Praxis

The Praxis program provides an exciting opportunity to combine the analytical reading, writing and thinking skills of a liberal arts education with the marketable skills required in the 21st century to take students into career paths of their own design.

Eligibility Requirements: The program is designed for students entering their sophomore year. Students must fill out an application for the program (available online at college.artsci.wustl.edu/praxis) by the middle of the second semester of their freshman year. Students must have maintained at least a 3.0 grade point average in their first semester to be considered eligible.

Faculty: The Arts & Sciences faculty, from a wide variety of backgrounds, have helped to develop the program and are eager to teach, monitor and mentor the Praxis students. In addition, leaders in business, nonprofit organizations, government and the like, many of whom discovered the foundation for their success in liberal arts studies, will be lecturers in the signature Praxis courses.

Focused Workforce Curriculum: Not only does the Praxis program provide students with the foundation of a liberal arts education, the curriculum is designed specifically to provide students with many additional tools essential for their future in the world of work. Besides the specialized content of a particular field, the student will be acquiring the expertise essential for his or her first job as well as for careers that may not yet exist:

- Analysis of multiple perspectives essential in the increasing globalization of our world
- Critical thinking
- Familiarity with quantitative analysis and methods
- Outstanding writing and speaking skills
- Foreign language literacy and culture
- Team and group work expertise and psychology
- Essential skills in traditional and emerging technology.

Internships: The Praxis experience culminates in an internship taken normally at the end of the junior year that allows students to synthesize the tools and theories they have learned and use them in the workplace. Locations for internships may include national and international sites.

Community: The success of our students is central to our program. The academic advisers, as well as each Praxis faculty member, assist students in tailoring their education to their own interests and goals. In particular, each student’s faculty mentor closely monitors the student’s progress. The faculty and staff and all the Praxis students form a supportive community that stimulates and encourages the highest standards of excellence in the students’ studies and in their chosen careers.

The Program

1. Leadership and group experience (3 units) (fall of sophomore year)
   
   **Required:** Praxis 201 Leaders in Context

2. Information technology skills (2 units) (fall of sophomore year)
   
   **Required:** Praxis 207 Fluency in Sociotechnology

3. Communication skills, both written and oral (3 units)
   
   **Spring of sophomore year**
   
   **Required:** Praxis 285 Communication That Works

4. Analytic and problem-solving requirement (6 units)
   
   **Required:** Econ 1011 Introduction to Microeconomics
   
   A second course in analytic skills (select one from below):

   Econ 1021 Introduction to Macroeconomics 3

   Phil 100G Logic and Critical Analysis 3

   ACCT 2610 Principles of Financial Accounting 3

5. Quantitative Skills (3 units)
   
   **Required:** A course in statistics (select one from below):

   Math 1011 Introduction to Statistics 3

   Math 2200 Elementary Probability and Statistics 3

   Math 3200 Elementary to Intermediate Statistics and Data Analysis 3

   Pol Sci 363 Quantitative Political Methodology 3

   Psych 300 Introduction to Psychological Statistics 3

6. International perspective or experience (3 units)
   
   **Required:** The study of any language through the 300-level or Study Abroad or One course in international economics or economic development (must be 300-level or above)

7. Internship (3 units)
   
   As the capstone experience of the Praxis program, the internship allows students to put into practice the skills and knowledge learned in the Praxis curriculum. The Praxis internship is conducted with the mentorship of a sponsoring Praxis faculty member and usually occurs by the end of the junior year. Students should contact the Praxis internship coordinator and have a faculty mentor in place before beginning the internship. It is not possible to fulfill the internship portion of the Praxis program with an internship that occurred before completing the majority of Praxis requirements, and the internship should consist of 135 hours.
Upon completion of the internship, there are two options available for students in order to fulfill the Praxis internship requirement. In conjunction with the approval of the faculty sponsor, the student submits a 10-page paper exploring the relevant issues and questions set by the sponsoring faculty. Depending on the topic, nature of the internship and discretion of the sponsoring faculty, a daily journal may be submitted in lieu of the 10-page paper. For full details as to the requirements for this internship, contact Dean Kiefer at jkiefer@wustl.edu. Required for completion of the Praxis program.

8. Praxis Seniors Master Class (1 unit)
As a capstone to the Praxis Program experience, this course revisits the major themes of the core Praxis courses in order to analyze their meanings in an interdisciplinary way. Students learn and explore the deeper applications of the topics introduced to them in their Praxis course work at a time in which they can reflect about what they have learned in the context of their internship experience.

Interdisciplinary lectures from the Praxis associated faculty in political science, anthropology and psychology will include the topics of organizational culture, leadership, followership, cooperation, communication, decision-making and presentation. This course is a requirement for the seniors enrolled in the Praxis program.

