

# INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (BA OR BS)

Offered by the Interdisciplinary Studies Council

**Professor:** Matthew Cheney

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The Interdisciplinary Studies major provides a unique opportunity to construct a university major that meets students' intellectual interests and career objectives. This interdisciplinary experience provides students with an alternative to the existing majors available at Plymouth. The Interdisciplinary Studies major provides flexibility by encouraging students to select courses from a variety of academic disciplines and lets students design their own education in consultation with a team of advisors. The areas of study open to students are limited only by interest, imagination, and energy.

## Degree Requirements

The Interdisciplinary Studies major consists a minimum of 51 credit hours integrating two or more disciplines. These credits must include Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies (IP 2000), Cluster Learning Springboard (IP 2500), and Interdisciplinary Studies Senior Seminar (IP 4500) (TECO, WRCO). At least 50% of total credits in the major must include upper-division (3000/4000 level) course work.

In addition to the courses in the Interdisciplinary Studies major, students must complete the General Education requirements. As with all majors, Directions courses cannot be counted in the major. A Quantitative Reasoning in the Discipline Connection (QRCO) must be included in the student's contract. Students must complete the University's minimum credit (120) requirement. Upon completion of the program, students will receive either a Bachelor of Science (BS) or a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree.

The foreign language requirement for all BA degrees calls for 0-8 credits: one year of one language (6-8 credits); or one 3000/4000 level world language course (3 or 4 credits); or being a native speaker of a language other than English (zero credit). American Sign Language I and II fulfill this requirement; however, American Sign Language does not satisfy the Global Awareness Connection.

As part of the coursework for Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies (IP 2000), students are responsible for designing their own Interdisciplinary Studies major with the assistance of faculty and staff advisors both within and outside the IDS program. As a requirement for successful completion of the Foundations course, students submit to the Interdisciplinary Studies Council an application to have their contract accepted and approved by the Council. While students may declare the IDS major at any point during their time as undergraduates, the IDS major requirements for graduation will only be established upon approval of the application by the IDS Council.

To complete the bachelor's degree in 4 years, you must successfully complete a minimum of 15 credits each semester or have a plan to make up credits over the course of the 4 years. For example, if you take 14 credits one semester, you need to take 16 credits in another semester. Credits completed must count toward your program requirements (major, option, minor, certificate, general education or free electives).

## Learning Outcomes

Interdisciplinary Studies graduates will be able to:

- Take control of their education by designing a customized degree. Through this process, students develop an understanding of what it means to be educated, hone lifelong learning skills, and articulate how their own program of study integrates such knowledge and skills.
- Integrate ideas and approaches from multiple disciplines to solve problems, create new knowledge, and reconsider traditional knowledge paradigms.
- Develop their role in a self-designed academic and professional "network" to benefit from mentorship and information-sharing while also contributing to a knowledge commons.
- Critically interrogate the platforms, architectures, and structures that underpin contemporary education and influence academic work in the world.
- Develop purposeful expressions of ideas to increase knowledge, foster understanding and dialog across communities, and/or promote change in others' attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors.
- Invigorate intellectual curiosity, pose creative questions, seek informed and nuanced answers, and confidently contribute original ideas to the knowledge commons.

## Career Pathways

Career Paths for Interdisciplinary Studies graduates are unlimited. From the moment they create their individualized major, IDS students are thinking about their intellectual journey, their life work, and how they can continue to engage their passions in the world after graduation. We work closely with the Academic and Career Advising Center to help students prepare for the world beyond the PSU campus.