

**MEMORANDUM**

January 6, 2010

To James Everett, Acting Dean of Arts & Sciences  
From Robin Walz, BLA Coordinator (Juneau Campus)  
Copy Roberta Stell, UAS Provost  
Jane Terzis, Humanities Chair

Re Bachelor of Liberal Arts Mid-Year Report – Catalog Year 2009-2010

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With the newly revised BLA degree program underway, this is a mid-year report of developments to date. The short version: the degree program has launched well and the logistical pieces are coming together.

In greater detail:

1. New BLA Enrollment under Catalog Year 2009-2010 (as of December 14, 2009)

BLA Interdisciplinary Studies Majors	16 Students
BLA Pre-Major	28 Students

This total of 44 students represents one-quarter of the 174 students currently enrolled in the BLA, including the 130 carry-over students from past years under the previous design. That one-quarter of all BLA students have enrolled in the new degree program during its first available semester is impressive.

(Note: The BLA student total of 174 students does not include 45 students who permanently remain “Undeclared”; from a programmatic perspective, these students are not formally enrolled or admitted to the BLA or any other degree program, but are merely “placeholders.”)

2. General Advising and Orientation

A coherent system of intake advising has been established. All new students are admitted as BLA Pre-Majors and are advised by UAS Academic Advising to work on General Education Requirements. Upon completing 24 university credits, these students are referred to A&S Advising Coordinators for full admission to the BLA degree program. Transfer, returning, or change-of-major students are referred directly to the A&S Advising Coordinators.

On the Juneau campus, all new BLA students receive general advising from the BLA Coordinator to select a Major Emphasis (Interdisciplinary, Designated Emphasis, Individual Design) and to receive an initial Faculty Advisor assignment. To date, 16 students have received BLA general advising on the Juneau campus (24 scheduled, 8 no shows). All distance students are advised by BLA Distance Coordinator, Bill Urquhart.

### 3. Orientation to the Liberal Arts (HUM 200) & BLA Portfolio Review (HUM 210)

From 16 new BLA Interdisciplinary Studies Majors, 13 students are enrolled in HUM 200 Orientation to the Liberal Arts and 14 in HUM 210 BLA Portfolio Review. The Portfolio Review course is particularly important for students: in this course, students will develop degree plans and a schedule for degree completion, each requiring approval by their faculty advisor.

Given the current number of BLA Pre-Majors and expected increases in transfer, returning, and change-of-major students as direct BLA Majors, it is anticipated that a section of each of these courses will be offered each semester on the Juneau campus. The first offerings of HUM 200 and HUM 210 by distance from the Ketchikan campus will begin in Fall 2010. The frequency of offerings by distance (each semester or once a year) will be established by actual enrollments.

### 4. BLA Faculty Work Group

One of the critical problems with previous BLA design was that no faculty was charged with oversight responsibility for the degree program. Toward resolving this shortcoming, a BLA Faculty Work Group has been formed to begin in Spring 2010.

Current BLA Work Group members:

Robin Walz, BLA Coordinator & Associate Professor of History (Juneau)  
Kevin Krein, Associate Professor of Philosophy (Juneau)  
Rod Landis, Associate Professor of English (Ketchikan)  
John Radzilowski, Assistant Professor of History (Ketchikan)  
Bill Urquhart, BLA Distance Coordinator & Assistant Professor of Sociology (Ketchikan)  
Jennifer Vernon, Assistant Professor of Communications (Juneau)

Tasks the BLA Work Group will address during Spring 2010 include but are not limited to:

- HUM 200 & HUM 210 Scheduling: finding and selecting faculty to teach these courses each term on the Juneau campus and annually or each term on the Ketchikan campus.
- Catalog Revisions: as the degree program is implemented, adjustments in requirements will become apparent. The BLA Work Group will identify those issues and will make recommendations to the Humanities Department. Those changes supported by the Humanities Department will either be forwarded directly to the Registrar for minor catalog revisions or, for substantive changes, to Curriculum Committee.
- Develop a BLA Assessment Plan: a major failing of the old BLA program was that it had no Assessment Plan. During Spring 2010, the BLA Work Group will constitute and charge a faculty team with the task of developing a BLA Assessment Plan. Upon draft completion, the plan will be reviewed by the BLA Work Group, forwarded to the Humanities Department, and upon acceptance filed with the Office of the Provost.