

## **Masters of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies**

22 February 2007

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the graduate Interdisciplinary Studies degree with a Native American focus is to emphasize the development of indigenous (i.e., American Indian and Alaskan Native) leadership and communication skills, and would be tailored, in an interdisciplinary manner, to meet the specific professional needs of the student's own aspirations and home community. Examples of disciplinary areas could include Anthropology, English, Fishery Resources, Forest Resources, Geography, Geology, History, Music, Natural Resources, Philosophy, Plant Sciences, Political Science, Psychology, Range Ecology and Management, Recreation, Theatre and Film, and Wildlife Resource. Please note that this is a graduate degree offered through the College of Graduate Studies, with academic advice and support from the faculty of the American Indian Studies Program.

### **ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM**

1. Regular enrollment for graduate study leading toward an M.A in Interdisciplinary Studies may be granted to a student who (1) has received a bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized accrediting association, and (2) has an undergraduate cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. The necessary forms for admission are available through the Admissions Office.
2. The GRE General Test is required by the Graduate School.
3. With the application for admission, the student must submit a written personal statement specifically describing the interdisciplinary proposal and outlining his or her reasons for undertaking an interdisciplinary program.

### **CONTENT AND PROCEDURES**

1. A student admitted to an interdisciplinary degree program should contact the associate dean of the College of Graduate Studies to discuss his or her proposed course of study.
2. The student chooses a major professor among the American Indian Studies Program faculty (who must also be a member of the Graduate Faculty), who will counsel the student in his or her program. The major professor will be a faculty member from one of the disciplines of the program. If the student chooses the thesis option, the major professor will be the thesis director.
3. The student and major professor nominate a program committee; the committee must have at least four members, including the major professor; at least one from each of the principal departments or disciplines involved in the student's program; one from outside the two disciplines; at least half of the committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.
4. After preliminary discussion and planning with the major professor, the student and the committee members develop a list of courses (a study plan) that the student will take. The study plan must fulfill all of the general university requirements for the M.A. (as outlined in the Graduate section of the U of I Catalog-30 credit minimum, including at

least 18 credits at the 500 level), and must place major emphasis on courses offered by two or more departments. This study plan must receive unanimous approval of the committee members and graduate dean.

5. Both thesis and non-thesis options require a comprehensive report to evaluate the student's ability to integrate all disciplines included in the program. A non-thesis report form is filed with the Graduate College by the major professor. For a thesis option, the student must complete 6 credits in INTR 500, as part of the 30 credits required for the M.A. degree.

6. The student, the major professor, and the other committee members must agree early in the student's program on the nature of any examinations to be administered and, where applicable, on the nature of the thesis and the number of credits to be awarded.

## **COURSES**

The core curriculum would include: AIST 401 Contemporary American Indian Issues (3 cr.) and AIST 404 Indigenous Leadership Styles and Communications (3 cr), along with additional courses to be drawn from two or more departmental disciplines. An Internship experience (AIST 498) is encouraged, and could entail the student working closely with tribal council members, department managers, agency heads and/or business leaders within the Tribal community, gaining invaluable, first-hand experience and insights.

Some of the following courses from the Interdisciplinary Studies "Courses" section of the U of I Catalog may be useful. Students majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies should register for INTR 500 for their thesis research. Their registrations for independent study should be in INTR 499 or 502; for research not directly related to a thesis, INTR 599; and for seminar, INTR 400 or 501. Students are encouraged to take Seminar, Special Topics and Research credits from one or more of the two disciplinary departments selected for the M.A. degree.

498 Internship (cr arr)

500 Master's Research & Thesis (cr arr)

501 Seminar (cr arr)

502 Independent Study (cr arr)

503 Workshop (cr arr). prereq: perm.

504 Special Topics (cr arr)

599 Research ( cr arr)

## **SPECIAL NOTES**

1. A degree in interdisciplinary studies is not meant to be a watered-down master's degree; it is a rigorous program that integrates two or more disciplines
2. The degree will read "Master of Arts" with a major in Interdisciplinary Studies; no other major will be recorded on the diploma or academic records. However, the transcript will show all courses taken while enrolled in the College of Graduate Studies.
4. In an Interdisciplinary program the student must be willing to take the initiative in bringing together the committee and to be responsible for making sure that all requirements are met and all procedures are followed.

5. If the student chooses the thesis option, he or she may use up to six credits of Inter 500 toward the degree.
6. Students in the Interdisciplinary program must read the graduate section of the General Catalog and be sure they are complying with all the requirements of graduation.
7. Interdisciplinary students should consult frequently with their major professor, and should not hesitate to call or visit the College of Graduate Studies office they have questions or problems.
8. Interdisciplinary students will need to obtain the following forms from the College of Graduate Studies office: "Appointment of Major Professor," "Study Plan," and, for thesis students, the "Graduate Handbook for Theses and Dissertations," which provides necessary information on formatting the thesis.

### **STUDY PLAN TEMPLATE EXAMPLES:**

The following template examples are provided to illustrate Interdisciplinary M.A. degree study plan options. All M.A. degree study plans must have a total of thirty (30) credits, reflecting at least two separate disciplines, including a total of eighteen (18) 500 level credits. There is a thesis and non-thesis option. In a thesis option, six (6) credits would be earned as part of the required thirty (30) credits. Additional study plan configurations are possible, using other courses offered within a discipline. Among the disciplines that can be considered are Anthropology, English, Fishery Resources, Forest Resources, Geography, Geology, History, Music, Natural Resources, Philosophy, Plant Sciences, Political Science, Psychology, Range Ecology and Management, Recreation, Theatre and Film, and Wildlife Resources. Directed Studies (499) or Non-thesis Master's Research (599) courses, within the appropriate selected disciplinary, can also be used as part of a study plan.

#### 1. a. Anthropology and History (non-thesis option; some prerequisite courses required)

AIST 401 Contemporary American Indian Issues (3 cr.)  
 AIST 404 Indigenous Leadership Styles and Communications (3 cr)  
 ANTH 510 Research Methods (3 cr)  
 ANTH 522 Plateau Indians (3 cr)  
 ANTH 543 Plateau Prehistory (3 cr)  
 ANTH 549 Lithic Technology (3 cr)  
 HIST 422 The American Landscape (3 cr)  
 HIST 523 Idaho and the Pacific Northwest (3 cr)  
 HIST 528 History of the American West (3 cr)  
 HIST 532 History of Indian-White Relations (3 cr)

#### 1.b. Anthropology and History (thesis option; some prerequisite courses required)

AIST 401 Contemporary American Indian Issues (3 cr.)

AIST 404 Indigenous Leadership Styles and Communications (3 cr)  
ANTH 510 Research Methods (3 cr)  
ANTH 522 Plateau Indians (3 cr)  
ANTH 543 Plateau Prehistory (3 cr)  
HIST 523 Idaho and the Pacific Northwest (3 cr)  
HIST 528 History of the American West (3 cr)  
HIST 532 History of Indian-White Relations (3 cr)  
INTR 500 Master's Research and Thesis (6 cr)

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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