TWO-YEAR PROGRAM (AA)

LIBERAL ARTS

The term “liberal arts” describes studies that provide general knowledge and intellectual skills rather than more specialized occupational or professional skills. Liberal arts students will explore courses in a wide range of areas, sample various disciplines to determine their educational futures, prepare themselves for continued study towards a baccalaureate degree, all while learning:

- How to think while examining, evaluating, developing and supporting arguments with critical thinking skills.
- How to learn by exercising the mind, organizing new material and expanding understanding of the familiar to understanding of something new.
- How to see the world as a whole, connecting the dots between ideas and areas of study and learning valuable lessons about the nature of the human experience.
- How to enjoy education and feel confident about personal opinions and ideas.
- How to be prepared for a job, including honing problem-solving skills, written and verbal communication, and analysis of information.

Where can a degree in liberal arts take you?
To a bachelor’s degree and beyond! Financially speaking, a four-year degree is a costly endeavor. Earning an associate degree in liberal arts is a cost-effective route to a bachelor’s degree, as many of the course credits can be transferred to four-year institutions. Maria graduates have completed four-year degrees locally at the University at Albany, The College of Saint Rose, Sage College of Albany and Siena College, to name a few.

Choose a concentration.
Maria’s concentrations provide options for a student interested in a particular area of study. Our faculty is talented, dedicated and passionate about the opportunity to work with and advise students, guide them with planning course work and exploring interests, and help them to think about options and work toward goals.

English Concentration
The English concentration focuses on a student’s interest in writing and literature. Upon completion of the degree, the student will be prepared to transfer to a four-year college to study English, leading to careers including teaching, journalism, publishing, public relations and law. Employers consistently note that the top skill they seek in hiring employees is communication, especially in writing.

Psychology Concentration
The psychology concentration explores the science of behavior and mental processes, while emphasizing the scientific and empirical bases of psychology. Students with psychology concentrations pursue bachelor’s degrees in psychology or related social or behavioral sciences, and seek employment in the mental health, counseling or personnel fields.

Religious Studies/Philosophy Concentration
The religious studies/philosophy concentration engages students in the study of life’s most fundamental ethical questions and the quest for ultimate meaning, and gives them the opportunity to investigate a variety of religious experiences and philosophical perspectives. It is especially recommended for students seeking further study in religious studies, philosophy and/or theology.

Complete the credits.
The liberal arts student must successfully complete 64 credits as follows:

- 48 credits of liberal arts (three in religious studies and an additional three in philosophy or religious studies, along with six credits in English, which must include Eng 111).
- 12 credits in each of three of the following four areas to total 36 credits:
  - Religious Studies/Philosophy
  - Social Science (sociology, psychology, economics, etc.)
  - Natural Science (mathematics, science, etc.)
  - Humanities (English, nonstudio art and music, etc.)
- 12 additional credits in any liberal arts course offerings.
- 14 credits, not necessarily in liberal arts areas, which must be approved by an academic advisor.
- 2 credits of First Year Experience

Try a class online.
At Maria, we’re all about supporting students, and that goes for those taking online classes, too. We think that for our diverse community, with families and work and very full schedules, learning online can only enhance the experience. Course work for an online class can be completed at convenient locations and times, usually within a regular semester. While most work is done remotely, some courses may require on-campus meetings for labs or exams.