Developing Innovative Master’s Programs in Liberal Studies
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1) Executive Overview

Key Observations

Employer demand for candidates with graduate or professional degrees and liberal studies skills has fluctuated over the past four years both nationally and regionally. Texas MSA’s represent major sources of demand for these candidates in the southern United States. Southern employers exhibit demand for a variety of soft skills (e.g., communication, leadership) as well as business skills (e.g., planning, management) and most frequently demand this skill set for management-level occupations. Employers from a variety of industries demand these candidates, but demand is particularly high in the health care and education industries.

Liberal studies master’s programs at small, religiously-affiliated, private institutions provide students with academic and personal enrichment, but do not prepare students for specific professional outcomes or next steps. Programs often attract part-time students with other commitments (e.g., employment, dependents); therefore, administrators design curricula to provide high levels of flexibility and choice. Some programs offer opportunities to specialize through concentrations or certificates to increase program graduate employability. Total program costs vary from $18,900 to over $36,000 across profiled institutions. Most programs maintain only one program director for staff and leverage existing courses and faculty at the graduate school to limit instructional costs.

Our research did not reveal any existing programs that incorporate mandatory study abroad experiences or offer students the option of an embedded global experience certificate that includes study abroad. However, there do exist MALS programs that offer study abroad opportunities or global studies concentrations. Similar to other MALS concentrations, global studies concentrations typically constitute around 50 percent of master’s program coursework and include a capstone experience. Although enrollment in the global studies certificate of Institution A’s MLA program is low, many students enroll in global studies courses without enrolling in the certificate program and contacts report interest in global studies from prospective students. Institutions that offer study abroad opportunities struggle to offer them consistently as the variety of student schedules and interests often results in prohibitively low demand.
2) Employer Demand for Program Graduates

Overall Demand

Methodology
The following analysis is based on a search that identifies job postings for which employers required a graduate or professional degree and any of the following liberal studies skills: critical thinking, writing, qualitative research, quantitative analysis, library research, and communications skills.

Southern U.S. searches included the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

National employer demand for candidates with graduate or professional degrees and liberal studies skills has fluctuated over the past four years. Job postings may indicate overall growth in employer demand for candidates with these qualifications, but may also reflect generalized recovery of the U.S. economy. Job postings from the southern region indicate a similar trend.

Demand Over Time for Candidates with Graduate or Professional Degrees and Liberal Studies Skills

National Job Postings, January 2010 – December 2013

The graphs at right may not accurately represent the rise in demand between H1 and H2 2013. Data collected after June 2013 is not directly comparable to data collected prior due to a change in the Labor/Insight™ tool’s web spidering technology.

Demand Over Time for Candidates with Graduate or Professional Degrees and Liberal Studies Skills

Southern Region Job Postings, January 2010 – December 2013

Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™
In the southern region, the tool identified the most postings for Texas metropolitan statistical areas; Dallas, Houston, and Austin represent three of the top five areas of demand. Atlanta and Miami also represent strong potential hiring markets for MALS program graduates.

Southern MSA’s where Employers Demonstrate the Highest Demand for Candidates with Graduate or Professional Degrees and Liberal Studies Skills

*Southern Region Job Postings, May 2013 – April 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>Number of Job Postings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX</td>
<td>31,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX</td>
<td>26,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA</td>
<td>25,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL</td>
<td>14,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos, TX</td>
<td>11,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC</td>
<td>10,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL</td>
<td>9,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville-Davidson—Murfreesboro—Franklin, TN</td>
<td>6,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL</td>
<td>6,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham-Chapel Hill, NC</td>
<td>5,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX</td>
<td>5,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raleigh-Cary, NC</td>
<td>5,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville, FL</td>
<td>4,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN</td>
<td>3,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma City, OK</td>
<td>3,287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 260,456 job postings with 15,687 unspecified

Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™

Skills in Demand

Employers of candidates with graduate or professional degrees and liberal studies skills demonstrate the highest demand for soft skills, such as communication skills, writing, organizational skills, and leadership. Job postings also suggest that employers desire candidates with business skills, such as planning, management, and project management. Contacts at Institution A report that many MALS students enroll in business courses to satisfy elective credits, which suggests that students also recognize the employer demand for a combination of traditional liberal studies competencies and business skills. Administrators should consider partnering with business schools to enable students to pursue leadership and management coursework as a part of MALS curricula.
### Top Baseline Skills from Job Postings for Candidates with Graduate or Professional Degrees and Liberal Studies Skills

*Southern Region Job Postings, May 2013 – April 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>179,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>128,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Skills</td>
<td>100,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>89,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>70,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>63,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>62,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Excel</td>
<td>52,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>50,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>49,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Office</td>
<td>44,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Building Effective Relationships with...</em></td>
<td>38,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Powerpoint</td>
<td>31,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail-Oriented</td>
<td>30,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory Skills</td>
<td>29,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>29,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Skills</td>
<td>28,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation Skills</td>
<td>27,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assurance and Control</td>
<td>27,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>26,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting</td>
<td>25,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>22,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>21,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Tasking</td>
<td>20,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>19,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Building Effective Relationships with Customers/Co-Workers
n = 260,456 job postings with 2,490 unspecified
Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight"
Although not necessarily the skills most frequently demanded by employers in the past 12 months, skills like problem identification, bilingualism, a positive disposition, and critical thinking demonstrate the highest year-over-year growth in employer demand. Our search identified 1,140 job postings that required problem identification skills in the last 12 months, but only 568 between April 2013 and May 2012; this represents a 101 percent increase in demand. Liberal arts program curricula should encompass these soft skills to offer students employable skills for the future.

**Fastest-Growing Soft Skills with at Least 1,000 Postings in the Last 12 Months by Percent Growth**

*Southern Region Job Postings, May 2012 – April 2014*

For reference, the tool shows that the overall number of job postings identified for these search parameters increased by 35.3 percent over the same time period used in the graph at right.

*Building Effective Relationships with Customers/Co-Workers
n (May 2013 – April 2014) = 260,456 job postings with 2,490 unspecified
n (May 2012 – April 2013) = 192,501 job postings with 1,685 unspecified
Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™*
Employers from a broad range of industries demonstrate demand for candidates with graduate or professional degrees and liberal studies skills, which indicates that MALS programs could recruit students seeking to pursue a wide variety of career paths. In particular, the education and health care sectors demonstrate strong demand in the southern region. In the last 12 months, Deloitte and the Department of Veterans Affairs publicized nearly 3,000 job postings each for these candidates. Top employers also represent audiences for marketing and career placement relationships.

**Top Employers of Candidates with Graduate or Professional Degrees and Liberal Studies Skills**

*Southern Region Job Postings, May 2013 – April 2014*

- Deloitte Development LLC
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Hospital Corporation of America
- UnitedHealth Group
- Hewlett-Packard
- ITT Educational Services, Inc.
- University of North Carolina
- Humana
- Education Management Corporation
- BB&T Corporation
- University of Florida
- Texas A&M University
- General Electric Company
- AT&T
- Accenture
- The Boeing Company
- University of Georgia
- Carolinas HealthCare System
- 24 Hour Fitness
- Ernst & Young
- Lockheed Martin Corporation
- Baycare Health System
- Dell
- Citi
- Parkland Health
- KPMG

n = 260,456 job postings with 62,870 unspecified
Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™
Employers most frequently demand liberal studies skills and graduate degrees for employment in manager-level occupations. MALS program graduates lack necessary qualifications for many top occupations, especially those in the health care industry; however, graduates could find strong demand for their qualifications in educational occupations (e.g., education administration) and manager positions in less technical fields (e.g., marketing). A curriculum that includes some business or leadership coursework would most effectively position graduates for employment in these occupations.

