



# Fiber Arts and Cultural Patterns

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## Overview:

In the Fiber Arts Program, we intend to teach, learn and contribute different skills involving Fiber Arts. The program will include but is not limited to knitting, crocheting and sewing. By living in a close residential setting, we will be able to promote a comfortable and social atmosphere where members can easily learn from one another, explore different crafts and expand their own knowledge. The program will be open and welcoming to veterans looking to improve as well as beginners looking to learn. Some of the activities we think would be beneficial to our program are as follows. We will hold craft nights where students outside of our program and Living and Learning can come and learn new skills or practice old ones in a comfortable environment. This would serve as a way to connect the program to the greater university community. Weekly program craft nights and voluntary projects will be used to create donations for local charities as well as give program members a chance to work on their own skills. Along with the practical learning and improvement of program members we will also include projects relating to the historical or cultural elements of fiber arts. Members will research and share information on their chosen craft. The sharing of their knowledge and skill will enrich our program and give every member a deeper understanding of what they are creating. This programs ability to teach practical life skills and create tangible useful items gives it the opportunity to help and connect with a variety of people.

## Learning Objective One:

**Each member will learn the basics of knitting, crocheting, or sewing, depending on individual desire. By the end of each semester, members should be able to show one to two finished projects.**

## Action Steps

Program members will meet regularly (ideally at least once a week) especially at the beginning of the first semester to learn the basic elements of knitting from the program directors. Then, each week after that, demonstrations can be arranged to accommodate members in other areas of the fiber arts they would like to learn. If the program advisor has any craft ideas he or she would like to share, we would arrange a demonstration for that as well. As a group, members will go to a craft store, such as Michael's, to obtain the proper supplies they need to start their first project and have the chance to ask questions about certain products if they are first-time learners.

Weekly craft nights will be arranged to practice and improve in each of our projects. This provides every member the equal chance of getting assistance if needed, as well as time to check in with each member and plan for upcoming events. Along with our weekly craft nights we will have monthly community craft nights where we will offer assistance to all university students who want to learn to knit, crochet and/or sew.

### **Learning Objective Two:**

**Each member will be able to contribute at least two handmade crafts to Living/Learning's annual Grab Our Goods event, held in December.**

#### **Action Steps**

At one of our early program meetings, we will discuss possible ideas and plan for the Grab Our Goods Event. At our weekly knit night meetings, members can discuss their progress and ask for help if needed.

### **Learning Objective Three:**

**Each member will be able to experience and appreciate different cultures by exploring the fiber arts and unique patterns of different cultures.**

#### **Action Steps:**

Members will research a chosen culture, pattern, and/or color scheme. They will then put together and share with the program the information on the history and meaning of the topic they chose.

Everyone will also find a project that relates to the topic they chose to research. We will then compile these projects together to create a Fiber Arts Project Book. This will give members the opportunity to explore other cultures.

Members should be able to use the university resources, such as the Bailey/Howe Library, the Fleming Museum, as well as other members of the group to learn about their topic.

### **Community Service**

Being able to physically create useful products gives the Fiber Arts and Cultural Patterns Program a great opportunity to help a variety of people. Giving back to the community will be a major focus of this program. Firstly, we would like to host monthly community craft nights, held in the Fireplace Lounge of the Living/Learning Center. These meetings would require all members to attend and share any experiences or skills they have with students who are interested in learning a new craft, such as knitting or crocheting. Secondly, we would like to donate our crafts to a local charity or shelter that could utilize them. In these blustery Vermont winters, blankets, mittens and scarves are essential items for everyone. We will also work as a program to create blankets to donate to various charities.

### **Plans for Interactions with Other L/L Programs**

We would like to have several collaborations with the Jewelry Program. I think a mixing of fiber arts with the beading and metal components of the Jewelry Making program would be very interesting and would like to see the kind of projects we could come up with. We could swap ideas and techniques that could translate into many different artistic fields. (ex. Knitting bracelets containing beads would be a good combination) We could also organize craft nights where members of both programs bring all their supplies for individual projects or group activities. With that, the Fiber Arts Program would get to build a relationship with at least ten more people in the Living/Learning community, and possibly create unique crafts not found anywhere else. We would also be interested in having a social event with programs outside of the Arts Initiative, such as with the Exploring Culture Through Tea. If that program would be willing to put together a small tea party or snack party, the Fiber Arts Program would gladly create little keepsakes for them, such as coasters. Finally, we would like to arrange a meeting with the LIVE program and make equality

bracelets with them. This would give us another chance to meet people outside of the Arts Initiative Program that we may not see everyday in our particular Living/Learning Building.