November 2, 2016

To: Dr. Lynnette Zelezny
    Provost

Dr. Kevin Ayotte, Chair
    Academic Senate

From: Paul Beare, Ph.D.
    Dean

Re: Request for Senate Approval of Creation of the Liberal Studies Department

The Kremen School of Education and the Liberal Studies Review Committee request the formation of the Department of Liberal Studies. The purpose of the Liberal Studies program is to provide a solid multidisciplinary preparation in the Humanities, Sciences, Social Sciences, Human Development, and the Arts. It is the designated major for future elementary school teachers who are required to teach all subjects. The role of the Liberal Studies Major at Fresno State and across the CSU is to ensure academic excellence for undergraduate students who enter our credential programs to become educators, mentors, and leaders in our nations schools and across communities.

Endorsement and support for this request are attached (1) and include:

• The Liberal Studies Review Committee (the governing body for the program).

• All four departments of the Kremen School of Education and Human Development: Curriculum & Instruction, Literacy, Early Childhood, Bi-lingual, and Special Education, Educational Leadership, and Counseling Education and Rehabilitation.

• The Kremen School Faculty Assembly

• The Multiple Subject Program Review Committee (the governing body for the Multiple Subject credential).

The Liberal Studies Program has been an interdepartmental undergraduate major at Fresno State for over 30 years, and is currently the largest major on campus, with a headcount in fall 2016 of 1167. (Pre-Business, not actually a major, has higher enrollment, the next largest actual major is Biology at 991). Liberal Studies majors are the only students on campus without a department home and without dedicated faculty to mentor them and with whom they can identify. There is no Department Chair nor is there representation in the Academic Senate. There is no dedicated physical space.

The proposed Liberal Studies Department will have the following features:
• A substantial body of knowledge unique to teacher education that informs the vision and direction of the Department
• Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies Review Committee, consisting of faculty from each college who teach Liberal Studies courses
• Seven full time faculty members including five who are tenure track
• Faculty active in teacher education research
• Faculty active in education related professional associations
• Dedicated Administrative Support Coordinator
• Strong partnerships with local teachers and schools
• Ambitious grant funding ($230,000 awarded 2015; $1,200,000 awarded 2016; $250,000 pending) for innovative curriculum development
• The current Program Coordinator already has the same level of assigned time and academic administrative responsibilities as the other Department Chairs in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development.
• No additional staff required nor any additional space requested. We will redefine the role of current staff and change the usage of space assigned to the Kremen School.

Please see the attached Liberal Studies Department Proposal for a more delineated rationale.
California State University, Fresno
Liberal Studies Re-imagined

Introduction/Background

In 1911, Fresno State began as Normal School with the express purpose to prepare teachers for the region. Though Fresno State has become a complex, comprehensive institution, the University and the Kremen School are dedicated to making a difference and to being distinguished within our region and state through exemplary preparation of teachers. As California does not allow an undergraduate major in education, the purpose of the Liberal Studies (LS) major is to prepare students to enter teaching credential programs, primarily elementary teaching (Multiple Subject), but not necessarily limited to that credential. This major is housed in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development; there is currently no Liberal Studies Department.

Liberal Studies is an approved major with 120 required units. Faculty hired by chairs in numerous departments across the university teach courses in the program. Historically, Liberal Studies was an approved program through the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC), but with the national passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), state approval was eliminated and each student must now pass the approved California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET) - Multiple Subjects to meet subject matter approval.

The formal infrastructure of the Liberal Studies program has consisted of only a coordinator and advisors (no department, no dedicated faculty, no dedicated space). The only contact students have with their program comes from the two SSP staff assigned to advise them. They receive excellent advising and the six-year graduate rate is the highest (75%) of any school or college at Fresno State. The graduation rate for transfer students in LS is over 85%. A Liberal Studies Review Committee has met to provide guidance and to complete assessment/evaluation requirements.

The Liberal Studies major has ranged from 1153 – 1192 undergraduates over the past five years. The average high school GPA of the LS majors was 3.28, their mean university GPA was 3.1, prior to entering the education major. The average student graduates with 135 units. In 2014-15, 329 degrees were awarded, accounting for 7.7% of all bachelor degree at Fresno State, second only to Criminology.

