as I still have a few science courses to knock out unrelated to my degree but required by medical schools before matriculation. I love being a post-bac student; it is nice only taking four hours instead of fifteen! I am pleased to be exploring the hospital setting at Jewish while also keeping my brain (somewhat) sharp until next August when I will hopefully be roaming the halls of UofL's medical campus!



Rhonda Orman

Rhonda Orman on Transformative Learning

Your vocation is where your greatest passion meets one of the world's greatest needs.

–Robert Greenleaf

In the good life, you're applying the talents you enjoy most to an interest you're passionate about in an environment that fits who you are and what you value.

–Bob Mueller

So begins Rhonda Orman's LBST proposal for her Human Development program. Rhonda's interests in both Human Development and what is known as Transformative Learning Theory really caught my attention. How do we know what we don't know? Should we say our ignorance is to our knowing as dark matter is to space? Never mind...Rhonda says it better and certainly with more clarity. Below, I'm including excerpts from her proposal, which she very graciously agreed to share. Any choppiness is the fault of yours truly. *Maggie Noffke*

I consider myself to be a lifelong student, passionate about striving to better understand the nuances of a truth beyond my lived experience. Truth, however, proves to be an elusive target. A chameleon, changing its appearance in the eye of each beholder, it is easily misunderstood as static rather than organic. My fascination with how humans make meaning in and of their lives intersects with this paradox and forms the basis of my interest in human development. Perception equates to truth for most people regardless of the validity of the information on which they base their perception. Paraphrasing Gerald Nosich, ignorance should not be labeled as the enemy. Ignorance makes learning possible. The danger, rather, lies in ignorance of ignorance—not knowing that we don't know, believing that we do know. Such blindness becomes a breeding ground for ill-informed, harmful decisions and processes. Therein lies my passion. I strive to become increasingly aware of what I do not know. I long to shine a light in the dark recesses of humanity to reveal the empty spaces crying out to be recognized and *known*, for it is in being known that humanity universally bases meaning of the lived experience.

During the remaining years of my working career, I plan to focus on facilitating adult education with an emphasis on human development. I envision adult education to encompass training, mentoring, and teaching in both formal and informal settings. In my current employment, I am involved in developing a year-long training initiative for departmental staff focused on developing and increasing critical thinking skills. Interestingly, much of this work involves “opening the door” to a willingness to learn before the actual work of practicing critical thinking begins. So great is my passion, I can easily imagine volunteering my time in this endeavor during the retirement phase of my life.

Poverty and violence best describe my formative years. My commitment to choose a healthier lifestyle as an adult temporarily proved futile. I entered adulthood with little awareness of the influence my life experiences exerted on my thinking. Successful in creating the life I had always wanted—a life free from poverty and violence—I found my life still lacked the meaning I sought. I instead found myself confronting the destructive ideology of my childhood and thus my own destructive thought processes. A slow, permeating consciousness of all I did not know began to grow. My journey of discovery and the particular manifestations of my clouded thinking play a central role in my life but it is the *process* of this awakening and pursuit of lifelong learning that intrigues me the most.

What constitutes a learning experience? How can we know we have arrived at the truth? What promotes or hinders learning? Is the meaning, or lack thereof, we make of our life experiences helped or hindered by our learning experiences? Reflecting on my mentors and teachers and the increased meaning that has resulted in my life from expanded thinking, I've concluded *how* we learn greatly influences *what* we learn. How we learn plays a central role in our ability to internalize the knowledge and make it meaningful to our own life experience....

I want to create a career balanced between group training/teaching/facilitation and one-on-one mentoring. A LBST major is well suited to my educational needs to achieve such a career path. Unlike a single discipline, this interdisciplinary approach seeks to understand the intersection and influence between the growth of individuals and the collective growth of communities and humanity in their entirety. This whole person perspective explores growth in individuals in the larger context of communion with all of humanity and the created world.





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Liberal Studies Program

Housekeeping

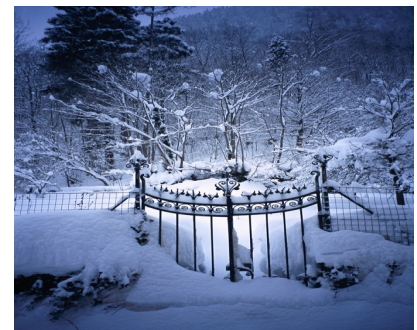
Reminders

REACH <http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/general/#GRE>
for GRE, DAT, and MCAT review session dates for spring semester.
They also provide tutoring, student success seminars, and language conversation tables.

The Career Development Center <https://louisville.edu/career/>
For career information, research, and resources, assessments, resume-writing, interviewing, and application for job and graduate schools

Out of Office

After December 9, Dr. Hale will be out of the office until after the New Year. After December 15, Maggie will be out of the office until January 3rd.



Be who you are and say
what you feel because
those who mind don't
matter and those who
matter don't mind.

Dr. Seuss

THE LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR MAY 2012
DEGREE IS FEBRUARY 2, 2012.