



MARIA COLLEGE

Liberal Arts and General Studies Programs

Student Handbook 2011-2012

**MARIA COLLEGE
700 New Scotland Avenue
Albany, New York 12208**

MARIA COLLEGE
LIBERAL ARTS AND GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAMS
STUDENT HANDBOOK

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MARIA COLLEGE

Liberal Arts and General Studies Programs

MISSION

The mission of the Liberal Arts and General Studies Programs at Maria College is to provide students with a quality education that will allow them the opportunity to use their learned skills to open a variety of avenues for their futures, especially in areas that involve caring service to others. The curriculum in Liberal Arts and General Studies is grounded in the humanities and intended to nurture a respect for the value, dignity, and diversity of all people. It is reviewed and revised by dedicated faculty to remain relevant and useful to students as well as to maintain high academic standards. Also, the curriculum is delivered through flexible scheduling options and in small classes promoting a warm, encouraging environment that allows students to grow.

Program Descriptions

- A. The **Liberal Arts** program is a multi-purpose program providing students the opportunity to pursue a well-rounded education by exploring courses in a wide range of areas such as psychology, English, science, etc.; to sample various disciplines to determine their educational futures; or to prepare themselves for continued study towards a baccalaureate degree.
- B. The **General Studies** program is designed for students who wish to enter a career program but lack prerequisites and/or a level of skills needed for acceptance into a specific program. It is also designed for students who wish post-secondary education for enrichment or to further develop career goals.

Flexibility in scheduling for both degrees can accommodate the needs of those students who wish to complete these programs through day, evening, and/or weekend courses as well as online courses. Students in both Liberal Arts and General Studies should work closely and frequently with their academic advisors.

Programs Learning Outcomes

By their completion of the Liberal Arts or General Studies Programs, students will be able to

1. Demonstrate the skill of problem solving, use scientific reasoning, perform specific calculations, and/or apply logical organizational skills.
2. Critically analyze written and oral material.
3. Demonstrate basic knowledge of human needs, values, achievements, and diverse cultures.
4. Speak and write technically correct English in order to express one's self with clarity and purpose.
5. Access a variety of information resources (e.g. computer, library, databases), evaluate the quality of the information, and effectively use the information.

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Liberal Arts and General Studies Programs

Programs Curriculum and Credits

A. Liberal Arts – Associate in Arts (AA)

The Liberal Arts student must successfully complete 64 credits as follows:

1. 48 credits of Liberal Arts (including 3 credits in Religious Studies and an additional 3 credits in Religious Studies or Philosophy and 6 credits in English, including English 111) distributed as follows:
2. 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, non-studio Art and Music, etc.)
3. 12 additional credits in any Liberal Arts course offerings
4. 16 credits, not necessarily in Liberal Arts areas, which must be approved by an academic advisor.

B. General Studies – Associate in Science (AS)

The General Studies student must successfully complete 64 credits as follows:

1. 12 credits to fulfill the College requirements of 3 credits in Religious Studies and an additional 3 credits in Philosophy or Religious Studies, and 6 credits in English, including English 111.
2. 20 credits of a Liberal Arts core in areas of humanities (English, nonstudio Art and Music, etc.), Natural Sciences (Mathematics, Science, Computer Science, etc.), Social Sciences (Psychology, Sociology, Economics, etc.), and Religious Studies/ Philosophy, with a reasonable distribution in three of the four areas.
3. 32 credits of free electives.

The General Studies student is encouraged to consider a block of courses in a particular career field to facilitate future employment or education.

Liberal Arts Degree Concentrations

Students in the Liberal Arts Program have the option of receiving a Liberal Arts degree with one of three concentrations: English, Psychology, or Religious Studies/Philosophy.

The concentrations allow students to focus some of their degree credits on a particular area of interest which may then lead them into a bachelor's degree or a specific area of employment.