Continuous improvement is part of the work at our university and recently (in 2015) positive steps have been instituted including: Liberal Studies Honors cohort; intrusive advising; improved access to advisors; remodeling the advising office; development of an online handbook; distribution of the Liberal Studies Newsletter; and increased interaction and visitation with Liberal Studies departments on sister CSU campuses. The Kremen School has also gained funding from Bechtel Foundation to re-imagine this major and address key issues for improvement.
Key Issues:

- A 2016 survey of Liberal Studies majors indicated that 98% of them wish to become teachers and, of these, 95% wish to be admitted to the Fresno State credential program. Of those students who are admitted to the Multiple Subject credential, in 2015 78.5% had been Liberal Studies majors. The others largely come from Child, Family, and Consumer Sciences.

- There is a very low CSET pass rate for LS majors. For the 2013-14 academic year, only 13% of Liberal Studies graduates passed all three sections of CSET prior to the start of the 2014-2015 academic year. In 2015-16 288 students graduated in fall and/or spring. Of this number, prior to fall semester 2016:
  - 60 (21%) passed all three CSETs
  - 27 (9%) passed 2 CSETs
  - 54 (19%) passed 1 CSET
  - 147 (51%) passed 0 CSETs

- A CSU executive order requires candidates to pass the exam prior to admission to a credential program. Competing institutions (private, for profit) do not have that requirement.

- There is no administrative structure to support the major students such as a department, department chair, office or faculty.

Until 2016, there has been no dedicated faculty hired to teach Liberal Studies coursework specifically. In 2014-15, 70% of all classes (upper and lower division) were taught by lecturers. In fall 2016, 57% of the upper-division courses are taught by lecturers. The major is housed in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development, however Kremen only teaches two courses required in the major, EHD 50 Intro to Teaching and CI 100 Educational Technology. While efforts in the past two years to better align courses in the program with research-based pedagogy have been promising, the status of Liberal Studies as a program only has made assurance of those reforms inconsistent. Departmental infrastructure and recognition will facilitate realization of important reforms such as cohort course scheduling and curriculum alignment.

- With instruction largely from part-time faculty, there is little fidelity to the syllabi.

- Courses are seen as service courses only in their ‘home’ department, and as such they have a low priority among department chairs. With the revised University budget formula, the motivation for FTES is decreased as the cost of the instructor is met while extra revenues are not generated, so motivation for these classes is reduced.
• No dedicated space currently exists that can be seen as a home for the Liberal Studies students.

• The students feel neglected by the University, missing what every other major at the University experiences.

Purpose

In order improve the preparation of Liberal Studies students attending Fresno State with the intention to enter a teaching credential program, the major is being reimagined. It will now provide improved content specific pedagogy and early field experiences to meet the goals of maintaining and improving graduation rates, increasing the pass rate of the California Subject Examination for Teachers – Multiple Subject (CSET), and increasing the pool of diverse candidates entering credential programs. We have begun implementing innovations to achieve these goals through our Liberals Studies Summer Academies, and the support and status of a department will enhance the visibility and significance of our efforts.

The shortage of teachers in California is dramatic and serious. Fresno State credential candidates experience essentially 100% employment and hundreds of teaching positions in our region are filled by emergency hires. A marked increase in teacher production is needed immediately.

While the LS program can be considered as a pre-professional degree for students wanting to pursue a teaching credential, the program has traditionally been decentralized, with individual departments across the university responsible for scheduling courses, staffing faculty, and overseeing curriculum and pedagogy. Additionally, advising for LS majors is provided by the Education Student Services Center, but only two courses (Introduction to Teaching, EHD50 and CI 100 Instructional Technology) is taught by faculty in the Kremen School of Education. One LS student noted this disconnect:

“I wish the program had a sense of community where I had networking opportunities and meaningful relationships.”

