California State University, San Bernardino

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

The Master of Arts Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies is designed to be a highly challenging academic program for the self-motivated student who has a clear perception of objectives and a background which will allow advanced study in the disciplines combined in the program. This individualized degree is designed to accommodate unique student interests or to prepare students for fields which require programs not presently offered at the university. It is not a replacement of existing degree programs but an enrichment of the university's offerings.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES MASTER'S DEGREE CANDIDATES

1. After making application to the university for an M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies, determine the feasibility of pursuing an Interdisciplinary Studies M.A. by consulting with appropriate faculty and reviewing the requirements and examining available CSUSB master's programs to see if the proposed degree could be met through any of these. Explore the resources of the campus needed for an Interdisciplinary Studies M.A. in terms of course offerings, library resources, facilities, and faculty expertise. Select three faculty members to serve as members of your faculty committee. You may want to check with the department chairs for suggestions as to faculty with expertise in your areas of interest. The faculty you choose should meet your needs in developing a multidisciplinary program of study. One of the three members must agree to serve as chair of your committee. The committee members should come from the disciplines that make up your plan of study.

2. Prepare a written proposal eight pages in length:
   A. Identifying by title the interdisciplinary program of study in which you wish to engage (i.e., Interdisciplinary Studies Master's Degree in (50-space limit) and describing the purpose or focus of this specially designed degree program;
   B. Explaining why this course of study cannot be pursued within one department with electives from other departments;
   C. Explaining how this program relates to your educational and career goals.
   D. Indicating your background, both academic and experiential, for undertaking this study; and
   E. Listing the CSUSB courses appropriate to your goals.

3. Submit the proposal to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review and approval. If the draft proposal is found promising, and University facilities can support the proposed program of study, the Dean of Graduate Studies will schedule an appointment with you to discuss the project and provide you with the forms and guidelines necessary to proceed with formal application to the program as outlined in item 5 below.

4. To complete your formal application for acceptance to an Interdisciplinary Studies Master's Program:
   A. Secure the agreement of faculty in the disciplines related to your proposed special
program to serve as members of your Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Committee. This committee must consist of no less than three tenured/tenure-track, full-time faculty members at CSUSB.

B. Convene a meeting of your Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Committee. At this meeting your committee will: (1) review your documents (i.e., CSUSB transcripts, your Statement of Purpose, etc.); (2) identify the appropriate preparatory course work, completed or to be completed; (3) develop with you and academically sound program of graduate study related to your Statement of Purpose; and (4) complete the Approved Study Plan form for the Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies;

C. On the form provided, list five upper-division prerequisite courses, each with a grade of “B” (3.0) or better, in the major discipline of the proposed program. The determination of the major discipline is subject to the approval of the University Curriculum Committee;

D. List the minimum of 48 units of course work, 70% of which must consist of 500- or 600-level courses, to be included in the Interdisciplinary Studies M.A. As an interdisciplinary program, these courses should include work from two or more departments. To avoid later difficulties with key courses that are not offered prior to graduation, reasonable substitutions should be listed where possible.

E. Secure signatures on your application from your Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Committee. The Interdisciplinary Studies M.A. proposal must be signed by three faculty members who have worked with the student in developing the proposed course of study. The faculty member who will chair the advisory committee must write a statement of support which includes a brief evaluation of the proposal.

5. Submit the completed proposal for the Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies will attach a copy of your current CSUSB transcript. These materials constitute the Application for a Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and will be forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee for consideration. The University Curriculum Committee will review all interdisciplinary studies proposals and reserves the right to reject the proposal or suggest revisions. The committee meets regularly throughout the academic year and applications can be submitted at any time, though every effort should be made to turn in the proposal early enough in the term to receive approval prior to registration for the next term. Please allow a minimum of four weeks for a response from the University Curriculum Committee. To be a classified graduate student in the interdisciplinary studies master's program in the fall quarter, you should apply by the end of the fifth week of the spring quarter. Applications are not considered during the summer quarter.

The application material should be filled out with great care and accuracy. Hastily done or carelessly prepared proposals are unlikely to convince the Curriculum Committee of the seriousness of the proposal.

Your interdisciplinary studies application will not only be evaluated for its uniqueness and content, but also for your writing ability. Though your committee is to assist you, the ultimate responsibility for the application is your own. The signature of the Chair of the University Curriculum Committee on the application for the Master's
Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies signals acceptance of an applicant to the program. Subsequent modification of an Approved Study Plan requires approval of the Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies on an official Change of Study form.

No more than 12 units of proposed course work can be taken prior to submission of the proposal to the University Curriculum Committee.

6. The Dean of Graduate Studies will notify the student in writing the decision of the University Curriculum Committee. This may be approval or a request for resubmission.

7. Any change or substitution of courses in the approved program must be approved by the student's faculty committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

8. Upon approval of the Interdisciplinary Studies M.A. proposal, the student will need to formally submit a change in plan (major) with Records, Registration and Evaluations to declare this objective. At graduation, the diploma will read: Master of Arts - Interdisciplinary Studies - (focus of Study). The focus of study will come directly from the Proposed Title on the student's Master's Program Approved Study Plan.

Revised October, 2007