

Interdisciplinary Studies Major

Academic Advisement:

College of Agriculture

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College of Education and Human Services

Terri Gass, (435) 797-1443, terri.gass@usu.edu

College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

Mary Leavitt, (435) 797-3883, mleavitt@hass.usu.edu

College of Natural Resources

Maureen Wagner, (435) 797-2448, maureen@cc.usu.edu

College of Science

Richard Mueller, (435) 797-2479, rmueller@biology.usu.edu

Degrees offered: Bachelor of Science (BS) and Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Objectives

The organization of academic departments and their associated degree programs reflects the history and traditions of study in those fields. The Interdisciplinary Studies major is intended to serve the needs of students who want to design a unique individualized academic program, obtain a broadly-based education, and diversify their professional potential. The degree is not intended to replace existing majors or curricula. Rather, it is designed to provide the *small number* of students whose degree needs cannot be met with other majors with a program which is less restrictive and more responsive to their individual plans and interests. Students who complete their programs will receive the Bachelor of Science or (if they meet the language requirement) the Bachelor of Arts degree. **The degree cannot be used as part of a dual major.**

The Interdisciplinary Studies major is available through the following five colleges: Agriculture; Education and Human Services; Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; Natural Resources; and Science. However, the major is *not* available to students enrolled in the College of Business, the College of Engineering, nor the Department of Computer Science. The Interdisciplinary Studies degree is also available through the University's Continuing Education centers.

Students who think the Interdisciplinary Studies major may be right for them, but are not sure, should ask themselves the following questions:

1. Students must have a minimum of 45 semester credits completed before the major may be declared. Do I have 45 or more semester credits on my transcript? If not, how close am I?
2. Interdisciplinary Studies **cannot** duplicate existing majors. Have I explored the educational opportunities at USU? Have I reviewed the *General Catalog* to see what is already available at USU? Have I visited Career Services (University Inn 102) to explore career development programs? Why don't any of the existing majors meet my needs?
3. Which areas of study am I proposing to combine? Do they logically go together? Does USU offer the areas of study I am proposing to combine? What would the program I am proposing lead me to? Are there job opportunities out there?
4. If my degree crosses two or more colleges, which college would I propose to serve as the lead college?

If, after reviewing the above, students feel that they have a unique interest in a subject matter and USU can help, this may be the right major for them. Interested students should make an appointment with the advising center in the college from which the degree will be awarded.

Admission Requirements

Students may apply for admission to the Interdisciplinary Studies major after completing 45 credits with a minimum GPA of 2.0, submitting an Application for Interdisciplinary Studies, and receiving approval for the Application.

Transfer students from other institutions or from other USU majors need to complete a minimum of 45 credits, achieve the required GPA, and have an approved Application for Interdisciplinary Studies for admission to this major in good standing.

Students who wish to pursue the degree must submit a letter of application containing the following information:

1. A clear statement of the student's educational objectives.
2. A proposed program of study including specific courses and listing the faculty member the student proposes to work with on the final thesis or project.
3. A brief statement explaining why the student feels the proposed program is worthy of a college degree.

A current unofficial transcript must be attached to the application. The application should be discussed with and reviewed by the student's major advisor.

Requirements

Students will work with a faculty member or members who will assist in course selection and will oversee the successful completion of the 45 credits in the program. Courses selected must provide coherent, carefully planned programs of study in the area of interest, which must involve two or more disciplines. Courses used for University Studies Breadth Requirements and courses used for Depth Humanities and Creative Arts (DHA), Depth Life and Physical Sciences (DSC), and Depth Social Sciences (DSS) may be counted toward the degree *only with the permission of the college advisor*. However, courses meeting the Communications Intensive (CI) and Quantitative Intensive (QI) requirements may be applied toward requirements for the Interdisciplinary Studies degree.

Courses used to meet the 45-credit minimum requirement may come from any department, with the following restrictions:

1. At least 21 of the 45 credits **must** be numbered 3000 or above.
2. Courses used for the major must include **at least 15 credits each** from two different disciplines. A maximum of 3 internship credits may be counted toward the major. **Note:** Some colleges may require that *more than 15 credits* counted toward the major be taught by departments within their college; check with the college advisor for further information.
3. The coursework must focus on an overarching theme and must be consistent with the student's educational and career goals.

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4. As part of the 45 credits, students must complete a 3-credit senior project, thesis, or capstone course supervised by their faculty advisor.
5. Students must pass every course approved for the program of study and must earn a composite GPA of at least 2.0 in the 45 credits of coursework used for the major. **Note:** Some colleges may have a higher GPA requirement; check with the college advisor for further information.
6. Courses used for the major may be used for a minor or to fill University Studies Breadth requirements *only with the permission of the college advisor.*

Additional Information

Students interested in the Interdisciplinary Studies degree should contact the advising center in the college from which the degree will

be awarded. Students who would like to explore the degree, but are unsure which college they should enroll in, may discuss their interests with Jana Kay Lunstad, University Advising and Transfer Services, (435) 797-3373, janakay.lunstad@usu.edu.

Students exploring whether or not the Interdisciplinary Studies major is right for them should review the major requirement sheet, which can be found online at: <http://www.usu.edu/ats/majorsheets/>

For students pursuing the Interdisciplinary Studies major, the requirement sheet provides details of major requirements, as well as a worksheet for students to record their progress toward fulfilling major requirements.

Course Description

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