A Liberal Arts Education at Kirkwood Community College

Start Here. Go Anywhere!
Liberal Arts Education

What can a liberal arts education do for you? A liberal arts education can serve as a map to life’s open road. A liberal arts education can open your mind and encourage critical and creative thinking for lifelong learning. In today’s fast-paced and competitive world, it’s important to have communication skills to relate with other people and technical skills to get the job done. General education and elective courses found in liberal arts majors lay the groundwork for success in any career.

At Kirkwood Community College, we help our students develop observation, data collection, experimentation, writing and communication skills then apply these skills to solve specific problems related to science, economics, business, English, history and many other disciplines. Kirkwood provides a place for exploring community and world cultures through art, music, philosophy, religion, speech, theatre and world languages. Check out a liberal arts education—it might just be the direction you are looking for.

Liberal Arts
2: the studies (as language, philosophy, history, literature, abstract science) in a college or university intended to provide chiefly general knowledge and to develop the general intellectual capacities (as reason and judgment) as opposed to professional or vocational skills
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Let This Be Your Compass

Are you good at math or English? Maybe you are intrigued by human behaviors. Or is it biology, chemistry or engineering that interest you? If so, liberal arts is your first stop.

To get where you want to go in life, you need a map. Consider the information found in the following pages as your guide to a liberal arts education. From journalism and mass communication to computer science, anthropology and theatre, liberal arts can help you to chart your course. So go ahead, start the first leg of your journey!

“Education’s purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.”
- Malcolm Forbes
Communications

What is studied?
1. English
2. Journalism and Mass Communication
3. Technical Communication
4. Speech Communication
5. Communication Media/Public Relations

Why are communications courses important to you?
1. Improve critical and technical reading skills.
2. Improve written language for learning, explaining and persuading others.
3. Use language, both written and spoken, to clarify thinking.
4. Improve ability to use speech to advocate for yourself and others.
5. Build skill in visual, spoken and written literacy.
Career Examples

- Writer
- Public relations professional
- Gateway to law school
- Photo, broadcast or print journalist

Transfer Tip

Excellence in reading and writing are essential for success in college—from the beginning.

Typical Courses

- Composition I
- Composition II: Technical Writing
- Fundamentals of Communication
- Public Speaking
- Newswriting and Reporting
Career Examples

- Teacher/college professor
- Writer
- Interpreter (foreign or sign language)
- Research consultant
- Foreign Service
- International business

Transfer Tips

- Complete foreign language and diversity course requirements before transferring to a four-year school.

Typical Courses

- Encounters in Humanities
- Ancient Mediterranean World
- Introduction to Philosophy
- Basic Reasoning
- Introduction to Ethics
- Introduction to World Religions
- Forms of Literature
- Literature and Culture
- Spanish
- French
- American Sign Language I-IV
Humanities

What is studied?

1. Anthropology
2. Foreign Language
3. History
4. Humanities
5. Literature
6. Philosophy
7. Religion
8. Sign Language

Why are humanities courses important to you?

1. Open understanding of yourself and others as part of a human community.
2. Develop a method of inquiry to understand and appreciate the humanities.
3. Understand how human past and present activities shape the future of human nature and culture.
4. Acquire communication skills in a second language for personal and professional communication with native speakers.
5. Build critical thinking skills for both formal and informal aspects of reasoning and argument.
6. Understand the complexity of the religious dimension of human life.
7. Expand awareness of expressive and receptive skills and the behaviors, values and issues in deaf culture.
8. Develop reading and interpretive skills to understand various forms of literary expression.
Social Sciences

What is studied?
1. Psychology
2. Sociology
3. Political Science
4. Geography
5. History
6. Economics
7. Education Careers
8. Early Childhood
9. Paralegal/Legal Assistant
10. Disabilities Services/Special Education
11. Criminal Justice: Law Enforcement or Community Corrections
12. Human Services
13. Sign Language Interpreter Training

Why are social sciences courses important to you?
1. Focus on the individual—learn about yourself and also about others’ thinking, motivations, behavior and culture.
2. Focus on citizenship—gain a well-rounded background as an educated person and good citizen.
3. Focus on the helping professions—explore social services, teaching, legal services, public safety, interpreting, communication via print and broadcasting, caring for children and the disabled.
Career Examples

- Family therapist
- Teacher
- Police officer
- Warden
- Urban or economic planner
- Daycare center director
- Paralegal
- Interpreter for the deaf
- Paraeducator
- Elected official in city, county, state or federal government

Transfer Tip

Map out your plan: as soon as you decide on a four-year transfer institution, check specific requirements each semester BEFORE you register at Kirkwood. Program requirements change constantly as the fields of study and job markets change.

