

Effective: October 1997

**Academic Program: Undergraduate Studies
INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS**

Approved: October 1997

Revised: November 1, 2004, Deans' Council
September 21, 2004, Faculty Senate

The policy on interdisciplinary programs replaces prior policy on interdepartmental major programs as adopted in 2004. The rationale for these programs is to provide students with an interdisciplinary perspective that cannot be provided by one department. The objectives for these programs are:

1. Define minimum University requirements for interdisciplinary programs focusing on an integrated discipline.
2. Ensure minimum standards of depth and breadth in proposed interdisciplinary programs.
3. Provide a framework within which the faculty members of various departments can develop interdisciplinary programs.

Definitions

Interdisciplinary Program: A major or minor focusing on integrated disciplines.

Interdisciplinary Major and Interdisciplinary Minor: A major and a minor which integrate the knowledge, perspectives, and methodologies of more than one discipline to form a specific academic focus in a recognized or innovative discipline not currently offered by existing academic departments (e.g., American studies, legal studies, comparative literature).

Interdisciplinary Course: A course that reflects the knowledge, perspectives, and methodologies represented in the program.

Faculty Teaching in the Program: Faculty identified by the director in consultation with the curriculum committee.

Policy and Implementation

Interdisciplinary Major

Course requirements for an interdisciplinary major will follow any current University policies regarding requirements for a major.

An interdisciplinary major shall require a minimum of 30 credits of coursework.

1. A minimum of six (6) credits of interdisciplinary coursework, focused on the integrated discipline represented in the major (e.g., introductory seminar, capstone experience/course), shall be required with three (3) credits or more at the 300-400 level.
2. A minimum of 18 additional credits shall be required in one discipline or clearly defined, interdisciplinary course of study, with at least nine (9) credits or more above the 300-400 level.
3. A minimum of six (6) additional credits shall be required from other disciplines or clearly defined, themed-elective grouping with at least three (3) credits at the 300-400 level.

Interdisciplinary Minor

An interdisciplinary minor shall require a minimum of 18 credits of coursework.

1. A minimum of six (6) credits of interdisciplinary coursework, focused on the integrated discipline represented in the minor, shall be required, with three (3) credits or more at the 300-400 level (e.g., capstone experience/coursework).
2. A minimum of 12 additional credits shall be required from at least two (2) disciplines, with at least six (6) credits above the 100 level.

Organization

The curriculum committee of an interdisciplinary program shall select, with the approval of the school Dean, where the program will be housed. Interdisciplinary programs, not in a department, shall be housed within a school under the auspices of the Dean.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee

A committee composed of the director of the interdisciplinary program, faculty teaching within the program, and students, if desired, in the program shall be organized in a way that best serves the interests of the program. The director will conduct an election within the program's teaching faculty for committee seats. The committee's leadership shall be self-determined.

Director of Interdisciplinary Program

In compliance with the existing CBA policy, the interdisciplinary curriculum committee shall determine the selection process for the director, including approval by the Provost.

The director of the interdisciplinary program shall have a three-year term commencing with the terms of triennially-elected department chairs, and report to the Dean of the school in which the program is housed. The director will have responsibilities equivalent to the department chair in administering the interdisciplinary program.

The director will also:

1. Communicate the needs of the program during a meeting of all school Deans.
2. Collaborate with the school Deans on matters relating to staffing, scheduling of classes, budgeting, and faculty selection process.
3. Serve as the primary adviser for students in the program.
4. Guide systematic program review on the required five-year cycle.
5. Maintain a list of courses offered in the program and faculty teaching those courses.

Council of Interdisciplinary Directors

The Council of Interdisciplinary Directors (CID), composed of the directors of all interdisciplinary programs, shall be formed. This body will coordinate the efforts of the interdisciplinary programs and will conduct an election of Faculty Senator(s) from the faculty teaching within the program. The senator(s) will serve in the CID, if he/she is not serving as director, and the alternate senator shall be one of the directors. One (1) senator shall be elected for every five (5) programs with a minimum of one (1) elected senator at all times (i.e., 10-14 programs = 2 senators, 15-19 programs = 3 senators).

The Council of Interdisciplinary Directors (CID) reflects the professional judgment of the faculty teaching in the programs and recommends policy to the school curriculum committees in such areas as: curriculum, admissions and standard practices; educational programs; University organization, advisement and counseling; student affairs; and matters of similar import.

The Council of Interdisciplinary Directors (CID) shall:

1. Review proposals for new interdisciplinary programs and the interdisciplinary courses within them.
2. Initiate recommendation for changes in academic regulations and policies or related matters affecting interdisciplinary programs and forward these to the Academic Policies Committee.