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TO: Academic Programs Subcommittee
    Undergraduate Council

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RE: Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) Program Modifications

Introduction
The Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) major is an alternative to a traditional major/minor program, allowing a student to design a program that reflects unique educational interests and career goals. There are at least 60 officially declared at any given time. However, there are approximately an additional 100 who have either expressed interest or are, in fact, working on the major but have not declared. The University awarded the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies to 65 students during 2005-2006.

Two curriculum formats are available: discipline-focused and topic-focused. The focus is on the disciplines in the traditional version; the focus is on the topic in the International Studies and Science and Technology versions. Under the discipline-focused format, students choose three academic fields from which they select coursework targeted to their individual area of interest. Coursework is selected in consultation with departmental advisors from each department represented. Under the topic-focused format, coursework is selected from a pre-approved selection of courses developed by a multi-disciplinary faculty committee composed of specialists in the topic area.

Funding allocated for student credit hours follows the coursework not the student. University College reports these numbers annually by course to each college. The departmental advisor's signature is required on the IDS proposal form and is confirmation that departments and colleges recognize the IDS major for priority for course availability as they do for their traditional majors.

Problem
The primary requirement of the major is that two of the three subject areas must be from departments within the Colleges of Humanities, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. This was established when the major was assigned to the former College of Arts and Sciences which included Fine Arts, Humanities, Science, and Social and Behavioral Science. Since then each of these have become independent colleges; the central advising structure that supported them – the Office of Academic Services – has been dissolved; and University College has been designated the academic home for the major providing advising planning for the students and the administrative infrastructure.

This particular requirement is overly restrictive. Students are increasingly interested in identifying the ways their major will assist them to become most effectively and functionally educated to deal with the 21st Century. For IDS majors the opportunity to select their three subject areas on a topic across or within undergraduate colleges is very appealing. However, students cannot be accommodated if they want more than one subject area outside the three colleges or have only one subject area from the three colleges. This includes students in good academic standing who have been pursuing a different major but find they are excluded due to requirements for admission to advanced standing and/or admission to the professional phase of the program.

Proposed program changes:
1. Delete IDS major requirement that two of the three subject areas must be from departments within the Colleges of Humanities, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.
2. Update course selection and advising process to include the following text:
   Courses within each subject area must be selected in consultation with and approved by the departments' major advisor.

   Proposed new catalog text would read:
   **The Interdisciplinary Studies Program (IDS):**
   The IDS major is an alternative to a traditional major/minor program, allowing a student to design a program that reflects unique educational interests and career goals. The student selects these subject areas, each with 21 units, that relate to a common theme. **Two of the three subject areas must be from departments within the Colleges of Humanities, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.** Courses within each subject area must be selected in consultation with and approved by the departments' major advisor. During the sophomore or junior year, students submit proposals to University College outlining their intended course of study. In addition to the general IDS option, there are two structured concentrations available … (see attachment for full text of description of major)

3. Establish Pre-IDS Major
   Proposed new catalog text to be added:
   Pre-IDS Major. Contact University College, 621-7763 for advising and program requirements.

**Reasons for the changes**
1. The foundation for the "two of three subject areas ..." requirement is no longer viable as the college structure that supported it –College of Arts and Sciences – no longer exists.
2. Increasing numbers of students in good academic standing are excluded from majors due to selection criteria. IDS offers an excellent option and increases the likelihood of retention and graduation from the UA.
3. Expanding the colleges a student can select also brings the discipline-focused IDS into alignment with the International and Science and Technology IDS where the approved course list is comprised of courses from colleges across the university.
4. Pre-IDS allows University College to introduce expectations of the major early in a student's career and enables both IDS and major advisors to know number of students in the pipeline.
   a. It addresses concerns of the faculty and professional major advisors who want to ensure that students work more closely with them in the development of the major.
   b. It enables entering freshmen who are interested in exploring IDS and must have a declared major for some scholarship programs to have a declared major.
   c. Recruiting undecided transfer students potentially generates a net-loss for UA when courses are not available to non-majors. Pre-IDS status would give these transfer students priority to courses in their proposed 3 subject areas.

**Benefits to be derived:**
1. Increase student access to the major by deleting the requirement that **two of the three subject areas must be from departments within the Colleges of Humanities, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.**
2. Strengthen student connection to advising by:
   a. Requiring that courses within each subject area be selected in consultation with and approved by the departments' major advisor.
   b. Establish Pre-IDST to introduce expectations of the major early in a student's career and to enable both University College and major advisors to know number of students in the pipeline.

**Implications of the change for students, faculty, resources, and other academic programs.**
1. **Students:** increased availability of the major, increased early connection to major advisors
2. **Departments/other academic programs:** improved opportunities for planning for course demand
3. **Resources:** no additional funding/staffing requested. Those colleges responsible for providing courses for the major are reimbursed as the funding follows the coursework.
Current IDS catalog entry

The Interdisciplinary Studies Program (IDS):

The IDS major is an alternative to a traditional major/minor program, allowing a student to design a program that reflects unique educational interests and career goals. The student selects these subject areas, each with 21 units, that relate to a common theme. Two of the three subject areas must be from departments within the Colleges of Humanities, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Courses within each subject area must be approved by the departments' major advisor. During the sophomore or junior year, students submit proposals to University College outlining their intended course of study. In addition to the general IDS option, there are two structured concentrations available:

Concentration in International Studies: The structured IDS Concentration in International Studies follows IDS requirements for work in three areas: students take at least 21 units each in international systems, language/regional studies and a functional track. Options for the functional expertise or track are Applied Political Economy, Science and Technology, and Development and Culture. Approval of a student's program of study rests with the Director of International Studies and Scholarships, and with the track advisors. To support this global, interdisciplinary educational plan, sixth semester proficiency is required in a foreign language. All IDS International Studies majors also undertake an international immersion experience (normally study abroad) and write a Senior Capstone Thesis under the guidance of a faculty mentor.

Concentration in Culture, Science, Technology & Society (CSTS): The concentration in CSTS provides students with a coherent and challenging major focusing on the interaction between science/technology and culture/society. The major is composed of three subject areas of 21 units each. Students take the core courses in CSTS as Subject Area 1. The other two subject areas are chosen from Anthropology, Economics, History, International Studies, Sociology, one of the natural sciences, or one of the College of Engineering disciplines. All students complete a Senior Capstone Thesis under the guidance of a faculty advisor.