### Top Occupations where Employers Demand Graduate or Professional Degrees and Liberal Studies Skills

*Southern Region Job Postings, May 2013 – April 2014*

- **Medical and Health Services Managers**: 10,715
- **Software Developers, Applications**: 9,623
- **Registered Nurses**: 8,637
- **Managers, All Other**: 6,076
- **Computer Systems Analysts**: 5,993
- **Marketing Managers**: 5,445
- **Lawyers**: 5,114
- **Nurse Practitioners**: 4,809
- **Financial Analysts**: 4,600
- **Postsecondary Teachers, All Other**: 4,418
- **Sales Managers**: 4,407
- **Financial Managers**: 4,340
- **Education Administrators, Postsecondary**: 4,209
- **Human Resources Specialists**: 4,164
- **General and Operations Managers**: 4,014
- **Accountants**: 3,962
- **Management Analysts**: 3,926
- **Sales Representatives**: 3,466
- **Auditors**: 3,294
- **Business Intelligence Analysts**: 2,873
- **Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists**: 2,846
- **First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers**: 2,641
- **Computer and Information Systems Managers**: 2,580
- **Counselors**: 2,462
- **Financial Managers, Branch or Department**: 2,400

*Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products
*Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors

n = 260,456 job postings with 4,492 unspecified

Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™
3) Program Design at Private, Religious Institutions

Curricula

*Design Curricular Requirements to Provide Flexibility, Interdisciplinarity, and Specialization*

This report examines the master’s programs in liberal arts and liberal studies at four small to mid-size private institutions with religious affiliations: Abilene Christian University, Creighton University, Dallas Baptist University, and Loyola University Maryland.

All four programs require students to complete 36 credits of coursework (i.e., 12 courses). Program students are highly independent and enroll for diverse curricular and career pursuits. Therefore, curricula are student-driven and allow students a high degree of flexibility in the focus and selection of coursework. However, institutions also provide students the option to specialize up to 50 percent of program coursework. Contacts indicate that an area of focus helps characterize a student’s course of study and define their degree for future employers.

**Curriculum Design Emphasis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dallas Baptist University</th>
<th>Creighton University</th>
<th>Abilene Christian University</th>
<th>Loyola University Maryland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity for</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interdisciplinary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Profiled Program Curricula**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Introductory Core</strong></th>
<th>Master of Liberal Arts at Dallas Baptist University</th>
<th>Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at Creighton University</th>
<th>Master of Liberal Arts at Abilene Christian University</th>
<th>Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at Loyola University Maryland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three interdisciplinary courses in:</td>
<td>One three-credit seminar on the theme of Understanding the World</td>
<td>No requirements</td>
<td>No requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Western Heritage and Christianity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ World Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Western Culture through the Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Opportunity for</strong></th>
<th>Master of Liberal Arts at Dallas Baptist University</th>
<th>Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at Creighton University</th>
<th>Master of Liberal Arts at Abilene Christian University</th>
<th>Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at Loyola University Maryland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialization</strong></td>
<td>Optional 18-credit concentrations in nine areas of study (e.g., East Asian Studies, Political Science, Missions)</td>
<td>No requirements</td>
<td>Required 18-credit area of focus defined by the student</td>
<td>No requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Elective Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 or 9 credits without any restrictions</td>
<td>27 credits, including four courses from the MALS program offerings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 or 15 credits</td>
<td>33 or 36 credits, including at least 27 credits from the MALS program offerings and including at least one course in each of three thematic areas: Historical Approaches, Themes in the Modern Experience, Creative Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No requirements</td>
<td>One three-credit directed independent research project completed prior to the capstone experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One course from at least two academic divisions; cannot complete more than 18 credits in any single discipline</td>
<td>No requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Capstone Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No requirements</td>
<td>One three-credit capstone course or independent research project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One three or six-credit synthesis project</td>
<td>Optional three-credit capstone project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Total</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36 credits</td>
<td>36 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 credits</td>
<td>36 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 credits</td>
<td>36 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Offer Students Interdisciplinary Capstone Experiences that Require both Written and Oral Components**

Students can complete a variety of capstone projects in accordance with their diverse coursework, including artistic productions. However, capstone experiences frequently include both a written product and an oral component (e.g., discussion section, oral examination, presentation).

