



“ a liberal arts education provides the best foundation for the 21st century citizen...one marketable skill...the ability to define and solve new problems. There is simply nothing better than the liberal arts to prepare brains to accommodate the pace of today’s world, where knowledge changes so quickly you can’t master any field but can only gain the fundamentals and the ability to acquire the rest.” (Ann Kirschner, “Alma Mater in the Time of TiVo” in Chronicle 12/9/05, B9)

MISSION: CULTIVATING HUMAN VALUES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

The College of Arts and Letters at Michigan State University cultivates critical and creative thinkers who address the challenge of becoming world citizens by composing persuasive, artistic, and philosophical artifacts that engage students to contribute to the development of a more humane world. Curricula within the College emphasize creativity as well as careful argument, innovation as well as tradition, expression as well as introspection.

VISION:

Guided by intentional practice, aligning goals and actions, we will energetically engage students to critically and creatively explore their sense of self, their cultural heritage, and their connection to other cultures. We cultivate the curiosity and ability to imagine and create more ethical and just worlds from the one we currently inhabit. The faculty in the College of Arts & Letters will enhance their considerable research strength by becoming more nimble and agile moving their research and scholarship energetically into print, finding ever-more interesting and effective ways to bring this scholarship into the classroom in appropriate and exciting ways, seeking assistance from funding agencies where appropriate. Teaching and learning will be increasingly mindful of its distinctive dual mission to assure the broad-based liberal learning goals--breadth of knowledge, intellectual skills, mental flexibility and ethical grounding (advanced communication, skills, analytical thinking, cultural competence, integrated judgment, and effective citizenship) that allow students to lead satisfying personal lives and play responsible roles in society while also providing the deep knowledge of their disciplinary major that launches them in successful careers. Our graduate programs seek creative innovative ways to produce the scholars/researchers/teachers who can negotiate the optimal balance of depth and connection to practice. They will develop habits of reflection and inquiry about engaged learning. The scholarly community in arts and letters will find attractive ways to make their scholarship and artistic production a central core of the intellectual climate of the university and its regional environment.