The impetus to develop Liberal Studies into a department originates in work begun as part of a New Generation of Educators Initiative grant received from the CSU Chancellor’s Office and Bechtel Foundation in 2015. In this project, faculty from across the university who teach courses in the LS program collaborated with K-8 partner teachers from local schools in a Summer Academy to realign and reconceive their curricula and pedagogy, with the goal of providing stronger content preparation for future elementary teachers. In this process of faculty collaboration, we realized our efforts would be more successful with the support provided by a formal department structure. We found that many faculty were unfamiliar with the requirements of the major, and did not have a sense of the curricular scope of the program. Faculty collaborated with K-8 partner teachers to develop field-based learning experiences,
engaging future teachers in authentic contexts with public school students. The benefits of this approach are highlighted in this student observation:

"While obtaining undergraduate Liberal Studies degree, it would’ve been beneficial to observe in primary/secondary classrooms so that we would have experience prior to the credential program."

The program is transitioning to a cohort scheduling model, where students in a cohort are registered for four upper-division LS courses as a group. These sections are taught by faculty who have participated in the Summer Academy collaboration, and enrollment is restricted to LS majors only. This innovative approach facilitates interdisciplinary faculty collaboration and the establishment of a community of support among students, as well as an explicit focus on the content preparation of future teachers, as called for by this student:

“When I was preparing for my CSET [California Subject Examination for Teachers] I realized that my one science class and my one history class were not sufficient to prepare me. Those classes were not taught with a lens towards the education field.”

In one course during the first cohort in Spring 2016, K-8 partner teachers presented a workshop on how to teach fundamental concepts. One student’s response:

“I loved how the teachers had recorded themselves presenting the curriculum. They were so enthusiastic when presenting too which was awesome! I also enjoyed the way they talked about teaching, they had such great passion! I liked how they even printed out samples for us to look at even though we didn’t have time to go over them, they were still useful to see how they do things in their classroom. I really enjoyed attending this presentation.”

This presentation by partner teachers required locating a larger class meeting space. The logistical infrastructure of a department and dedicated DAA would facilitate being able to capitalize on special class learning experiences like this one.

Our initiatives are highly consistent with University Strategic Priorities 1 & 4, emphasizing enhanced learning experiences and collaborative and engaged community partnerships. Faculty are currently developing capstone courses for the program that feature Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, Universal Design for Learning, and Teacher Inquiry as guiding frameworks for curriculum, providing a powerful connection of content to pedagogy in preparation for credential program coursework.

The Department will continue to engage in the standard undergraduate program review. The program has an established and rigorous Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP) to guide evaluation of program effectiveness. Faculty are engaged in many University initiatives, including DISCOVERe, eScholars, and Faculty Learning Communities. We also plan on a new direction for the Build-a-Teacher Club, emphasizing social justice and extended connections with area practicing teachers.
Policy on Academic Organization and Governance, APM 113-3

A. The academic scope of the department represents a discrete and clearly defined discipline wherein:

1. There exists a substantial body of knowledge unique to the area concerned.

The Liberal Studies program is a unique, independent, pre-professional degree, focused on the achievement by learners of a broad, diverse, culturally sensitive perspective by integrating concepts, communicating effectively, thinking critically and creatively, problem solving, and making sound ethical decisions. This multidisciplinary approach is highly suitable for the rigorous preparation of future teachers. In many other California universities, Liberal Studies is an independent department. Comparable LS departments are: CSU Long Beach, Los Angeles, Northridge, Dominguez Hills, Chico, and Sacramento. In other states where a teaching credential is an undergraduate program, a separate department exists for the elementary education major. This includes over 1300 universities according to AACTE. The body of knowledge informing the field of teacher education is extensive, and includes the subfield of teacher subject area knowledge. One example is the recent 1500-page Handbook of Research on Teaching (Gitomer & Bell, Eds.; 2016), which contains specific chapters on such relevant topics as diversity, globalization, and technology.

