

BIS 301: Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies*

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If you leave a message, please leave: your name, which class you are in, a phone number with a message system (if it's a cell phone, please also leave a "land line" phone number), and tell me what your concern or question is.

Office Hours: Tuesdays afternoons, by appointment, & extensive phone & email availability

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When you email please use a good subject line which includes a) when your class meets (for example, 9:15 or 10:40), b) your last name, and c) a word or two that captures the main point of your email.

Examples of good subject lines: 9:15 Jones, Goals or Tues. Night Smith Portfolio

Please understand that I have over 100 students per term, so please make a good effort to use your materials (syllabus, reader, notes, etc.) to find basic information before you call or email. After that, if you have a special situation or need clarity, by all means let's talk!

Also, your classmates are a great resource, so make some new friends and acquaintances. They may be able to help you quickly or at a time when I'm unavailable but you feel like you need information immediately. So call and email each other and start to build a network. Jot down the name and contact information for at least two of your classmates below (and transfer them to your phone or planner as well). If something doesn't sound right or complete check with a second classmate or confirm with me.

Course Description and Goals

This course includes the prerequisite of a minimum of 2 courses in each of your Concentration Areas (disciplines). In turn, this course is the prerequisite for the rest of your BIS Core Classes. So after completing this class you should be prepared to take the BIS 302: Interdisciplinary Inquiry course, then BIS 401: Applied Studies, and, finally, BIS 402: Senior Seminar.

The intention of this course is to describe and provide practice with a model of interdisciplinary thinking practice through how the assignments work together and build on one another. It starts with building a better understanding your disciplines for even though you've taken at least two courses in your concentration area/disciplines, it is often the case that students are "unconscious" of their own disciplines' domains, driving questions, methods, and issues. So we start with intradisciplinary thinking then move on to cross/multidisciplinary thinking and finally to multi/inter/transdisciplinary thinking using L. Richard Meeth's definitions ("Interdisciplinary studies: A matter of definition" from *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 1978) as the spine of the class with both large and small assignments slowly building interconnections, awareness, and skills. Along the way we will be building an appreciation for how interdisciplinarity interweaves in more than just the academic and professional world as it also relates to you personal life and goals. Such recognition naturally enhances motivation as well as understanding the existence and application interdisciplinary opportunities and thinking in multiple arenas.

The following three broad learning goals will serve as the foundation for the BIS 301 experience:

- Goal 1** Understanding disciplines in general, and your concentration areas in particular, from an interdisciplinary perspective.
- Goal 2** Understanding interdisciplinary studies and how interdisciplinarity is practiced both in academia and in the "real world."
- Goal 3** Understanding individual strengths and opportunities for improvement with respect to future success in increasingly interdisciplinary workplace and societal settings.

These goals will be accomplished in a context that improves critical thinking, oral and written communication skills, and time/project management. These broad-based skills will aid in success at school, at work, and at home as you learn to perceive creative connections, integrate information, and find new and more effective ways to view issues.

Specifically, the course includes the following components:

- Critical Thinking: self-assessment and practice
- Defining Interdisciplinary: terminology, approaches, core competencies, tools and techniques
- Understanding Disciplines: in general, and your concentration areas in particular
- Self-Assessment: academic, career, and life exploration and goal setting/planning/portfolio

Learning objectives associated with the nature of interdisciplinary study and its importance in the workplace and society are interwoven into the curriculum over the course of the semester. Students will learn terminology and levels/approaches associated with interdisciplinary study and practice and begin to develop and employ related skills that will lead to personal effectiveness.

Course Readings

The following textbooks and reader are required for the course:

- *Course Reader*: The reading packet is available from *The Alternative Copy Shop*, corner of Forest and University, Tempe, (480) 829-7992. Additional articles / readings as assigned.
- Have, or be able to borrow/access, introductory texts in both of your disciplines (new, old, borrowed...not important but you need something for a couple assignments you will do.)
- This is an “Literacy and Critical Inquiry” a.k.a. “L” course that is heavy in writing. While not required: I STRONGLY recommended that you get and use a good college level dictionary and thesaurus. I also recommend a little book called “Elements of Style” by Strunk & White. It’s easy, inexpensive, and will improve your writing. It is often assigned for English and writing classes, so look around or ask bookstore people and you’ll find it.

Your Reader will provide...

This a list of what is in this reader to help you estimate about where to turn in the packet when you are looking for things...