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**Research Emphasis at Creighton University**

The program at Creighton University emphasizes student research more than all other profiled programs. Students complete a directed independent research project with a faculty advisor and then enroll in either a capstone project or capstone course. The capstone course provides a venue for students to present and discuss their directed independent research projects. The capstone project enables students to extend their previous research through academic research, applied research, or creative work under the guidance of a three-person faculty committee.

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**Consider Online Delivery of Coursework to Attract Target Student Audience**

Master’s programs in liberal studies typically attract students that enroll part-time and maintain other commitments (e.g., employment, dependents). To increase flexibility and attract these students, faculty can deliver courses in online and blended formats. Loyola University Maryland and Creighton University require liberal studies students to complete all coursework in face-to-face formats, but the Dallas Baptist University program can be completed entirely online.
Profiled Liberal Studies Programs are Designed for Personal and Academic Enrichment, Not Professional Advancement

Most program websites emphasize the lack of concrete professional next steps for program graduates. The Dallas Baptist University website indicates that the liberal arts program is not directed toward professional research or doctoral studies. The Abilene Christian University website explains that students may enroll in the program for professional enhancement, but it "is not designed to produce a standard career credential as are more traditional master's degree programs." ¹

Typical Admission Requirements

- A bachelor’s degree in any subject from a regionally accredited institution
- At least a 3.0 undergraduate GPA (only for the last two years of study for Loyola University Maryland)
- May require GRE score submission

Collaborate with Graduate School Departments to Leverage Existing Courses for Liberal Arts Curricula

Only the Loyola University of Maryland program maintains dedicated faculty and requires that students complete a majority of credits through program coursework. The Creighton University program also offers substantial coursework, but students in the Abilene Christian University and Dallas Baptist University programs complete almost all credits through enrollment in courses provided by other departments. Through collaborations and enrollment agreements, liberal studies program directors can greatly reduce instructional costs for the program and facilitate interdisciplinary study for students.

Liberal Studies Programs Maintain Lean Administrative Staff, but Charge High Tuition

Many institutions develop liberal studies graduate programs to increase net revenue as instructional costs and staffing costs are low. Although all four programs require the same number of credits and charge tuition per credit hour, overall program cost varies dramatically across institutions. Tuition does not appear to correlate with program staffing. In fact, Loyola University Maryland maintains the largest staff but charges the lowest tuition.

Program Staff and Tuition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Program Staff</th>
<th>Total Estimated Tuition and Fees for Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyola University Maryland</td>
<td>• Program Director</td>
<td>$18,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Director of Program Operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assistant Director of Recruitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas Baptist University</td>
<td>• Program director</td>
<td>$26,820 (all face-to-face)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$28,260 (all online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creighton University</td>
<td>• Program Director</td>
<td>$28,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abilene Christian University</td>
<td>• Program advisor (faculty member)</td>
<td>$36,576</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Abilene Christian University Master of Liberal Arts program website (Accessed 12 May 2014) (http://www.acu.edu/graduate/degree-programs/liberal-arts/index.html)
4) Embedding a Global Studies or Study Abroad Component

**Options for Incorporation**

*Develop a Global Studies Certificate or Concentration within the Liberal Studies Curricula*

Multiple graduate-level liberal studies programs offer students the ability to concentrate a portion of their curricula in global or international studies. Most concentrations and certificate programs constitute one-third to one-half of total program credits and require students to complete a capstone project or course in their area of concentration.

**Case Study: the Global Studies Certificate Program at Institution A**

The Institution A Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) program enables students to pursue a certificate within the liberal studies curriculum. Students can create any concentration, but the program offers 14 programs leading to certificates (e.g., Folklore Studies, Urban Studies). Program administrators developed certificate programs to increase student employability after graduation; certificates provide a marker of concentration recognized in the marketplace.

The Global Studies certificate program was implemented in 2007. Only students in the MLA program can complete a global studies certificate. The program requires students to complete seven of nine MLA courses in global studies; this includes a global studies seminar, five courses with global subject matter, and a capstone project on a global studies topic.