2. There exists recognized national, professional, academic, or occupational societies and/or organizations related to the academic scope of the department

There are numerous national professional and academic organizations/societies dedicated exclusively to the interests of teacher education. Faculty in the LS program at Fresno State are active members in several professional organizations, such as the American Education Research Association and the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. They are also engaged in discipline-specific organizations such as the Literacy Research Association and the Association for Science Teacher Education. For eight years Fresno State was the host institution of The Renaissance Group, which has as a key tenet that educator preparation is a whole university endeavor. Faculty are also engaged in scholarly interdisciplinary collaboration with colleagues across the university including the departments of Earth and Environmental Sciences, English, and History.

3. Accreditation (if appropriate) is enforced or in the process of being established

As this is an undergraduate, pre-professional program, LS is not included in formal accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator
Preparation. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing that accredits all educator preparation programs has proposed and is studying the program approval process being extended to the Liberal Studies majors across the state. It is expected to be in place by 2018.

**B. The department will better provide an adequate nurturing for the academic scope than the structure under which it presently functions.**

A Department of Liberal Studies provides a needed home for undergraduate students comprising one of the largest majors at Fresno State. The decentralized nature of the program has not facilitated the important development of a sense of belonging and tradition for students. With a formal department and associated resources such as a department office, Department Administrative Assistant, and dedicated faculty, our majors will experience the natural benefits that result from an institutionalized place. By developing and teaching capstone courses for majors, official LS faculty will be able to provide more meaningful mentoring, resulting in a purposeful sense of community.

The logistical support from the formal department structure better supports important curricular innovations such as field experiences, where careful scheduling and communications are needed. The complex planning associated with cohort scheduling is another activity that benefits from the resources of a department. Additionally, departmental structure also facilitates the instruction of upper-division courses in the major by tenure-track faculty.

Strategic planning supports both the students' retention and completion success, as well as the instructors' abilities to develop and implement integrated curriculum and projects. This models for students what the teaching field will be like and sets our future teachers up for success.

**C. The program of the proposed department will make an integral and significant contribution to the university's academic mission; it offers a viable degree; and that it advances the programmatic needs of the college/school and university.**

The establishment of the Department of Liberal Studies is highly consistent with Fresno State's Strategic Plan, particularly with respect to providing support for collaborative learning experiences that bridge across colleges and departments from across campus and into community partners. The faculty that will form the nucleus of this new department are strongly committed to providing transformational learning experiences for the future teachers of the Central Valley, including powerful field-based learning, capstone coursework, and collaborative curricula. The degree is viable in that it leads directly to the Multiple Subject credential. Credential completers over the last four years
have experienced essentially 100% employment in elementary classrooms as the teacher of record.

D. **There exists strong evidence for the department's potential growth, vitality, and educational value.**

Based on the preceding brief overview, the LS program is in the process of significant reform focused around two key innovations: (a) cohort course scheduling, and (b) interdisciplinary faculty collaboration. Faculty are already engaged in powerful collaborations to design and implement opportunities for “extraordinary learning” as called for in Strategic Focus 1.

Faculty in Fall 2016 cohorts designed and facilitated a fall orientation that connected students with each other, their instructors, and introduced them to the campus and DISCOVERe learning tools (i.e. tablets and Google Classroom). The instructors of these courses have also designed an integrated field experience project with assignments from each of the courses.

There is no plan to grow the number of majors; there are sufficient numbers, they just are not being prepared in a manner that facilitates further growth or employment. Correcting that is the aim of forming the department.

E. **The projected full-time equivalent faculty in the proposed department will be at least seven of whom at least five will be full-time probationary and tenured faculty.**

The assignment of faculty to the department will be determined by consultation with leadership in the Kremen School. Following is the list of full time, faculty members who have currently been determined as assigned to LS. The first five are tenure track. Numbers 2, 3, and 4 were hired specifically to be part of the LS Department. We are currently searching for a STEM educator and are in the process of picking the specific full time lecturer to be assigned. The FTEF will be well over the 7 required when the capstone courses are offered.