The curriculums and credits needed for the concentrations are listed below (these credits will come from 100 and 200 level courses only):

English Concentration

The Liberal Arts—English concentration student must successfully complete 64 credits as follows:

1. 48 credits of Liberal Arts (including the College requirements of three credits in Religious Studies and an additional three credits in Religious Studies or Philosophy and six credits in English including English 111) distributed as follows:
 2. 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.)
 3. 12 credits in the English concentration
4. 16 credits, not necessarily in Liberal Arts areas, which must be approved by an academic advisor.

Psychology Concentration

The Liberal Arts—Psychology Concentration Student must successfully complete 64 credits as follows:

1. 48 credits of Liberal Arts (including the College requirement of three credits in Religious Studies and an additional three credits in Religious Studies or Philosophy and six credits in English including English 111) distributed as follows:
 2. 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, Non-studio Art and Music, etc.)
 3. 12 credits in the Psychology concentration
4. 16 credits, not necessarily in Liberal Arts areas, which must be approved by an academic advisor.

Religious Studies/Philosophy Concentration

The Liberal Arts—Religious Studies/Philosophy concentration Student must successfully complete 64 credits as follows:

1. 48 credits of Liberal Arts (including the College requirements of three credits in Religious Studies and an additional three credits in Religious Studies or Philosophy and six credits in English including English 111) distributed as follows:
 3. 12 credits in the Religious Studies/Philosophy concentration
 4. 16 credits, not necessarily in Liberal Arts areas, which must be approved by an academic advisor.
 - Natural Science (Mathematics, etc.)
 - Humanities (English, Nonstudio Art, etc.)
2. 12 credits in each of three of the following four areas to total 36 credits:
 - Religious Studies/Philosophy
 - Social Science (Sociology, Psychology, etc.)

Liberal Arts Program – Philosophy and Religious Studies Courses

The aim of the Philosophy and Religious Studies courses at Maria College is to involve students in the study of life's most fundamental ethical questions and the ultimate meaning of human existence. As philosophy searches for truth by asking the questions what is knowledge, what is good and what is real, religious studies approaches truth by asking what is the nature of religious experience. These courses are an important component of Maria College's curriculum, as is fitting for a college sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy. Religious studies and philosophy courses strive to reflect the mission of the College.

Goals of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Courses

To help students understand and appreciate the broad role ethical concerns and religious experience plays in human culture.

To help students, regardless of personal religious stance, to understand and be able to articulate the importance of ethical and religious beliefs in the political, social, economic, and international arenas today.

To promote critical thinking and the ability to articulate an argument clearly and persuasively both in speech and in writing.

To expose students to diverse perspectives on religion and society, by exploring religious ideas in a multicultural and interfaith context.

To provide students an academic investigation of philosophical and religious experience through critical study and appreciation of the various philosophical and religious traditions of the world.

To prepare Maria College students to enter careers with the skill to make ethical decisions and the awareness and appreciation of cultural and religious diversity.

Philosophy/Religious Studies Student Learning Outcomes

Students will

Approach the study of philosophy and religion using historical, descriptive and critical methods that will require students to demonstrate competency in the skills of problem solving, organizing information logically, critical thinking, researching, writing and speaking accurately and gaining aesthetic awareness.

Regardless of their personal religious stance, demonstrate an appreciation of diverse philosophic and religious beliefs and how they influence the contemporary political, social, economic and international arena.

Academically examine religious experience so that they may gain an objective understanding of the influence religious experience may have on the lives of others and may increase their personal awareness of religious experience.

Liberal Arts Program – English Courses

The English courses at Maria College are seen as an essential part of every student's curriculum in that the courses provide students with the opportunity to develop the reading and writing skills that are vital in all academic and professional areas. Through these courses, students have the opportunity to engage with language in many different ways from developing vocabulary to improving proficiency in writing and speaking standard English to interacting with works by some of the world's most renowned writers. The English courses within the General Studies and Liberal Arts Programs are integral to the accomplishment of the College's mission, goals, and learning outcomes which focus on graduating students who are able to capably read, write, speak, and do research so that they can take these skills and provide service to the community.

Goals of English Courses

To provide students with courses that will help them to develop the language skills of reading, writing, and speaking.