The program website indicates that the Global Studies Certificate is designed for:

- Students interested in graduate-level research in global studies
- Professionals whose careers require global studies knowledge
- Students interested in employment in the global marketplace or international non-profits
- Educations who wish to incorporate global studies topics into their classroom teaching

However, contacts indicate that few teachers pursue the program. Program administrators do not systematically track student employment outcomes after program completion; anecdotal evidence and conversations with students during their studies indicates that global studies certificate students typically seek global knowledge and competencies for professional development and future international employment, whether abroad or in the U.S. For example, professionals in international finance have enrolled in the program in the past. In particular, many international students pursue global studies courses.

The MLA program overall enrolls 160 to 170 active students, with 60 to 70 percent of students actively enrolled in coursework each semester. Only 10 to 15 students have formally completed a global studies certificate over the past seven years, but global studies is still one of the three most popular certificate programs, along with urban studies and cinema studies. Also, contacts report that many students pursue global studies courses but may not officially apply for the certificate. In fact, anecdotal evidence suggests that the global studies certificate option acts as a recruitment vehicle for the MLA program; a significant number of students mention the global studies certificate in application interviews.
Other Liberal Studies Programs with Global or International Concentrations

- At Southern Methodist University, students in the Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) program can pursue 11 different concentrations, including a concentration in Global Studies. The global studies concentration is not designed as a professional or vocational credential, but as curricular enrichment. To receive a transcript notation for this concentration, students must complete their six elective courses (18 out of 36 credit hours) in global studies; courses that qualify are determined by students and their faculty advisors. The program requires that at least two courses have a non-Western focus.²

- The City University of New York Graduate Center offers over 20 tracks in its MALS program. Of the 30 total credits, students in the International Studies track complete two introductory courses in international studies and a master’s thesis or project on an international topic.³

Create Optional Study Abroad Opportunities for Liberal Studies Students

There are also a few liberal studies programs that provide students with study abroad opportunities. Due to the scheduling constraints of liberal studies program students (i.e., mostly part-time), administrators design study abroad opportunities as two or three-week travel components during the summer or a mid-semester break. Travel components may be embedded within normal courses or constitute stand alone-for-credit offerings. Program administrators typically engage a faculty member to develop and lead study abroad trips.

Liberal Studies Programs with Study Abroad Options

- The graduate program in liberal studies at Duke University offers students a limited number of summer study abroad opportunities. To accommodate part-time and working adult populations, these summer courses typically involve on-campus instruction and a two-week study abroad component. Students must apply for the program as enrollment is limited. In 2014, the program will offer a study abroad course in Florence, Italy. Tuition equals $3,600 and program literature indicates that students should budget approximately $3,236 for room, board, airfare, and other expenses.⁴ The program website appears to indicate that these MLA seminars with study abroad components are offered every two years. Every year, students can also choose to enroll in three-week summer seminar courses at Oxford University through the International Summer Schools program.⁵

- The MLS program at Southern Methodist University offers students both the global studies concentration and a number of three-credit study abroad opportunities each summer. Students do not have to complete the concentration to participate in study abroad, nor are students in the concentration required to avail themselves of study abroad opportunities. Southern Methodist University contracts with Portus Travel to offer study abroad trips. To engage non-traditional students, many of these study abroad trips allow spouses or dependents to participate as auditors. This practice also likely increases program revenue at marginal additional cost.⁶

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² Southern Methodist University website (Accessed 20 May 2014) (http://www.smu.edu/~mediamedia/Site/Simmons/MLS/PDF/GlobalStudiesConcentration.ashx)
³ City University of New York website (Accessed 20 May 2014) (http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Page-Elements/Academics-Research-Centers-Initiatives/Masters-Programs/Liberal-Studies/Program-tracks/International-Studies)
⁴ Duke University website, Graduate Liberal Studies 2014 Summer Study Abroad (http://liberalstudies.duke.edu/documents/Study%20Abroad%20final%202014.pdf)
⁵ Duke University website (Accessed 20 May 2014) (http://liberalstudies.duke.edu/academics/index.php)
⁶ Southern Methodist University website (Accessed 20 May 2014) (http://www.smu.edu/Simmons/AreasOfStudy/MLS/StudyAway)
Develop a Global Experience Certificate with a Study Abroad Component

There do not appear to exist programs that offer study abroad opportunities as part of a global or international studies concentration. Similarly, we were unable to identify any programs in which students receive certification or recognition for substantial study abroad experience.

