

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Interdisciplinary Studies Undergraduate Major

Administered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

A major in interdisciplinary studies is offered in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for undergraduate students who have unique interdisciplinary educational goals. The student, a faculty review board, and an academic advisor design the major. Leading to either the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science degree, the major includes 36 to 48 credits of coursework chosen to provide a coherent, carefully planned program in an area of interest that bridges two or more disciplines.

This specialized area is identified on the diploma. Learning goals are individually crafted for each proposed major. All interdisciplinary studies majors must also satisfy the requirements of the liberal arts and sciences curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

A degree in Interdisciplinary Studies may be particularly attractive to students who wish to develop an area of interest based upon one of the College's cross-disciplinary programs; the faculty of the cross-disciplinary studies programs in Classical Studies and U.S. Latino/a Studies have laid out an interdisciplinary track for study in those areas.

Students have also worked with faculty to propose Interdisciplinary Studies tracks in areas of interest such as International Relations, Ecology Studies, African American Cultural Studies, Asian Studies, and Cognitive Studies. Currently students are working with faculty to identify interdisciplinary programs of study in Climate Science and Health Science.

Learning Outcomes

As part of the proposal process students are expected to identify specific learning goals of their proposed interdisciplinary coursework. In addition to meeting the learning goals of the general education program of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and meeting university-wide learning goals, Interdisciplinary Studies majors graduates will be able to:

- Integrate knowledge and modes of thinking grounded in interdisciplinary inquiry
- Use methods and tools from multiple disciplines to solve problems
- Connect their learning to their professional goals

Further information about the Interdisciplinary Studies major can be obtained from the LAS College Student Academic Services office.

How to Propose an Interdisciplinary Program

A student seeking admission to the program in interdisciplinary studies develops a proposal in consultation with faculty and an advisor. The proposal will include a program of study and a letter of application that explains how the proposed major meets specific educational and learning goals. Since students are expected to earn at least 30 credits after they are admitted into the program, the proposal is ordinarily submitted to the LAS Associate Dean for Academic Programs during the sophomore or junior year. The proposal will be considered if the area of interest properly falls within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and if the student's educational goals cannot be met by a more traditional combination of existing majors, minors, and electives.

Specific Requirements for the Program of Study

The interdisciplinary studies major must meet College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2022-2023/collegeofliberalartsandsciences/#lascollegerequirementstext>) and University-wide requirements (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2022-2023/collegescurricula/>) for graduation. In addition the proposed major must include 36 to 48 credits of coursework chosen to lead to a distinctive set of learning outcomes and bridge two or more disciplines. A major emphasizing the humanities or communicative arts normally leads to a B.A.; a major emphasizing the natural or social sciences normally leads to a B.S. Different requirements for the B.A. and B.S. degrees are determined by the nature of the chosen field of study. Courses listed in the individualized major may come from any department of the university with the following restrictions:

1. The selection of courses needs to focus on a single theme and be consistent with the career and educational goals of the student.
2. At least one half of the courses in the major will come from departments within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
3. The courses will be chosen from at least two disciplines.
4. All courses in the major must be at the 200-level or higher.
5. At least 15 credits must be at the 300-level or higher with at least 6 credits at the 400-level or higher.

An average grade of C or better must be earned in 15 credits at the 300-level or higher in the major.

To meet the English and communication proficiency requirement, a grade of C or better must be earned in ENGL 250 and in either an advanced English composition course or a course in the major with a significant writing component.

Forms and sample proposals are available here (<https://iastate.box.com/s/mf3126yjf7tobnjoq9lf4jw67jmxm8iv/>). Further information may be obtained from the LAS College Student Academic Services office.

Interdisciplinary Studies Major with a track in Classical Studies

Students may pursue an Interdisciplinary Studies Major with a track in Classical Studies (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2022-2023/collegeofliberalartsandsciences/classicalstudies/#curriculumtext>) by completing a program of study defined by faculty who work in this interdisciplinary program. Additional information is available on the Classical Studies page of the catalog.

Interdisciplinary Studies Major with a track in U.S. Latino/a Studies

Students may pursue an Interdisciplinary Studies Major with a track in U.S. Latino/a Studies (<http://catalog.iastate.eduhttps://collegeofliberalartsandsciences/uslatino-a-studies/#interdisciplinarymajortext>) by completing a program of study defined by faculty who work in this cross-disciplinary program. Additional information is available on the U.S. Latino/a Studies page of the catalog.