Contact Person: Dean Joy Kiefer
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Departmental website: http://college.artsci.wustl.edu/praxis

Director
Joy Kiefer
Assistant Dean
PhD, Washington University
(College of Arts & Sciences)

Participating Faculty, 2014-15
Robert W. Duffy
Lecturer
AB, Washington University
Suzanne M. Langlois
Lecturer
BSBA, Washington University
Kimberly Schneider
Lecturer
MEd, University of Missouri-St. Louis
JD, Washington University
Jill Stratton
Lecturer, Associate Dean of Students
MS, Indiana University

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L62 Praxis 201 Leaders in Context
In this course we explore leadership both theoretically and practically. Focus is on understanding the concept of culture and how the cultural context informs a leader’s style and effectiveness. This course also is designed to help students develop insights about leadership practice through readings, discussions, conversations with leaders, and group projects based on fieldwork. Students examine a wide variety of leaders and leadership styles in order to better understand how leaders mobilize followers within the constraints of their particular settings. Students also analyze the creation of institutional identity within organizations and corporate culture and explore effective leadership practices within these settings, as well as analyzing some cross-cultural examples of leadership. This course is limited only to students enrolled in the Praxis program.
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S: IQ, SSC BU: BA EN: S

L62 Praxis 207 Fluency in Sociotechnology
This course studies the fundamentals of technology and how that technology is effectively implemented in organizations and affects human interactions and processes. We consider much of Microsoft Office: Excel, Access and PowerPoint and how the presentation of data in these forms affects our decision-making processes and how humans interact using these technologies. We also develop web skills with a close look at how presentation of information and data in general functions or does not function based simply on how it is presented. This course is limited only to students enrolled in the Praxis program.
Credit 2 units. A&S: SS A&S: IQ, SSC BU: BA EN: S

This course seeks to add in-depth sophistication to the functional skills acquired in one of the Praxis core courses, Fluency in Sociotechnology. Through interdisciplinary reading and exercises, the course illustrates to students that not all visual messages are created equal even when they contain the same information. For example, the most commonly used presentation tool, Microsoft PowerPoint, is routinely used in ways that misrepresents the data it is meant to explain. Organizations often create confusing and complicated spreadsheets that produce numerous and costly errors, the very thing the software is meant to eliminate. Furthermore, websites are regularly so difficult to navigate and use they unknowingly hemorrhage profits and customers, the two things the technology is designed to attract.
In this course, students learn the social, psychological and organizational implications of using these technologies so they may become more skillful and effective practitioners. This course is limited only to students in the Praxis program. Prerequisite: Praxis 207 Fluency in Sociotechnology. Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S: IQ, SSC EN: S

**L62 Praxis 285 Communication That Works**
This course focuses on the communication forms and skills essential to contemporary living and working. Various forms of writing for different audiences and purposes: business letters, memorandums, proposals, reports, press releases, speeches as well as public speaking are practiced and critiqued. The use of technology common in public speaking is practiced and critiqued. The use of technology common in public presentations is expected. Course reading is supplemented with viewing and listening. Final grade is based on combination of quizzes, writing assignments and demonstration of speaking skills. This course is limited only to students enrolled in the Praxis program. Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S: IQ, HUM EN: H

**L62 Praxis 286 Entrepreneurship and the Liberal Arts**
It is a little-known truth that more entrepreneurs come out of Arts & Sciences than any other college. This course begins by exploring why this is so, examining in particular the creative and innovative qualities developed in liberal arts that are crucial to the success of the entrepreneur. We then move on to examine entrepreneurs in action, hearing from those in the field and reading of others, learning how the liberal arts proved instrumental in various ways to their development and ultimate success as entrepreneurs. Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S: IQ, HUM EN: H

**L62 Praxis 300 Praxis Seniors Master Class**
As a capstone to the Praxis Program experience, this course revisits the major themes of the core Praxis courses in order to analyze their meanings in an interdisciplinary way. Students learn and explore the deeper applications of the topics introduced to them in their Praxis course work at a time in which they can reflect about what they have learned in the context of their internship experience. Interdisciplinary lectures from the Praxis associated faculty in political science, anthropology, psychology, topics include organizational culture, leadership, followership, cooperation, communication, decision making and presentation. This course is a requirement for seniors enrolled in the Praxis Program. Credit 1 unit. A&S: SS A&S: IQ, SSC EN: S

**L62 Praxis 367 Seminar in Positive Psychology**
Reviews the relatively recent development in the field known as: “Positive Psychology.” Topics may include: happiness and life satisfaction, positive self-esteem, creativity, caring relationships, love (passionate and otherwise), empathy, optimism, ambition, moral character development, attachment, compassion, forgiveness, helping, work ethics and successful aging. Designed to take a sampling of those aspects of psychology that emphasize the positive side of human nature. Prerequisite: Psych 100B and at least one 300-level course. Same as Psych 367 Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S: IQ, SSC FA: SSP