However, some institutions do offer “global experience” certificate programs that acknowledge student completion of significant international coursework and international studies. These are typically at the undergraduate level and only available to students already pursuing a degree program. For example, North Carolina State University awards a Global Perspectives Certificate for completing the following requirements:

- An international experience (e.g., study abroad, international internship, overseas volunteer program, research abroad)
- At least three credits of language study
- Four courses with strong international emphases
- Thirty hours of co-curricular internationally-focused activities and 10 hours of internationally-focused volunteer work
- A final project on global experiences, including public presentation or publishing

North Carolina State University website (Accessed 20 May 2014) (http://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/for-students/global-perspectives-certificate/gpc-certificate-requirements/)
Other Study Abroad Certificate Programs

- Study Abroad Certificate at Washington and Lee University: http://www2.wlu.edu/x59373.xml
- Study Abroad Certificate at Fort Hays State University: http://www.fhsu.edu/academic/internationalization/studyabroadcertificate/
- Global Experience Certificate at the University of Waterloo: https://uwaterloo.ca/international/go-abroad/get-your-global-experience-certificate
- Global Competence Certificate from GCC: http://www.globalcompetencecertificate.org/
- Global Competency program at Thompson Rivers University: http://www.tru.ca/services/beyond/global.html
- Global Certificate at Washington University in St. Louis: https://global.wustl.edu/university-wide-international-initiatives/the-global-certificate/
5) Research Methodology

Project Challenge

Leadership at a member institution approached the Forum with the following questions:

▪ What employer demand exists for liberal studies master’s program graduates, particularly in the Southern United States?
▪ What skills do employers seek?
▪ How do administrators design liberal studies master’s programs at private, religiously-affiliated institutions?
▪ How could a liberal studies program provide students with global studies or study abroad experience?

Project Sources

The Forum consulted the following sources for this report:

▪ EAB’s internal and online research libraries (http://www.eab.com/)
▪ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (http://nces.ed.gov/)
▪ Abilene Christian University Master of Liberal Arts program website (http://www.acu.edu/graduate/degree-programs/liberal-arts/index.html)
▪ Creighton University Liberal Studies Master of Arts program website (http://academics.creighton.edu/program/liberal-studies-master-arts-ma)
▪ Dallas Baptist University Master of Liberal Arts program website (http://www3.dbu.edu/graduate/mla.asp)
▪ Loyola University Maryland Graduate Program in Liberal Studies website (http://www.loyola.edu/academic/liberalstudies)

Research Parameters

The Forum interviewed graduate liberal studies program directors.

A Guide to Institutions Profiled in this Brief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Approximate Institutional Enrollment (Undergraduate/Total)</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Abilene Christian University</td>
<td>South (City, Midsized)</td>
<td>3,600/4,400</td>
<td>Master’s Colleges and Universities (Larger Programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Creighton University</td>
<td>Midwest (City, Large)</td>
<td>4,000/7,700</td>
<td>Master’s Colleges and Universities (Larger Programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Dallas Baptist University</td>
<td>South (City, Large)</td>
<td>3,500/5,600</td>
<td>Master’s Colleges and Universities (Larger Programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Loyola University Maryland</td>
<td>Mid-Atlantic (City, Large)</td>
<td>3,900/6,000</td>
<td>Master’s Colleges and Universities (Larger Programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution A</td>
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<td>12,000/25,000</td>
<td>Research Universities (Very High Research Activity)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Profiled through publically available sources

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (http://nces.ed.gov/)