To promote critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, and organizational thinking which are essential aspects of all learning.

To provide students with the skills needed to use and evaluate various resources, including electronic resources, to successfully complete research.

To introduce students to written works from various time periods and various cultures that enhance our understanding of human behavior.

To acquaint students with some of the best writers and writing to make them part of a literate community.

To raise students' awareness of the power, beauty, and responsibility of language.

English Student Learning Outcomes

Students will

Read for meaning in a wide variety of texts which also involves developing the ability to critically analyze these texts.

Express themselves with clarity and purpose using technically correct standard English.

Access, evaluate, and synthesize information from the library and other information/learning resources including electronic resources.

Demonstrate an awareness of the value of written language.

Liberal Arts Program—Social Science Courses

The social science courses at Maria College provide the students with opportunities to engage curriculum from several inquiry-based learning approaches which are seen as vital to be well-prepared in academics and professions. Through these courses, students have the opportunity to understand human behavior in many ways from theoretical and empirical to research and evidence-based findings. These social science courses within the General Studies and Liberal Arts Programs are integral to the accomplishments of the College's mission, goals, and learning outcomes which focus on graduating students who are able to capably read, write, speak, scientifically reason, and effectively use research information so that they can take these skills and provide service to the community.

Goals of Social Science Courses

To provide students with courses that will help them to develop scientific reasoning across different contexts.

To introduce students to various scientific theories and research findings which are found across different cultures and demographics.

To provide students with the skills needed to use various resources, including electronic resources, to successfully complete research (i.e., a review of the research literature).

To provide students with courses based in science to help complement the knowledge and skills grounded in philosophy, religion, and literature.

Social Science Student Learning Outcomes

Students will

Express themselves with clarity and purpose in order to demonstrate knowledge of social science theories, concepts, and information.

Demonstrate critical thinking skills, including problem solving, in relation to issues in the social sciences.

Utilize the terminology of the social sciences through written and oral assignments.

Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method and its relevance to the social sciences.

Access, utilize, and evaluate a variety of information resources relevant to the social sciences.

Demonstrate an awareness of the individual in relationship to the past, the world, others, and self.

Liberal Arts Program—Mathematics and Science Courses

The aim of the mathematics and science courses at Maria College is to involve students in the study of mathematical and scientific concepts so that they develop quantitative and scientific reasoning skills which will be internalized and applied to other program coursework and their personal life activities. The nature of the information gained by participating in mathematics and scientific skill development can significantly increase students' options in educational and career choices. These courses and the knowledge gained from them are an important part of Maria College's curriculum in that they prepare students to achieve the College's goals and learning outcomes in order to achieve their academic and career goals related to the College mission.

Goals of Mathematics and Science Courses

To foster an understanding of mathematics and science and the roles that they play in various programs, everyday life, and the workplace.

To develop the mathematical and scientific capabilities of students so they become confident in their ability to understand mathematical and scientific concepts.

To promote identification and analysis of patterns, development of logical, critical thinking, and reasoning skills, recognition of relationships, and application of the learned skills in order to problem solve in real-world situations.

To provide students with the skills to build mathematical and scientific comprehension, interpretation, and the ability to communicate with the vocabulary of the subject areas.

To encourage students to see the learning of mathematics and science as a valued undertaking.

Mathematics and Science Student Learning Outcomes

Students will

Demonstrate and evaluate mathematical and scientific information in written, oral, and symbolic form.

Demonstrate an adequate knowledge of factual scientific information.

Utilize mathematical and/or scientific knowledge in order to analyze and interpret data in real-world situations.

Solve mathematical problems and judge the reasonableness of the results.

Describe the evolution of mathematics and science as interrelated and evolving subject areas that have application in a variety of disciplines.

