

## By-laws for Interdisciplinary Studies at Western Oregon University

Approved by Interdisciplinary Studies Advisory Board: 9-20-17 (4-0, 2 absences),  
reaffirmed by the Advisory Board on 11-03-17 (6-0)

Approved by Faculty Senate:

Approved by Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs:

**Article I.** Program purpose and student learning outcomes

**Section 1.01** The faculty at Western Oregon University recognizes the importance of meeting the needs and interests of all students. Accordingly, the **Interdisciplinary Studies Program** offers an opportunity for students to construct individualized majors based on their interests and goals.

**Section 1.02** Interdisciplinary Studies learning outcomes are flexible enough to accommodate many combinations of academic interests. Learning goals focus on core elements of areas of study and their applications and connections to other fields. Given the individualized nature of the program, the goals also encompass student self-direction: goal setting, planning and reflection.

- (a) Define learning goals. (Program-specific)
- (b) Design an interdisciplinary program of study for achievement of those goals. (Program specific)
- (c) Differentiate the ways of knowing, the conventions, and methods used in that program. (Inquiry & Analysis)
- (d) Explain appropriate theoretical and practical connections among the chosen areas of study. (Integrative Learning)
- (e) Demonstrate reflection and self-assessment in completing the program of study. (Integrative Learning)

**Article II.** Institutional Location

**Section 2.01** The Interdisciplinary Studies program serves undergraduate students, drawing from courses and faculty in the academic colleges. Because of the university-wide nature of the program, it is housed in the Office of Academic Affairs.

**Article III.** IDS Advisory Board

**Section 3.01** IDS Advisory Board governs the IDS program. The Advisory Board must include faculty members from LAS and COE who will guide the program and its students through advising, curriculum development, and assessment. Library faculty may also serve on the Advisory Board. Administrative staff who provide support are ex officio members of the Advisory Board.

**Article IV.** Advisory Board Membership

**Section 4.01** The IDS Advisory Board has five to seven faculty members, including faculty representing the College of Education and the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

**Section 4.02** All members of the Advisory Board shall be tenured and serve with the approval of their division chair.

**Section 4.03** Faculty interested in sharing in the responsibilities for the program may nominate themselves for consideration for membership on the IDS Advisory Board. When the board has a need for new members, it will put a call out to the university seeking interested faculty.

**Section 4.04** The board benefits from new perspectives that can arise from disciplinary diversity within and across WOU's academic units, and seeks members who advocate for students and interdisciplinary approaches to education. The program benefits from stability in its leadership and some new membership to bring new ideas and energy to the endeavor. Administration and Advisory Board members keep this in mind in filling vacancies.

**Section 4.05** The Board recommends new members to the Provost for affirmation.

**Section 4.06** To allow for continuity in the program, members shall serve for a minimum term of at least three years, with the possibility of reappointment.

**Article V.** Advisory Board Responsibilities

**Section 5.01** The IDS Advisory Board:

- (a) Meets at least once a month
- (b) Provides academic advising to IDS students and others with broadly interdisciplinary interests
- (c) Develops and maintains a plan for a capstone experience for IDS students
- (d) Assesses student learning, relative to IDS learning goals, via the capstone
- (e) Explores, develops and proposes curriculum changes and new curricular paths for IDS
- (f) Reviews atypical area blocks for particular students to ensure academic integrity and shared knowledge about the program
- (g) Attends SOARs and Preview Days to represent IDS program
- (h) Advocates for interdisciplinary approaches in the program and the university

**Section 5.02** Members of the IDS Advisory Board:

- (a) Are authorized to recommend IDS program-level exceptions on behalf of their academic advisees
- (b) May teach the capstone, when other teaching responsibilities allow this to occur, in-load

**Section 5.03** The IDS Advisory Board may divide up responsibility for these activities in ways it determines are most effective, and may constitute standing and ad hoc committees to which responsibilities may be delegated on behalf of the group.

**Article VI.** WOU administration is responsible for:

**Section 6.01** Intake advising for new IDS students

**Section 6.02** Arranging for workload accommodations for IDS Advisory Board faculty, when advising loads, program coordination or capstone responsibilities pose burdens on participating faculty beyond their normal scope of teaching, service and advising.

