

Curriculum & Curriculum Map

Interdisciplinary Studies Program Overview

Interdisciplinary Studies provides students with the opportunity to construct, with intensive consultation and advice, a 36-credit interdisciplinary “major equivalent” that is not restricted to conventional departmental or unit boundaries. While the program encourages the creation of highly individualized degrees, it serves to accommodate students in a variety of fields that lack an undergraduate major and are interdisciplinary by their very nature. These include, among others: Aquaculture, Criminology, Cognitive Science, Environmental Studies, International Studies, Linguistics, Sustainability Studies, Translation & Interpretation, Health Studies and other Pre-Professional programs.

Objectives of the Program:

Our main goal is to foster critical interdisciplinary thinking on the part of students who are obliged to articulate a “proposal,” which defines an interdisciplinary inquiry. Thus, students must construct, under advisement, a 36 credit upper-division program of study, which draws on not less than three Departments in the University. To do so, they must come to an understanding of the immense possibilities available in the University as represented in the UHM catalogue, and then see how the various courses in their programs integrate into an intellectual whole. A critical feature of this process is the writing of a “narrative,” a clear statement of the rationale for the course of study. Once engaged in the course of study, the IS major is a unique opportunity for students, regardless of the immediate motivations in any single course, to see that there are important connections as regards what occurs in the world and that they need to get clear on these connections in problem-solving. During the mentoring sessions, the student learning objectives are:

The main goal of the Interdisciplinary Program is to foster critical interdisciplinary thinking on the part of students who construct, under advisement, a 36 credit upper-division program of study, which draws on not less than three Departments in the University. The Program Learning Outcomes are:

1. To demonstrate knowledge in the chosen area of their interdisciplinary major.
2. To demonstrate the capacity to think across disciplines. (We encourage students to be problem-focused, rather than discipline-oriented, and to recognize that information pertinent to problem-solution is not discipline-bound.)
3. To communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. (The writing of a narrative, which justifies the array of courses in the program, is the first step in developing this capacity.)
4. To demonstrate critical thinking, encouraged, perhaps uniquely, not only by the effort to construct individualized BA programs, but by pressing students to expand the context and forms of inquiry.
5. To demonstrate “learning to learn” skills or ‘problem-solving’ skills, which begins with the construction of the specifics of the major, requires initiative in determining what needs to be investigated and how it is to be investigated.

IS Major

All Interdisciplinary Studies “major equivalents” are comprised of courses offered by departments and programs in the UHM catalogue. It is a crucial feature of the advising process that the “major equivalent”

consist of upper-division courses with thematic integrity. Flexible curriculum choice is thus made possible with no loss of academic rigor.

IS Courses

Each IS Faculty teaches one course per semester regularly. The courses are:

- IS 322: Ethnohistory (Spring Semester)
- IS 331: Science and Culture (Spring Semester)
- IS 340: Human Values and the Environment (Fall Semester)
- IS 441: Linguistic Anthropology. (Fall Semester)

Students may choose to include the above courses in the major equivalent if they fit into the program or take at least one of them as an elective. Through these courses students are introduced to interdisciplinary research methodology, written communication, critical thinking, interdisciplinary problem-based thinking and methods of exploring linkages between disciplinary fields for creative problem-solving, which cover many aspects of both Student Learning Outcomes and Institutional Learning Outcomes.

In our courses, we encourage students to:

- think critically and creatively, applying questioning and reasoning, generating and exploring new questions (SLO 2, ILO 2a: IS 322, IS 331 & IS 340)
- conceptualize problems and ask research questions, analyze research data, engage in self-directed inquiry (SLO 2; ILO 2b: IS 322 & IS 414)
- communicate clearly in writing (SLO 3 & 4; ILO 2a, 2c)
- demonstrate continuous learning and personal growth through self-assessment and reflection, intellectual curiosity, personal and social responsibility (SLO 5; ILO 3a: IS 322, IS 331, 340)
- to show respect for cultural differences or stewardship of natural environment and ethical responsibility (SLO 5; ILO 3b, 3c: IS 322 & IS 340)

Student Learning Outcomes for Individually Designed IS Curriculum

The Student Learning Outcomes for the designed interdisciplinary IS curriculum, comprised of coursework from different disciplines, are as follows:

1. To acquire knowledge and understanding in students' chosen interdisciplinary field (*Progress Monitored in IS Major; Assessment Evidence Collected: IS Current Student Survey/Grad Exit Survey*)
2. To develop skills in exploring interdisciplinary relationships and follow problems across disciplinary boundaries (*Assessment Evidence Collected from IS Proposal, Current Student Survey, Grad Exit Survey, and Written Work in IS Courses*)
3. To develop critical thinking skills by developing skills of comparing, contrasting, and synthesizing a variety of perspectives (*Assessment Evidence Collected— IS Program Survey/Grad Exit Survey/ Written Work in IS courses*)
4. To communicate clearly in writing (*Assessment Evidence Collected from IS Proposal, Current Student Survey, Grad Exit Survey, and Written Work in IS Courses*)

5. To demonstrate life-long learning and problem-solving skills (*Assessment Evidence Collected from IS Proposal, Current Student Survey, Grad Exit Survey , and Written Work in IS Courses*)

Interdisciplinary Studies Curriculum Map

IS Courses/ Major Courses	SLO I	SLO2	SLO3	SLO 4	SLO5
Upper Division Course Work	Major Courses	IS Prop, IS Courses, IS Major	IS Courses/IS Major	IS Proposal/IS Courses/Major Courses	IS Courses

(Click **here** for a Sample Proposal.)

Click [here](#) for a Curriculum Template