

“Rhode Island School of Design’s Division of Liberal Arts is dedicated to the development of responsible and responsive personalities, without which design education is not only futile but may even be socially unjustifiable.”

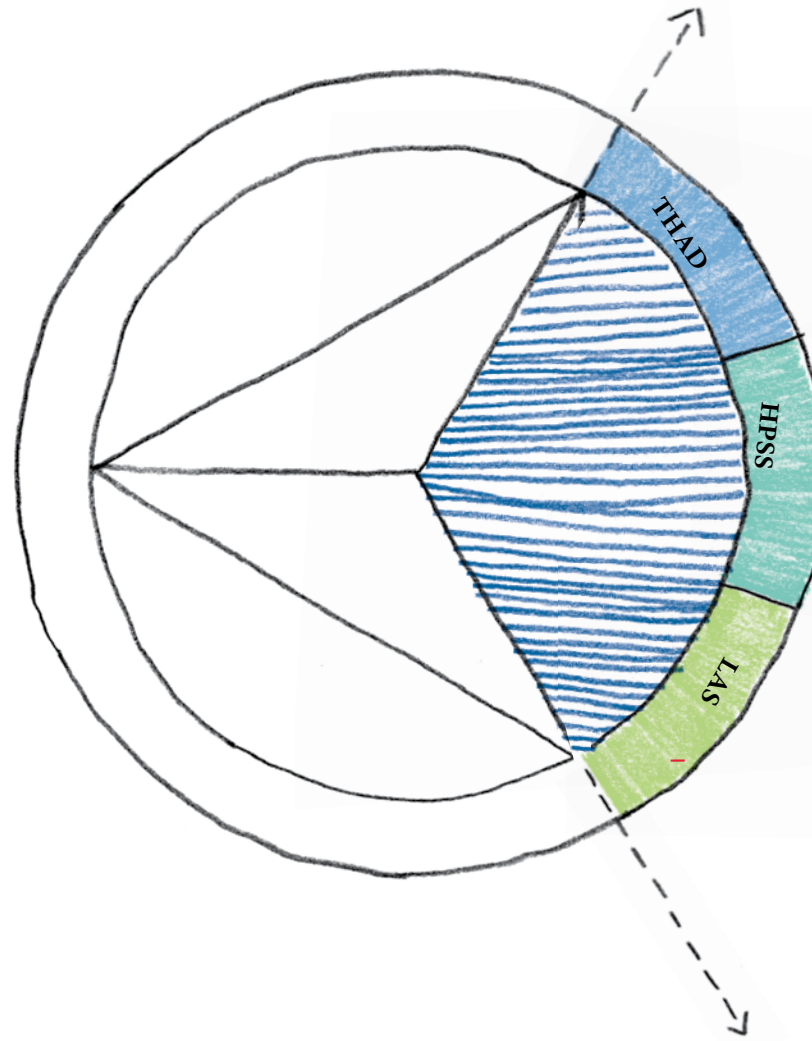
—JOHN R. FRAZIER, PROFESSOR OF PAINTING AND RISD PRESIDENT, 1956

LIBERAL ARTS AT RISD

Founded as an academic division in 1940, Liberal Arts is one of the major categories of “arts” offered at RISD, along with design and fine arts. It has had a significant role in the institution’s history. As early as 1901, RISD students in early Architecture and Modeling programs were required to take courses in Art History and English. In the 1930s, when the school began granting its first degrees, two years of English became required for art education majors, and a wide range of courses in art history, economics, French, history, physics, and public speaking were added to the curriculum. In 1956, leaders of the College specifically cited the importance of the humanities in training students for leadership in their fields and modified RISD’s degree requirements to create a balance between students’ general education and professional study.



STUDENTS TAKE A THIRD OF THEIR TOTAL COURSES AT RISD IN LIBERAL ARTS.



14 TOTAL COURSES REQUIRED

DEPARTMENT OF THEORY AND HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN	4 COURSES INCLUDING H101* + H102*
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES	3 COURSES INCLUDING S101*
DEPARTMENT OF LITERARY ARTS AND STUDIES	3 COURSES INCLUDING E101*

*REQUIRED

4 ELECTIVE COURSES (ANY LIBERAL ARTS DEPARTMENT)

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE NUMEROUS, AS LONG AS STUDENTS MAKE SURE THAT THE COURSES FULFILL THE DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE.