1. Frederick L. Nelson, Ph.D.,
   Assistant Professor,
   Coordinator
2. Patrick DeWalt, Ph.D.,
   Assistant Professor
3. Myunghwan Shin, Ph.D.,
   Assistant Professor
4. Selena Van Horn, Ph.D.,
   Assistant Professor
5. TBD, Ph.D.
   Assistant Professor
   University 1 Director, FT Lecturer
7. TBD,
   FT Lecturer

As the demand for cohort course scheduling grows, the need for additional adjunct and full-time faculty will occur. The collaborative nature of the cohort program requires a special level of commitment from faculty, and the prestige of a department enhances the ability to attract faculty with that quality. If 300 students per year continue to complete the major, that means 12 sections per year of each capstone course will need to be offered. This will lead to additional hires in those areas. As mentioned, LS faculty will also teach in the credential so the student experience a continuity through their actual career preparation.

**Liberal Studies Re-imagined: Reforms**

1. Through Faculty Learning Communities (FLC), professional development, and shared input from faculty and K12 teachers, the written and implemented syllabi for the identified LS courses are being transformed to include cutting edge pedagogy, alignment to the CSET, and connections to the profession.

2. Liberal Studies students are increasingly being placed in cohorts so they progress with peers and are auto-enrolled in classes, making possible a 4-year completion. Cohorts enable students to take the CSET subtests as they align with the program course sequence.

3. Data will be collected for pass rates for each subset of the Multiple Subject CSET and courses/program redesigned until the rate has improved to an acceptable level.

4. Liberal Studies needs a new administrative arrangement. This department is being proposed to ensure leadership, fidelity and quality in the major. A Liberal Studies Chair will provide leadership, represent the major at the university and in the system, oversee the ‘Liberal Studies Fellows’ program, and teach coursework in the major.

The Liberal Studies Chair will be a tenure track faculty member, who leads the designated Liberal Studies Fellows who are drawn from the various colleges teaching Liberal Studies courses, and who have participated in pedagogical and curricular professional development in the Summer Academies. The Liberal Studies Chair will be assigned to the Kremen School and supervised by the Director of Teacher Education. The Chair, along with the Liberal Studies Fellows, will oversee the program, set the schedule for LS courses in consultation with department chairs, assign faculty to sections and cohorts, and work to assure fidelity to the syllabus, progression of cohorts, and ultimately, student success.
The administrative structure will include committees for both general program oversight and consultation as well as curriculum committees. The Liberal Studies Review Committee will be comprised of the Chair, two representatives from upper division and lower division courses, basic credential coordinators, an advisor, and two faculty at-large. The LS Review Committee will meet at least four times a year to make recommendations to the program and Director of Teacher Ed, to review CSET passage by subtest, and to ensure the SOAP and assessment are being implemented. Curriculum Committees for both upper division and lower division which are comprised of a representative of each course will meet at least twice a year, but more often during the reimagining process, to make changes to the instruction, curriculum, assignments, and experiences. Lead Faculty ‘Liberal Studies Fellows’ will communicate with other faculty teaching their course to ensure fidelity.

5. Liberal Studies cohorts need to be taught by dedicated and trained tenure track faculty and lecturers who are committed to preparing future teachers. Many of them will be designated ‘Liberal Studies Fellows.’ For professional training, as monies are available, they will receive a stipend (currently $5,000 for training and $300 per semester, from grant and student success funding). This will continue as long as funding is available. The courses and faculty should be part of the tablet initiative of the university. Students from the first years’ cohort were provided tablets.

The Liberal Studies Fellows can be tenure track or lecturer, however they must be consistently assigned to the program. The LS Faculty will become members of a professional learning community focusing on LS student success. Whether hired specifically for Liberal Studies or for other content field responsibilities, Liberal Studies teaching must become a continuing assignment and an identity for these faculty demonstrating the whole university responsibility in teacher preparation.

7. There will be dedicated Liberal Studies sections of all upper division Liberal Studies courses. Faculty teaching the dedicated sections will be part of a faculty learning community (FLC) and students part of a student learning community (SLC). The dedicated sections will be have class limits in increments...25, 50, 75, 100 so students will consistently be enrolled with other students in their cohort, Liberal Studies Learning Communities.