**Article VII.** Coordinator/Chair of IDS Advisory Board

**Section 7.01** The Chair is elected by the members of the Advisory Board to a three-year term, and referred to the Provost for affirmation. The chair's position is renewable.

**Section 7.02** The Chair's election normally takes place in the spring term preceding the academic year the position is assumed.

**Section 7.03** The Coordinator/Chair's responsibilities include:

- (a) Calling and chairing monthly meetings of the IDS Advisory Board, including setting the agenda with input from members
- (b) Leading the Advisory Board in setting and achieving goals for the program
- (c) Representing the program in Division Chair, Department Head and other meetings for academic leaders
- (d) Coordinating IDS Advisory Board in assessing program learning outcomes, and ensuring assessment and annual programs reports are filed in a timely fashion
- (e) Working with the Office of Academic Effectiveness on self-study report development when the program is subject to academic program review
- (f) Working with academic administration to solve student problems and answer questions about curriculum
- (g) Working with IDS support staff to ensure equitable distribution of advising responsibilities
- (h) Advocating for disciplinary diversity and balance among Advisory Board members
- (i) Addressing issues or problems with Advisory Board members or students, as needed
- (j) approve IDS program-level exceptions

**Article VIII.** Meetings

**Section 8.01** The Advisory Board meets at least once a month during the regular academic year. The group operates primarily collegially and by consensus but the following are subject to vote by the IDS advisory board, with a majority of votes required for a motion to pass.

- (a) Any curricular change that is submitted to the Faculty Senate's Curriculum Committee (at this time, the Advisory Board comprises a committee of the whole for curricular issues)
- (b) Recommendation to the Provost regarding Coordinator/Chair of the IDS Advisory Board. It is anticipated that the first faculty director will assume the role by Fall 2019.

**Section 8.02** To ensure that the group is empowered to move the program forward, other issues may also be decided by vote should the group be unable to reach consensus through collegial conversation and debate. Upon request of any Advisory Board member, the vote can be held via written ballot. Unresolved issues are to be adjudicated by the Provost.

**Article IX.** Term of Service

**Section 9.01** Advisory Board members agree to serve a minimum three-year term.

**Section 9.02** Advisory Board members are expected to advise IDS students in the spirit of the program, and continued Advisory Board membership is dependent upon effective advising.

**Section 9.03** Upon leaving the Advisory Board, it is expected that former members will continue to advise continuing students through graduation.

**Article X.** Changes to the By-laws

**Section 10.01** Any member of the IDS Advisory Board may bring forward a written proposal to change the IDS by-laws.

**Section 10.02** A proposal to change the by-laws will be presented over two meetings. At the first meeting, the item will appear as New Business; the issue will be presented in writing and will be discussed. At the second meeting, the item will appear as Old Business with the intent that it may be voted upon.

**Section 10.03** A majority vote of the faculty members of the IDS Advisory Board is required for by-laws to change.

**Article XI.** Definitions

**Section 11.01** Area of study: The IDS Advisory Board defines “area of study” as one of the following: (1) WOU academic division, (2) WOU academic department, (3) WOU interdisciplinary minor, or (4) a self-designed configuration of courses designed around a thematic area for which the student has explained the coherence and the academic advisor recommends to the IDS Chair for approval.

**Section 11.02** Curricular issues: “Curricular issues” are defined as program or course modifications, including new degree paths, that require approval by a committee of Faculty Senate. Exceptions made by advisors in building areas of study are understood as advising issues, not curricular matters. That said, advisors are expected to retain the integrity of the IDS degree and bring unusual situations forward to the whole group so that it can understand the range of issues that come up and consider whether changes in the curriculum or in curricular policies may be warranted.

**Section 11.03** Coordinator/Chair: The Coordinator/Chair of IDS is a role filled by a single person, elected by the IDS Advisory Board from among their members and affirmed by the Provost.

Drafted by 2016-2017 IDS ad hoc advisory committee:

Bob Hautala, Exercise Science

Ryan Hickerson, Philosophy

Shaun Huston, Geography

Sriram Khe, Geography

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