Liberal Arts and General Studies Programs Policies

1. Professor/Student Expectations

Professor – In teaching courses, your instructor agrees to strive to:

- . come to every class on time, prepared with thoughtful, relevant, and up-to-date material
- . be highly motivated to teach as creatively and energetically as possible
- . be fair, reasonable, and treat each student with respect
- . return student work in a timely manner

Student – By enrolling in a course, a student agrees to

- . attend every class
- . be on time
- . complete all assigned work
- . be prepared to think, listen, question, and participate.
- . treat the professor, other students, the educational setting, and the educational process with dignity and respect
- . seriously commit to engaging in the level of work that a course demands
- . utilize academic and student services (including but not limited to study groups, tutoring, the Learning Resource Center, and other services included in the Student Handbook) to maximize learning and success
- . schedule to or visit instructor during office hours to further engage course material or share personal information that is inappropriate in a classroom or hallway context

Results – When the professor/student expectations are met:

- . a professional, comfortable teaching/learning environment exists
- . an instructor can teach with minimal or no disruption
- . a student can learn with minimal or no disruption
- . a consistent teaching/learning environment exists across the curriculum

Online students

-- Successful distance learners have self-direction and good time-management skills. Students must be self-starters, have a desire to learn, take a personal initiative, be resourceful and be persistent. Distance learners work well alone, are not procrastinators, have good reading comprehension skills, resist distractions, and are comfortable without the social elements of traditional education.

--Online students need some basic skills to successfully take an online course:

E-mail: How to use the basics of an e-mail system

Internet: How to use the basics of the Internet

Windows: How to use an operating system, i.e. creating folders, zipping files, and managing files

Word Processing: How to use the basics of Microsoft Word

APA Style: How to properly format an assignment and document sources

2. Students with Disabilities Policy

Maria College is committed to fulfilling the needs of individual students. This includes responding to the needs of students who are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Individuals who identify themselves as having a physical, psychological, or learning disability and are in need of special services/academic adjustments (i.e. extended time testing, readers, etc.) under the Americans with Disabilities Act must notify Deb Corrigan, Dean of Student Services in the Office of Student Services/Marian Hall (438-3111, Ext. 250), as well as each individual instructor if special accommodations are requested. It is the responsibility of the student who is in need of classroom assistance or modifications under the Americans with Disabilities Act to inform the instructors individually as no special accommodations can be made unless this information is shared with the student's instructors. Reasonable accommodations will be made upon documentation of one's disability. "A reasonable accommodation is one that does not alter the essential nature of a course or program and does not cause undue hardship" (Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

3. Conduct Code for Students

Maria College expects that its students will act as responsible, courteous, and law-abiding citizens. Further, as members of an intellectual community, students are expected to maintain standards of personal and academic honesty in all course work and examinations.

Academic Dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, forgery or alterations of institutional records, and inappropriate use of electronic communicative or storage devices.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior is the refusal to behave civilly so that teaching and learning within the classroom are obstructed.

Prohibited behaviors are the violation of College policies and regulations and violation of federal, state, and local laws.

4. Deficiency Warning

Letters are sent to students in a course who have shown a weakness in one or more of the areas of a course that make up the final grade. The intent of this letter is to offer you help to improve your performance in a course. If you receive a Deficiency Warning letter, please talk to your instructor about it. Your advisor will also contact you, and you will receive a call from the Office of Student Services. It is part of the Maria College mission to provide students with a supportive environment. Please understand that the Deficiency Warning letter is a way that the College is attempting to help you be a successful student.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

Students are expected to attend all classes since in-class work is a significant step in succeeding academically.

It is equally important that students arrive on time for each scheduled class. The professor will shut the door, and at that time, the student is considered late. Any class not fully attended due to late arrival or early departure may be considered an absence.

Students are not to make appointments during scheduled class meeting times.

Attendance is calculated into final course grades according to the guidelines presented in each course syllabus.

6. Missed Tests or Quizzes

Tests and quizzes are important forms of measuring learning. You are expected to attend all scheduled tests and quizzes on time. Any arrangements for missed tests and penalties for arriving late for a test or quiz will be indicated on each instructor's course syllabus.

7. Class Assignments

Class assignments are due on the dates indicated on the course syllabus for each one of your courses. Any penalties for late assignments will be indicated there as well.

