The Master of Liberal Arts program provides learners with the unique ability to pursue a highly customized interdisciplinary graduate degree program, developed according to their own interests, while building broad analytical and problem solving skills that reach across the boundaries of academic disciplines and beyond the limited structure of traditional graduate degree programs.
ABOUT THE CONCENTRATION
This new concentration within the Master of Liberal Arts program will deliver master’s-level instruction in political science within the structure of an interdisciplinary graduate program. The political and civic engagement concentration seeks to maintain the connection between the academic study of politics and its actual practice and effects. It offers students the opportunity to explore concrete political participation from a wide variety of angles, enabling them to assume leadership roles in their local, state, national, and international communities. This program is designed for individuals interested in careers in governmental and non-governmental organizations, community development projects, human rights, lobbying, and advocacy; and those located in the Piedmont and Upstate regions of South Carolina.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM
The Master of Liberal Arts degree offers people of all ages the opportunity to pursue interdisciplinary studies at a graduate university level. The theme of the program is “The Search for Order.” Through three complimentary core courses and elective courses chosen in consultation with the program director, students engage in both deep and wide-ranging explorations of the arts and sciences. The interplay of reading, writing, and discussion clarifies the key questions and challenges within “The Search for Order,” and then motivates each student to both formulate and defend positions on how those questions are to be addressed. These skills enable the learner to pursue an extended and thoroughgoing exploration of human thought and knowledge. M.L.A. students travel across a varied and enticing intellectual terrain.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
The Master of Liberal Arts degree requires completion of 33 semester hours of approved graduate level courses, at least half of which must be 600 level courses. Twelve hours are in four courses designed for the program, and seek to explore how order is brought to our world through empirical, rational and intuitive means. The fourth required course, the Capstone Colloquium, to be taken at the end of the program, is an individual project on a topic tied to the theme of the concentration.

AN AWARD-WINNING FACULTY
The new concentration will be taught by faculty in the Department of Political Science. The current faculty includes three Distinguished Professors, four Fulbright grant recipients, four Outstanding Junior Professors, and one recipient of Winthrop’s top teaching recognition, the Kinard Award. The department and its faculty are dedicated to intellectual growth, scholarly excellence, and meaningful civic advocacy in local, national, and international venues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
The concentration in political and civic engagement consists of 12 hours of approved courses (see list that follows), of which at least 6 hours must be at the 600-level. In addition, the Capstone Colloquium (LART 604) must focus on a topic or theme directly related to the concentration and must be done with a faculty director with expertise in the chosen area.

WITHIN THE CONCENTRATION
The following 500-level political science (PLSC) courses may be applied to the concentration in political and civic engagement:
- PLSC 506: International Political Economy (3)
- PLSC 507: Politics of Social Movements (3)
- PLSC 512: Education Politics and Policy (3)
- PLSC 514: Survey Research and Data Management (3)
- PLSC 515: Urban Politics and Policy (3)
- PLSC 551: African American Political Thought (3)
- PLSC 553: Feminist Theory (3)

In addition, all 600-level political science courses may be applied to the concentration in political and civic engagement. These courses are offered on a regular and rotating basis.
- PLSC 611, 612, 613: Academic Research in Political and Civic Engagement (1-3)
- PLSC 616: Religion and Politics in America (3)
- PLSC 631: Globalization and International Politics (3)
- PLSC 632: Women’s Global Engagement (3)
- PLSC 633: International Organizations (3)
- PLSC 640: Special Topics in Political and Civic Engagement (3)
- PLSC 641: Community Organizing and Grassroots Advocacy (3)
- PLSC 642: Political Violence
- PLSC 651: Concepts of Citizenship

M.L.A. students enrolling in the concentration in political and civic engagement may enroll in 500-level political science courses that are not listed above. These courses will be considered electives.