Typical Courses

- U.S. History
- European History
- Understanding Cultures (Latin America, modern China, modern Japan, the Middle East)
- Macroeconomics/Microeconomics
- General Psychology
- Introduction to Sociology
- American Government
- Field Experience in Education
- Criminal Law
- Health Safety and Nutrition
- Fundamentals of Legal Research
Career Examples

- Artist
- Art teacher
- Photo journalist
- Musician
- Writer/editor
- Vocal performer
- Actor/Actress
- Theatre director
- Costume designer
- Dance instructor

Transfer Tip

Take advantage of practical and immediate production experience your first two years of college in performance, literary magazine production or technical theatre.

Typical Courses

- Music Appreciation
- Art Appreciation
- Music Theory
- Introduction to Theatre
- Acting
- Stagecraft
- Art History
- Design
- Drawing
- Photography
- Ceramics
- Painting
- Printmaking
- Dance
- Creative Writing
- Poetry Writing
Fine and Performing

What is studied?

1. Art
2. Creative Writing
3. Dance
4. Music
5. Theatre

Why are fine and performing arts courses important to you?

1. Use creative self expression.
2. Explore non-linear ways of thinking.
3. Understand the elements and forms of music, art or theatre.
4. Develop aural recognition skills and their application to music genre.
5. Build vocal, instrumental and physical performance skills for personal and professional applications.
6. Practice basic acting techniques to develop improvisation, concentration and self-analysis skills.
7. Gain hands-on experience on the technical aspects of theatre production.
8. Understand the aesthetic and historical value of art for human existence.
9. Develop analytic and technical skills necessary to develop individual creativity and ability.
Mathematics

What is studied?
1. Basic Mathematics
2. Algebra, Geometry
3. Applied Mathematics
4. Calculus and Differential Equations
5. Statistics and Data Analysis

Why are mathematics courses important to you?
1. Understand patterns, relations and functions.
2. Communicate thoughts and ideas precisely using the language of mathematics.
3. Solve problems using appropriate mathematical strategies.
4. Analyze and evaluate the mathematical thinking of others.
5. Use mathematical models to represent and understand quantitative relationships.
Career Examples

- Engineer
- Computer software engineer
- Systems analyst, computer scientist and database administrator
- Physicist and astronomer
- Atmospheric scientist
- Chemist and materials scientist
- Business analyst
- Actuary

Transfer Tip

Take the most advanced mathematics courses you can. Having the ability to think mathematically will open the door to many programs of study and career opportunities.

Typical Courses

- Math for Decision Making
- Finite Mathematics
- Fundamentals of Statistics
- College Algebra
- Business Calculus
- Calculus I, II, III
- Differential Equations
- Linear Algebra
Career Examples

- Biological scientist (biologist, biotechnologist, geneticist, microbiologist)
- Engineer (many different kinds)
- Health professional (doctor, nurse, dentist, pharmacist, physical therapist)
- Physical scientist (chemist, materials scientist, physicist, astronomer, atmospheric scientist)
- Systems analyst, computer scientist, and database administrator

Transfer Tip

Take the most advanced science courses you can. Having the ability to think scientifically will open the door to many programs of study and career opportunities.

Typical Courses

- College Biology
- General Botany
- Astronomy
- The Environment: Natural Science Perspectives
- Environmental Geology
- Evolution of the Earth
- Human Evolution
- Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II
- Bio-Organic Chemistry
- General Chemistry I & II
- Organic Chemistry I & II
- College Physics I & II
- Classical Physics I & II
Science

What is studied in this discipline?

1. Biological Sciences
2. Anatomy and Physiology
3. Biology
4. Environmental Science
5. Exercise Science
6. Microbiology
7. Physical Sciences
8. Chemistry
9. Geology
10. Physics
11. Pre-Professional
12. BSN Nursing
13. Chiropractic
14. Computer Science
15. Dentistry
16. Engineering
17. Medical
18. Pharmacy

Why are science courses important to you?

1. Understand and practice logical thinking skills, in which conclusions are based on a reasonable interpretation of quality data.
2. Recognize pseudoscience and evaluate it on the basis of scientific reasoning, process and scientific legitimacy.
3. Be scientifically skeptical.
4. Practice problem-solving skills, and understand their application to the scientific method.
5. Be confident and comfortable with science and in dealing with scientific issues.
6. Make, collect and record observations.
Outstanding students at Kirkwood have the opportunity to participate in the Kirkwood Community College Honors Program. In this program, students work closely with a Kirkwood Honors faculty member and learn more about a chosen discipline. To participate in the Honors Program, students must have earned at least 12 semester credits at Kirkwood and must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Kirkwood recognizes students with outstanding scholastic achievement with an invitation into Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges. Phi Theta Kappa symbolizes excellence in higher education and encourages scholarship among two-year college students. Kirkwood students who have earned at least 12 semester credit hours with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher are eligible to become members of Alpha Eta Rho, or Beta Lambda Tau, Kirkwood’s chapters of Phi Theta Kappa.