Unless otherwise indicated by an instructor, class assignments should be typed on 8.5 by 11 inch white paper using a font size of 12, the standard font style of Times New Roman, and one-inch margins on the sides of the page.

In addition, Maria College requires that assignments (unless otherwise indicated by an instructor) be completed using the style created by the American Psychological Association (APA) which includes both typing guidelines as well as guidelines for crediting sources used for research. The APA style is presented in Language Skills and Composition I classes. As well, the Learning Resource Center and the Maria College web page have information to assist you in applying APA style to your assignments.

8. Withdrawing from a Class

If you are not able to finish a class during the course of the semester, you must officially withdraw from the class by completing a Course Adjustment Form available from the Registrar's Office. The form may be submitted through the tenth week of the semester. A grade of **W** will appear on your transcript once you have officially withdrawn from the course. Failure to complete a course adjustment form will result in an **F** grade on your transcript for the course.

Before completing a Course Adjustment Form, you will need to speak to both your instructor and advisor whose signatures are required on the form.

NOTE: If you are receiving financial aid or student loans, you will need to talk to the Financial Aid Office to determine any effects the withdrawal will have on your current aid and future aid.

9. Program Dismissal and Readmission

Students who have a cumulative average less than 2.0 at the end of a semester are placed on academic probation (See the Probation and Academic Dismissal Policy in the general *Maria College Student Handbook*).

In addition, any student in the Liberal Arts Program with a cumulative average less than 2.0 at the end of a semester will be placed on probation from the Program. If the student's GPA remains below a 2.0 for the semester following the probationary semester, the student will be dismissed from the Liberal Arts Program. This does not automatically mean that the student is dismissed from the College.

Once a student achieves a GPA of at least 2.0, he or she may request readmission to the Liberal Arts Program. In order to do this, a letter requesting readmission must be sent to the Liberal Arts Program Chairperson. This letter should include information as to what the candidate has accomplished during the time he/she left the Program and the possible return, i.e. courses taken, work experience. The request will then be acted upon at the next scheduled Liberal Arts Program meeting. Letters requesting readmission for the fall semester should be submitted by March 15 and for the spring semester by October 15.

10. Communication Devices

Cell phone ringers, pagers, etc. should be turned off while students are in all College learning environments, such as classrooms, the Library, the Learning Resource Center, and the Computer Room. Cell phone use is permitted in halls, the cafeteria, and lounges providing that the conversation does not disturb others. Students are not excused from class to complete a cell phone conversation except in case of an emergency.

The use of other electronic devices will be at the discretion of the course instructor as stated in the course syllabus.

Grading Policies for Liberal Arts and General Studies Courses

Grading Scale:

The following grading scale is used for grades in LA/GS courses:

100 – 93	A	76 – 73	C
92 – 90	A-	72 – 70	C-
89 – 87	B+	69 – 67	D+
86 – 83	B	66 – 63	D
82 – 80	B-	62 – 60	D-
79 – 77	C+	59—0	F

S/U Courses: The passing (S) grade requirement is stated on the course syllabi for S/U courses.

Transcript Grades:

Grades of A through D- are considered passing grades in LA/GS courses.

A total of 64 credits is needed in order to complete an LA or GS degree. As well, an overall cumulative GPA of 2.0 which is the equivalent of a C average is needed for graduation in either program.

Students who intend to transfer to another college or university should keep in mind that typically only grades of C or better qualify for transfer.

Letter of Intent Students:

Students who intend to transfer into another program at Maria College must receive a C or better grade in any GS course required by that intended program. For example, a GS student with intent for Nursing must receive a C or better grade in courses such as General Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Composition I, Contemporary Moral Issue, and Anatomy and Physiology. For acceptance into the Associate Degree in Nursing Program, a minimum GPA of 2.3 is required.

Students in GS with intent for another program may retake courses in which they receive a C- or lower grade; however, the credits for that course will be counted only once towards graduation credits. As well, a C- or lower grade will affect the semester GPA in which the grade was earned, but the final GPA for graduation will only reflect the higher grade for a course that has been retaken.

Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society:

The Phi Theta Kappa recognizes and encourages scholarship among part-time and full-time two-year college students who possess a 3.67 GPA and have completed at least 12 credits. The Society provides opportunities “for the development of leadership and service, for an intellectual climate for exchange of ideas and ideals, for lively fellowship for scholars, and for stimulation of interest in continuing academic excellence.” Annual dues are required.

Non-Credit Courses

Introduction

During advisement, your faculty advisor may indicate that you need to register for one or more non-credit courses. These courses are intended to provide you with necessary skills and prerequisites that will allow you to eventually move into your intended program. The Admissions Office will determine through the Maria College admissions/placement exam and your high school transcript whether the Basic Math Skills and/or Language Skills class is required. The Basic Chemistry may be taken if you do not have high school chemistry which is required in order to take Anatomy and Physiology and Microbiology.

Although the courses listed below are non-credit courses in terms of graduation credits, each course is considered to provide three credits towards full-time status for financial aid purposes. Your advisor will be able to answer any questions you may have about these courses.

Basic Math Skills (MAT 100)

Students who fail to meet Admissions criteria on the Maria College Admissions or Placement test in Mathematics are required to register for this remedial course. Mat 100 is designed to help students overcome difficulties in mathematical calculations, to cope with math anxiety, and to prepare for success in the future mathematics courses and/or the mathematics components in their chosen programs. Course content includes basic processes in whole numbers, fractions, decimals, ratios and proportions, percents, measurements, statistics, and signed numbers. Students are taught techniques for problem solving and mathematical reasoning using real-life data, real-life applications. This course is based on mastery of content and a minimum grade of 80% is required on each area tested for successful completion.

Language Skills (ENG 100)

Students who fail to meet Admissions criteria on the Maria College Admissions or Placement tests in Reading and Writing are required to register for this remedial course. The Language Skills course is designed to help students improve their reading, writing, vocabulary, and study skills. Areas addressed are summary writing, reading for comprehension, development of effective paragraphs and essays. In the Language Skills course, students will be introduced to the American Psychological Association (APA) style of documentation for research papers. Language Skills students will be able to apply all the skills taught in this course to other curriculum areas and will be given a foundation for the Composition I course that is required for all Maria College students.

Basic Chemistry (CHM 001)

Students who do not have high school chemistry are required to take chemistry before taking Anatomy and Physiology and Microbiology and before entering their intended health-care program. The Basic Chemistry course covers the basic concepts of the atom, ions, molecules and chemical bonds as they apply to anatomy and physiology. In addition, the course will cover fundamental physical concepts that apply to chemical reactions. There is no lab component to this course. A class average of 75% or better is required for successful completion of this course.

NOTE: Chm 100 – General Chemistry I may be taken to fulfill the chemistry requirement. Chm 100 includes a lab and provides four graduation credits.

Learning Resource Center Policies and Procedures

The Mission of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) is to provide academic support to students enrolled in all options and all programs at Maria College (remedial, ESL, disabled, as well as those with histories of academic success) so that they can successfully complete their course work. The LRC accomplishes this mission through these goals:

To identify students who require remediation in math, in reading and in writing and to provide them with such instruction.

To provide study skills instruction for students needing assistance with succeeding in course work.

To provide additional information which can be helpful in understanding course work through various media (computers, audio-visual, video, printed and instructor provided material), which supplement what instructors provide students.

Assistance is provided on a drop in, individual basis. Appointments and/or advanced notice will be necessary if the assistance will be time consuming. Skills instruction is offered by the LRC through mini seminars and non-credit courses.

Reading, Writing and Study Skills

To provide instruction for students who experience problems reading their textbook.

To provide assistance with spelling, grammar, punctuation and organization in student papers. LRC personnel will neither rewrite papers nor alter the content. For the LRC personnel to assess an assignment please allow at least 24 hour for the review notice is necessary.

To assist in meeting the College's requirement in following the American Psychological Association [APA] style of writing and documenting.