FOR A YEAR-BY-YEAR OVERVIEW, SEE PAGE 8

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

“More than achieving the competence to solve problems and perform complex tasks, education means attaining and sustaining curiosity and humility.” — ANDREW DELBANCO, *COLLEGE*

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
14 Liberal Arts COURSES	4	4	3	3
4 THAD	H101* H102*			
3 HPSS	S101*			
3 LAS	E101*			
4 ELECTIVES**				

*REQUIRED **LAEL OR ANY DEPARTMENTAL LA COURSE

MORE THAN

250

COURSES OFFERED BY THE DIVISION OF LIBERAL ARTS EACH YEAR

LESS THAN

30

STUDENTS IN EACH CLASS, EXCEPT FOR THE REQUIRED ART HISTORY SURVEY

FIRST-YEAR REQUIREMENTS

All first-year students are required to take four courses: H101, H102, E101, and S101. There are no waivers or substitutions for these courses. Beyond this first-year curriculum, students take electives across the departments.

COURSE NAMES AND NUMBERS

All courses in Liberal Arts have either a departmental prefix (THAD, HPSS, or LAS) or a general prefix (LAEL), which means that they are electives in areas that fall outside the core curricula of the existing departments.

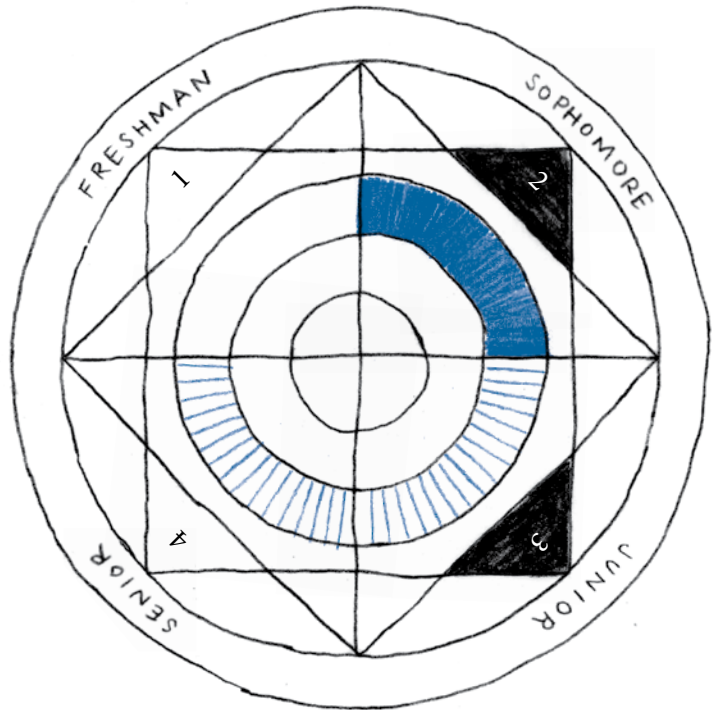
COURSE CREDIT

Credit for courses is determined by the department head of each Liberal Arts department, according to a course's sponsoring department, the instructor's credentials, syllabus content, and methods of assessment. Departments in Liberal Arts represent very different disciplines; credit is not interchangeable.

TRANSFER CREDIT

After matriculation, students can receive transfer credit up to four courses (12 credits). Courses taken at Brown during the academic year are exempt from this limit. All courses, once transferred, will receive credit in the RISD system according to their fit with the Liberal Arts departments. International courses transferred to RISD have to also have the same amount of contact hours as RISD courses to receive credit.





“Whether it was taking a course focused on immigration or on sports, I have been able to analyze the distribution of power within a society and the effects of democracy in an organization or an entire country....This has opened up my education to not only think like a designer, but to be aware of the workings of the culture and society.”

— ASHLEY KOCHISS, BFA ARCHITECTURE & HPSS CONCENTRATOR

ADVISING

Walk-in advising about degree requirements is provided in the Liberal Arts Office; just come by during business hours.

Advising about broader learning goals, from course selection to career choices, is provided by faculty. Thus every sophomore at RISD is assigned a Liberal Arts faculty advisor. Concentrators in Liberal Arts departments work with their respective concentration coordinator, a faculty member who oversees students’ progress through the concentration.

Enrollment policies and forms are easily obtained at the Registrar’s Office online site: risd.edu/registrar

CONCENTRATIONS

Over 150 students concentrate, or minor, in Liberal Arts each year. Concentrating means fulfilling all your degree requirements in Liberal Arts by taking a set of courses that focus on an academic subject, from art history to politics and policy. Students have the freedom, within the established curriculum, to follow diverse interests and meaningfully shape how their liberal arts learning might complement their studio work.

THAD: www.risd.edu/academics/thad/concentration

HPSS: www.risd.edu/academics/hpss/concentration

LAS: www.risd.edu/academics/las/concentration

NCSS: www.risd.edu/academics/concentrations