Students are encouraged to participate in these unique educational and cultural experiences to enhance their liberal arts education and possibly increase future employment opportunities. Some study abroad programs are offered as short-term summer programs, while the semester in England is offered each fall. Study abroad programs in the past have taken students to Costa Rica, Italy, Jamaica, Madrid and Australia, to name a few. Students can also receive credits through study abroad programs.
Service Learning

Service Learning is a classroom instructional method that enables the students, who are placed as volunteers in agencies and organizations, to learn and use the academic information and skills they study in class to assist these agencies and organizations in meeting real community needs.

Diversity Perspectives

Students have an opportunity to explore the cultures and perspectives of other groups through courses that fulfill the diversity graduation requirement. These courses are designed to help students understand themselves as members of diverse human societies. Some of these courses will also fulfill core course requirements.

Career Option Programs

Career Option programs are transfer programs that allow students to concentrate their electives into special career preparation while completing an A.A. degree. The programs include a practicum, internship and field experience to give students a real taste of career options. These experiences help build valuable work skills under qualified supervisors and network within their field. Students can transfer on or qualify for an entry level position in these fields - that is why they are called “career option programs.”
Kirkwood Close to You

Kirkwood makes a liberal arts education accessible.
- Nine off-campus centers.
- Anytime/Anywhere classes are offered via the Internet allowing students to set their own pace.
- ICN for classrooms around the state.
- Interactive Instructional Television connects classmates and instructors across the region or state in live classes.

Kirkwood is Quality

- Experienced faculty who care about student success.
- Average credit class size is 23 students.
- Day and evening classes offered to fit your schedule.

Kirkwood is Value

- As of fall 2006, tuition at Kirkwood is $99 per credit hour.
- Scholarship, financial aid and loans are available.
- Work-Study program offered.

Kirkwood is Transferable

- More than 50 percent of Kirkwood graduates transfer to a four-year college.
- Kirkwood has numerous articulation agreements to make for smooth transfers.
Kirkwood At A Glance

Kirkwood Community College’s 600-acre main campus is located on the southwest side of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Off-campus centers are located in Linn, Jones, Cedar, Johnson, Iowa, Benton and Washington counties.

Kirkwood Community College is dedicated to offering students state-of-the art facilities, hands-on learning, academic support services, cutting edge technology, financial aid and much more!

• Kirkwood offers more than 100 career and college transfer programs.
• Kirkwood is a member of the prestigious League for Innovation in the Community College, a consortium of 19 of the nation’s finest two-year colleges and is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.
• Kirkwood was chosen by the League for Innovation as one of 12 “Vanguard Colleges” in North America. This group of two-year colleges is researching and modeling new learning methods and initiatives for the 21st century.
• Kirkwood was recognized as “Community College of the Year” for 2000-2001 by the National Alliance of Business.
• Kirkwood offers day, night and online courses.
• Kirkwood has an average credit class size of 16 students.
• Kirkwood’s 2005 graduating class included 2,400 students who represented 94 of Iowa’s 99 counties, 36 states and 92 foreign nations.
Wrap Up

Now that you have browsed through the information, you have only just begun your Kirkwood experience. A liberal arts education through Kirkwood is geared to take you places. Open your mind to the possibilities that await you by enrolling today!

It’s easy to get started. Kirkwood Community College is your first turn on the road to success!

“GenXers rated the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City corridor high in affordability, job possibilities, and things to do in the communities among several other categories of “coolness.”

- Based on results released in 2003 study commissioned by the Iowa Department of Economic Development and the Iowa Human Resources Recruitment Consortium
Getting Started

Apply
Since many programs fill up quickly, you should apply soon. Select ONE major or program area on the application. Your application will be processed, and you will be sent information regarding what you need to complete your admission to Kirkwood. There is no application fee.

Placement Exams
To determine your appropriate placement in reading, writing and math courses, you will need to submit current ACT scores or take the Kirkwood placement (COMPASS) test.

Financial Aid
Obtain and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1. The financial aid process takes three to five months to complete, so you'll need to start early.

Scholarships
Most scholarship granting organizations start accepting applications January 1 and close around March 15. Check with Kirkwood, as well as your guidance office, for a list of scholarship options. Browse through scholarships and apply online at www.kirkwood.edu/foundation/scholarship.html

Housing
If you need housing, please look early. Many local apartment complexes fill up by spring. A list of available housing can be obtained by calling the Housing Office (319) 398-5596 or by visiting www.kirkwood.edu/housing

TGIF (To Get Information Fast)
Visit the Kirkwood campus on a TGIF high school campus visit day. Call 319-398-5517 or 800-363-2220 to learn more.