Math Skills

To provide assistance in arithmetic and basic mathematics.

To instruct students in using computer software that teaches mathematics.

Content Course

To assist students in using videos or computer software that offers course content.

To assist students in accessing the Internet so that they may do research for a course.

To allow computer usage for remedial or course work. CAI (computer-assisted instruction) will have priority over Internet use. If the LRC is busy, Internet usage may be limited.

To work with personnel to fulfill the Mission of the College, to implement the Mission of the LRC and achieve the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes.

All LRC services are provided to students and graduates at no additional cost.

Letter of Intent Information

Some students who are accepted to Maria College and wish to enter a specific program are lacking prerequisites. The Office of Admissions accepts them into the College as General Studies “Letter of Intent” Students. The goal is to take classes, normally over the course of a year (which may include summer courses), to fulfill the recommendations of the Office of Admissions in preparation for entering a desired program.

The Letter of Intent form is available online at the Maria College web site by clicking on *Admissions* on the home page and then clicking on *Letter of Intent* under *Downloads* on the right side of the Admissions’ page. The Letter of Intent form, once completed, can also be submitted online to the Admissions Office.

Frequently Asked Questions

What happens during the Initial Advisement/Registration Session?

- Most incoming students attend general registration dates set by the College.
- Letter of Intent students may meet with faculty of the intended program, or, as in the case of Nursing Intent students, with Liberal Arts/General Studies faculty.
- The faculty uses information from the Office of Admissions to help the student select courses to take during the first semester at the College. This information is based on whether the student has met the prerequisites for an intended program as listed above.
- The student often asks whether the faculty member assisting with registering for courses for their initial semester will be the advisor for the upcoming semester and beyond. The student may or may not be assigned the same faculty member as advisor as the faculty member who conducts the student’s initial course registration. Also, after the student enters the desired program, the student is assigned a new advisor within the program.

Why would I need to register for non-credit courses?

- If students have performed at a certain level on the Maria College Admissions/Placement test, or if they come to the College without the prerequisite high school units in English, math, and/or science, the Office of Admissions will note that the student may be required to register for some or all of the following non-credit courses:
 - Language Skills
 - Basic Math Skills
 - Basic Chemistry
- Non-credit courses count as three credits taken for the purposes of the financial aid requirement of a full-time course load of 12 credits, but **do not** count as credits toward the total number of credits (64) needed for graduation.

What courses should or should not be taken in the same semester as non-credit courses?

- A student taking non-credit courses would have a cumulative grade point average at the end of the semester that depends only upon the credit-bearing courses for which the student registers. A student who is taking these non-credit courses may have a better chance of success in certain other courses once the non-credit courses are completed.
 - **For example**, if a student is required to take Language Skills, it may be better to wait until another semester to register for courses that will require heavy use of the mechanics of language, such as heavy emphasis on vocabulary, accurate spelling, reading comprehension, and regular writing assignments. Anatomy and Physiology is an example of a course in which there is heavy emphasis on understanding vocabulary and accuracy in spelling.

- **Another example** is the student who is required to take Basic Mathematics Skills. It may be better to wait until another semester to register for courses that will require regular and accurate use of mathematics skills. Chemistry is an example of a course in which there is heavy emphasis on accuracy in the mathematics associated with balancing equations.

For how many credits/courses should I be registering?

- Full-time students
 - The student may need to be full time for financial aid or health insurance purposes.
 - A full-time student must carry a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester.
 - A full-time student may carry up to 18 credits.
 - Students may take more than 18 credits only in specific circumstances and with specific limitations and financial obligations.
- Part-time students
 - Part-time students also may receive financial aid if the student takes at least 6 credit hours in a semester.

What do I do while I am waiting to enter my intended program?