8. Liberal Studies’ majors need a place and people with whom to identify. An accessible room where majors can congregate, receive assistance, and see other majors is preferable. ED 151 will become the Liberal Studies Department office and ED 152 will be a conference room. This space has become available due to a long term Rehabilitation Assessment Center’s grant not being renewed.

9. Once steps are accomplished to reimagine and transform the upper division courses, the review of the lower division courses will start as well as review of the LS concentrations. The LS Review Committee will be responsible for recommendations on concentrations.
Summary

In closing, Liberal Studies is poised to serve as a model for innovative interdisciplinary collaboration and flexibility for student success. The potential for synergy between the LS department and the award-winning partnership teacher credential programs in the Kremen School is extensive. The status of a department will provide an essential catalyst to help focus the vision and mission for the future. Departmental infrastructure is critical for the thoughtful and ambitious growth of the program, including marketing and recruitment, curriculum development, faculty collaboration, and community engagement. Faculty leaders in the program work regularly to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with local school districts and community college partners, continuing to tell the message of the transformative teacher education program at Fresno State, of which Liberal Studies is a critical component.
October 18, 2016

To: Provost Zelezny
RE: Liberal Studies Reimagined Proposal

The Liberal Studies Program Review Committee in the Kremen School of Education and Human development unanimously passed to approve the proposal for the reimagined Liberal Studies Department on October 17, 2016.

If you have any questions please contact me lalamillo@csufresno.edu

Best,

Laura Alamillo, Chair
Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education
October 19, 2016

To: Provost Zelezny

RE: Liberal Studies Reimagined Proposal

The Multiple Subject Program Review Committee in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development unanimously approved the proposal for the reimagined Liberal Studies Department on October 18, 2016.

The development of this department will enable us to facilitate consistency in instruction which will allow us to disrupt the challenges students currently face associated with high-stakes teacher credential entrance exams. This has been a significant problem for aspiring teachers in the Central Valley and we are eager to better serve and support our students.

If you have any questions please contact me lbennett@csufresno.edu

Best,

Lisa Bennett, Ph.D
Multiple Subject Credential Program Coordinator
Assistant Professor, Department of Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education
October 18, 2016

To: Provost Zelezny
RE: Liberal Studies Reimagined Proposal

The Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education Department in the Kremen School of Education and Human development unanimously passed to approve the proposal for the reimagined Liberal Studies Department on October 17, 2016.

If you have any questions please contact me lalamillo@csufresno.edu

Best,

Laura Alamillo, Chair
Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education
Date: November 2, 2016

To: Dr. Lynnette Zelezny  Dr. Kevin Ayotte, Chair
    Provost  Academic Senate

From: Dr. Linda Hauser, Chair
       Department of Educational Leadership

Re: Request for Senate Approval of Creation of the Liberal Studies Department

The Department of Educational Leadership has reviewed the proposal for the establishment of the Department of Liberal Studies in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development. Our faculty voted to support this proposal. We feel it is a logical and needed move, and the creation of the Liberal Studies Department will make a strong contribution to the mission of the Kremen School and the University.
October 31, 2016

To: Provost Zelezny

RE: Liberal Studies Reimagined Proposal

The Kremen School of Education and Human development (KSOEHD) Faculty Assembly unanimously passed to approve the proposal for the reimagined Liberal Studies Department on October 25, 2016.

If you have any questions, please contact me at suhnandez@csufresno.edu

Best,

Susana Hernández

KSOEHD 2016 – 2017 Faculty Assembly President
October 21, 2016

MEMORANDUM

To: Dean Paul Beare
From: Jacques Benninga, Department Chair
Re: C&I Department Vote on Liberal Studies

At your request the issue of support for the creation of a Liberal Studies Department was on the agenda for our Wednesday, October 19, 2016 department meeting. It was presented and discussed. Because several faculty members were not able to attend the meeting, it was moved that an electronic vote be held. Support information subsequently was emailed to all full-time department faculty.

Deadline for submitting an electronic vote was Friday, October 21, 2016, 12:00 pm.

I tabulated the votes at approximately 12:30 pm on the deadline date. Eleven faculty voted and the vote was unanimous (11-0) to support the creation of a Liberal Studies department.