School of Interdisciplinary Studies

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies provides an environment that allows students to understand and integrate the liberal arts and sciences. The school administers interdisciplinary degree programs that afford students the opportunity to design their degree plans on an individualized basis. To assist the student in pursuing a course of study leading to the successful completion of an undergraduate degree, the school provides a unique support structure. Included in this structure is the school's Internship Program that supports professional work experience in diverse career settings. The educational environment of Interdisciplinary Studies is especially congenial to students eager to pursue unconventional or innovative combinations of coursework.

Programs

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies administers the programs for the Bachelor of Arts in American Studies, the Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Studies, the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies, and the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies. The program in American Studies is designed for students who wish to learn more about United States' institutions, arts, and society, both in the past and present. The Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Studies is designed for those planning to enter the healthcare professions and affiliated fields. The Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies Programs emphasize a broad learning experience and a wider perspective than that provided by traditional undergraduate majors. All programs are designed for students who wish to choose among conventional disciplines, both to explore a variety of topics and to integrate courses focusing on a particular area of interest. They are also appropriate for those students who seek a thorough grounding in the traditional arts and sciences from an interdisciplinary perspective. For students in other schools who wish to broaden their education by including a School of Interdisciplinary Studies program, the double degree is recommended. This option calls for a minimum of 30 semester credit hours at the upper division beyond those necessary for the major with the larger semester credit hour requirement. In addition, the student must satisfy all requirements for both majors. The School of Interdisciplinary Studies encourages double majors in American Studies and Healthcare Studies, but a double major is not an option in Interdisciplinary Studies. Students seeking to double major in American Studies or Healthcare Studies must consult with the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies. The School of Interdisciplinary Studies is now working in collaboration with the Health Professions Advising Center to offer health courses under the prefix of HLTH. In order to graduate with a degree from the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, students must complete 51 semester credit hours of upper-division coursework. They must complete a minimum of 45 semester credit hours at UT Dallas. In the final semester, all the coursework should be taken at UT Dallas.

Fast Track Baccalaureate/Master's Degrees

The Fast Track Program permits qualified undergraduate students to begin work on the MAIS (Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies) degree before completing their bachelor's degree.

As a Fast Track student, a qualified senior may take up to 12 semester credit hours maximum of approved graduate courses - including MAIS 5300 Foundations of Interdisciplinary Inquiry and MAIS 5321 Library
Research Skills - during their senior year (within 30 semester credit hours of graduation), which will apply to their undergraduate degree plans as either major or elective courses. To qualify for admission to the Fast Track program, a senior must have completed at least 36 semester credit hours of core courses in their major and have attained a GPA of at least 3.500 overall and in their major.

Registration for graduate courses will be made in consultation with and approval from the MAIS Program Head, the School of Interdisciplinary Studies Associate Dean, and the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies. Students who are non-IS majors will also need to obtain permission from the Undergraduate Dean of their respective majors. Depending on the student's undergraduate major, the graduate courses they complete may be applied as "major and related" or as "electives" on the undergraduate degree plan.

Students who are interested in the MAIS Fast Track program should consult with their Academic Advisor and complete an application form. The best time to apply is immediately prior to the start of the senior year (within 30 semester credit hours of graduation). Completed applications can be submitted to Dr. Jillian M. Duquaine-Watson, MAIS Program Head, or to Ahnna Peavey, Administrative Assistant for the MAIS program, and will be reviewed by the Fast Track Admissions Committee in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies.

**Internship Program**

All undergraduates in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies are encouraged to take an internship with an organization in the community. Internships provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills that they have mastered in their academic work. Students applying for internships must be in their junior or senior year and in good academic standing, have completed the appropriate coursework, and receive approval of the Internship Director. Students normally enroll for 3 to 6 semester credit hours. Students interested in the program should see the Internship Director of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies or call 972/883-2354.

**Honors in the Major**

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies offers Honors Programs, which vary, by major, and provide an intellectually challenging opportunity for the brightest and best students in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies.

Junior and Senior students with a cumulative UT Dallas GPA (grade point average) of 3.900 are eligible to apply for the honors programs, which consist of a defined curriculum of 30 semester credit hours, including an upper-division writing course, and an internship component. Due to our high GPA entrance requirements, an honors thesis is not required for honors in the major. For Honors with distinction, however, an honors thesis is required. This thesis must be submitted at least one week before the end of classes, and must be nominated by the supervising professor as being of exceptional quality. The faculty of the school (or a subgroup thereof) will then determine if the thesis warrants this level of distinction. Students must apply for Departmental Honors through their academic advisor at the time they apply for graduation. For applications and more details, please consult your Interdisciplinary Studies academic advisor.

**Minors**

Minors offered by the School of Interdisciplinary Studies are available to students in all majors except for
students taking the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies. There is no minor offered in Interdisciplinary Studies. Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in American Studies and the Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Studies are encouraged to take any minor offered by any school at the University. Students may also contact the academic advisor in their major for a list of the courses that satisfy each minor. Students who take a minor will be expected to meet the normal prerequisites in courses making up the minor, and should maintain a minimum GPA of 2.000 on a 4.00 scale (C average). Minors available within the School of Interdisciplinary Studies are:

- **American Studies**
- **Environmental Studies**
- **Exercise Sciences**
- **Gender Studies**
- **Healthcare Studies**

**Faculty**

All faculty in the University are eligible to participate.

**Professors:** George W. Fair, Karen J. Prager, Lawrence J. Redlinger, Erin A. Smith

**Professors of Instruction:** Jillian Duquaine-Watson, Tonja Wissinger

**Associate Professors of Instruction:** Kathleen Byrnes, Patricia A. Leek

**Assistant Professors of Instruction:** Michele McNeel, Syed Naqvi, Neall Pogue, Azadeh Stark, Larissa Werhnyak

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