- The student should be taking courses required for a specific program. You can tell what these courses are by reviewing your “graduation audit.” This shows the general education courses required by a program. These are courses that do not have the designation of NUR, PNC, or OTA. These include:
 - The six English credits needed for graduation which include ENG 111- Composition I. If you need to take ENG 100 – Language Skills, you will do so before taking Composition I, and you will need to take another English elective (course of your choice) to fulfill the English requirements.
 - The six religion/philosophy credits needed for graduation which include RES/PHI 201 – Contemporary Moral Issues (CMI). The CMI course is required specifically by the Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant, and Education—Early Childhood Programs, and you will need to take another Religion/Philosophy elective (course of your choice) to fulfill your religion/philosophy requirements.
 - The Anatomy and Physiology I and II lectures and labs. (These may need to be preceded by biology and/or chemistry if noted by the Admissions Office.) Students need to be aware of the “Two-time Policy” for Anatomy and Physiology. “Students wishing to be considered for a health-related program may only repeat Anatomy and Physiology lecture (ANP 105, 106) and labs (ANP 107, 108) once. A request to waive this policy must be discussed with the Academic Dean or the Director of Admissions prior to enrolling the third time” (*Maria College Student Handbook*). Be careful to note that withdrawing from one of these courses counts as having taken it.
 - Both PSY 100 – General Psychology and PSY 200 – Developmental Psychology
 - Introduction to Sociology
- Be aware of the date by which the Letter of Intent should be submitted to the Office of Admissions. The College will notify you in writing, and notice of these dates is posted about the College buildings.

What happens after I submit my Letter of Intent?

- The Admissions Office sends the student a letter of acceptance (or deferral) after a number of weeks following the submission of the Letter of Intent.
- The student will be notified of the place, date, and time of an informational meeting and then the registration for the first semester in the intended program.
- The student will be assigned a new advisor in the program.
- This faculty member will advise the student for the remaining semesters while the student is part of the program up to graduation.

- While waiting to hear about acceptance into the intended program, and before registering for the first semester in the new program with your new advisor, the current advisor may register/sign/approve you for any general education courses.
 - **For example**, if you submit the Letter of Intent during the spring semester, your current advisor may register/sign/approve you to register for summer courses that are general education course requirements for the program. However, your current advisor is not allowed to register/sign/approve you for core courses in the new program. For example, the Liberal Arts/General Studies faculty advisor cannot register/sign/approve you for any Nursing core courses.

What do I do if I Want to Change Programs? *All of the forms listed below (except for the Letter of Intent which is available online through the *Admissions* page on the Maria College web site) are available under *Student Services—Registrar—Registrar Forms* on the Maria College web site.*

a. Letter of Intent

- Students desiring to pursue a different degree/certificate program at the beginning of the next semester are required to submit a Letter of Intent to the Admissions Office.
- Letter of Intent forms can be obtained from the Admissions Office. The form is also available at www.mariacollege.edu.
- Students wishing to be considered for a non-health related program, such as Education—Early Childhood, Business, or Liberal Arts are eligible to file a Letter of Intent form by November 1st to be considered for the Spring semester.
- Students having intent for the Practical Nurse Certificate Program must submit this form by December 15th to start the program in the summer.
- Students having intent for the Associate Degree Nursing and Occupational Therapy Assistant Programs must submit this form by March 15th to start these programs in the fall.
- **Students filing after these dates incur the risk of being placed on a Wait List.**
- Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Office of Admissions.

b. Change of Intent

- Students wishing to change their intent for a program are required to submit a **Change of Intent Form** to the Office of Student Records.

c. Change of Program

- A matriculated student at Maria College in a program other than General Studies who intends to pursue a different program at the beginning of the next semester must obtain permission from the Academic Dean and Program Chairperson and is required to submit a **Change of Program** form to the Admissions Office. This form must also be completed for Liberal Arts students who decide to enter one of the Liberal Arts Concentrations.

d. Readmission/Resumption of Study in a Program

- Students who are dismissed from any program and who wish readmission must submit this request in writing to the appropriate person.
- Final approval will be based on program recommendations and available openings.

e. Certificate Request Form

- Students who intend to complete one of the College's certificate programs, such as the Gerontology Certificate, must complete a **Certificate Request Form** to let the Registrar know of the intent.