Combined Liberal Arts and Business: Combined Bachelor’s/Master’s Degree Opportunities

Combined degree programs (bachelor’s/master’s) at UF allow students the chance to get a head start on their graduate education by taking graduate level courses while still an undergraduate. This reduces the time and money it takes to get both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree. Liberal arts students are especially finding the combined degree programs offered by the College of Business at UF an attractive way to combine their liberal arts education with a graduate business education. We will highlight one of these programs, the Information Systems and Operations Management (ISOM BS/MS) combined degree program, in this edition of Transfer Times and other programs will be featured in future editions.

“Students from liberal arts majors perform exceptionally well in the ISOM program because of the creative, communicative and problem solving acumen that is emphasized and the need for these skills in a business environment,” says Chandra Hardy, ISOM Director of Admissions and Student Services. “When the technical skills are added to the liberal arts education, students become prime job candidates.

It is estimated that by 2020 there will be 1 million more information systems jobs than graduates to fill these jobs. Many graduates of this program currently receive multiple job offers in the $60K-$80K range,” says Ms. Hardy. Graduates with the ISOM degree are employed by consulting firms, government agencies, healthcare, industry and retail in a wide range of information systems jobs.

Transfer students who earn at least a 3.0 UF GPA can apply to either the combined degree or directly to the Master of Science ISOM program. Students in the combined degree program can potentially eliminate one semester of study required to obtain the master’s degree and graduate 1.5 years after the bachelor’s degree instead of a full two years. Add a business minor while completing the undergraduate degree and students may even be able to complete the master’s in only one year beyond the bachelor’s degree. For more information, see: http://warrington.ufl.edu/graduate/academics/ms-isom/combined/.
Welcome to the 5th edition of Transfer Times, a publication of the UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences intended to provide some helpful information for prospective transfer students. I recently read an article which bemoaned the fact that, despite all of the advances in communication technology, it remains difficult to effectively deliver your message. I’m sure those of you responsible for advising students have experienced some version of this at your own institutions! The article reminded readers that there really was no substitute for good old one-to-one communication, and I agree. That’s why I would remind each of you that we are ready and willing to talk with each and every prospective transfer student about the opportunities that await them here at UF. Please feel free to encourage interested students to reach out to us. In the meantime, I hope you will share with students the news and notes in this issue of Transfer Times. Thanks for all you do!

Joe Spillane, PhD
Associate Dean for Student Affairs
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

This year’s CLAS ambassadors include pre-med students, English majors, economics majors, and everything in between; some have aspirations to attend graduate school and others will dive straight into the workforce. It is this imbedded diversity that allows the organization to be successful and achieve its goal of assisting the College and its students. For example, the ambassadors act as student advisors during advance registration; for three weeks you can find them tabling outside Farrior Hall helping students with questions ranging from reading a degree audit to adding a minor. Their diverse backgrounds and different majors allow the ambassadors to assist more students and cover a wider range of topics as student-advisors.

In addition to advising, the ambassadors are responsible for their own programming and outreach. Past projects have included a blog geared towards liberal arts students, collecting information from CLAS alumni about where their degree took them, and hosting a charity volleyball tournament benefiting a local food bank.

Overall, the CLAS Ambassadors are here to serve as a resource for both students and faculty who are a part of the largest college at the University of Florida. CLAS ambassadors look forward to working with transfer students as they transition to UF and transfer students becoming future ambassadors.
During Fall 2015, CLAS launched its STEM majors peer mentor/mentee program, providing academic support for new transfer students who are in the mathematics and science majors. All the peer mentors are transfer students and paired with students who are in similar areas of study. The goal of the program is to help new students feel welcomed in their first year at UF by getting them connected with current students who can provide the personalized support they need as they transition to a new environment. The mentor/mentee program is typically two semesters. Students meet with their mentors at least twice a semester. The initiative has been met with great success. For more information about the peer mentor/mentee program for CLAS STEM majors, you may contact Robert Kwong at rkwong@advising.ufl.edu.

Connecting with Transfer Students

Every Fall semester, advisors from UF’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences visit Santa Fe College for their Gator Day transfer event. This gives CLAS advisors a chance to meet with prospective students and explain ways to become a competitive transfer applicant! Pre-Health advisors from CLAS also join our transfer advisors to share important information concerning various health related professional schools. CLAS is currently looking to expand their visits to more campuses all around Florida. If you would be interested in hosting an event, you may contact Richard Blake at rblake@advising.ufl.edu.
Major Spotlight: Philosophy

Why Study Philosophy at UF?

Philosophy addresses the most general and important questions that arise when we think about the world and ourselves. What is it to know something? What is truth? What makes for a good argument? How are we to understand consciousness? How am I the same as my past and future selves? Are our actions fully determined by prior causes? What makes what we do right? How ought one to live? What things are inherently valuable? In addressing such questions philosophers today engage with the ideas of the greatest thinkers of the past – Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Russell, and Wittgenstein.

What can you do with a B.A. in Philosophy? The fact is that Philosophy provides students with highly marketable, highly transferable skills useful in any career that involves thinking, talking, or writing. Employers value philosophy major’s creative problem solving and their ability to deal with ambiguity, and the statistics show that Philosophy majors have the highest increase in mid-career vs. starting salary at 103.5%. Philosophy is also excellent preparation for professional school. Philosophy majors have the highest overall score on the GRE, are second only to math and physics majors in average LSAT scores, and even top all business majors in performance on the GMAT.

But just as getting a job is not the only or best reason to attend university, so the real reason to study philosophy is that it will make your life better by making you a more reflective person. What Socrates said over 2500 years ago is still true today: "The unexamined life is not worth living."

Find out more about the UF Philosophy major at [http://www.phil.ufl.edu](http://www.phil.ufl.edu). Click on "Valuing Philosophy Education" for an archive of news reports on how Philosophy B.A.’s are faring in the job market.

John Palmer, PhD
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You may have an idea of what you want your career to look like after you graduate. But how do you know if it is really the right one for you? Or, what if you don’t know what you want to do? Figuring out a major and/or career can feel overwhelming at times. One great resource to help is the O*NET OnLine www.onetonline.org, a partner of the American Job Center network. This site enables users to search for careers based on a variety of criteria such as specific job titles, those with bright outlooks, specific types of abilities, interests, and work activities, as well as many others.

Once a career is selected that you would like to research further, this website gives a description of the position, and a sampling of similarly reported job titles. In addition, the site also details information relating to all aspects of the job. This ranges from a list of tasks you can expect to perform, tools and technology you can expect to use, the education required to obtain a career in this field, and wages and employment trends, as well as several other factors that you can explore.

Many times students have an idea of the kind of field they want to work in, but do not know the range of jobs associated with that field or what kind of education they need to reach their goals. For students considering multiple majors, O*NET OnLine can be a huge help and can take the mystery out of choosing a major and career. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a wide range of unique majors that can prepare you for a multitude of careers since the reality is that few careers require a specific undergraduate major. Explore our majors at www.clas.ufl.edu/majors.