- Syllabus (subject to change) & Academic Integrity Policy
- Calendar of Due Dates (subject to change)
- Writing Guidelines
- “Ticket In” Instructions
- Personal Narrative Instructions
- Core Writing/Presentation Assignment Instructions
- Understanding Your Disciplines – Intra- & Cross-disciplinarity
- Multidisciplinary Panel/Symposium Project
- Interdisciplinary Group Project
- Portfolio
- Readings List (also provided on the next page of this syllabus)
- Readings
- Career Services Handouts & Resume Workshop Notes

*** Syllabus information and assignments may be added, deleted, or changed at the discretion of the instructor. Substantial changes are rare, of course, but you are responsible to know about changes, big or small, and abide by them if they occur.**

Readings List

(all of these readings may not be assigned in this order, but this will help you locate them in the reader)

Kleinman, <i>Flexibility, Entrepreneurship Vital in 21st Century, Futurists Say</i> . Wall Street Journal.
<i>What Do Employers Want?/What Should You Get Out of College?</i> , New York Times, August 4, 2002
Jones, <i>Offbeat Majors Help CEO's Think Outside the Box</i> . USA Today
Harmon-Vaughn, <i>Blurring the Edges</i> , ISdesignNET, www.isdesignet.com/Magazine/May'00/fider.html
Fisher, "Success Secret: A High Emotional IQ"
The Importance of Interdisciplinary Thinking handout
Meeth, <i>Interdisciplinary Studies: A Matter of Definition</i> , Change, 1978, p. 10
Saffo, <i>Untangling the Future</i> , Business 2.0, June 2002
Wieners, <i>8 Technologies That Will Change the World</i> , Business2.0 June 02
Boudreau, <i>Carbon Dioxide: A Dome of Our Own</i> , ASU Research, Fall 01
<i>Great Problems and Interdisciplinary Solutions</i> , Interdisciplinary Science Reviews, Vol. 3(1) 1978
Nosich, <i>What is Critical Thinking Within a Field or Discipline?</i> Learning to Think Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum.
Corey, <i>Work and Leisure</i> , I Never Knew I Had a Choice, 6 th Edition
Corey, <i>Meaning and Values</i> , I Never Knew I Had a Choice, 6 th Edition
Klein, <i>Conclusion: The Integrative Core</i> . Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, and Practice (Conclusion)
Barker, Gilbreath & Stone (1998). <i>The Interdisciplinary Needs of Organizations: Are New Employees Adequately Equipped?</i> Journal of Management Development, 17(3)
Small Readings /Excerpts in with Assignment Instructions
For the Personal Narrative:
Leonhardt, <i>Meet Mr. and Ms. Median Income</i> , New York Times Magazine
Sullivan, <i>Bitten</i> , New York Times Magazine
<i>What do you do all day?</i> New York Times Magazine
Values Checklist
Dreams and Desires Worksheet
SMART Goals materials
For the Concentration Area Reports/Speech:
Excerpts from Encyclopedias and Dictionaries for Concepts & Theories
Morris, <i>Life's Grand Design</i> , U.S. News and World Report 7/29/02
Klein, <i>Evolution of Interdisciplinarity</i> ,
Petrie, <i>Do You See What I See?</i>
Career Services Career Development checklists, resume and cover letter materials

BIS 301Calendar

These dates may change AND assignments may be added or deleted.
You are responsible for coming to class to hear announcements relating to dates and assignments.

DATE	WHAT'S DUE
Week 1 - August 26	Syllabus Acknowledgement
Week 2 - September 2	Ticket In (T.I) – on various readings T.I. -- BIS Plan of Study
Week 3 - September 9	T.I. –Nosich on disc. critical thinking T.I. – Conc. Areas Plans of Study
Week 4 - September 16	Concentration Area Reports & Presentations
Week 5 – September 23	T.I. – Work & Leisure
Week 6 - September 30	T.I. – Meaning & Values
Week 7 - October 7	T.I. – Thompson-Klein
Week 8 - October 14	Multi-Disciplinary Presentations Cut off for first ½ of term missed work.
Week 9 - October 21	Multi-Disciplinary Presentations
Week 10 - October 28	Personal Narrative Multi-Disc. Presentations & new material
Week 11 - November 4	T.I. Resume & Job Description T.I Integrating Areas
Week 12 - November 11	Veteran's Day – Nothing due
Week 13 - November 18	Portfolio & Presentations
Week 14 - November 25	T.I. Current Events Cutoff for 2 nd half of term missed work
Week 15 - December 2	Interdisciplinary Group Presentations
Week 16 - December 9	T.I. Reflection

** The final exam is scheduled for normal class time during Final Exam week which is
is the week of December 11 through December 17

Instructor's Expectations of the Student:

Preparation and Approach to People & Learning

1. Time -- Plan to spend at least one hour of preparation and course related work time for every hour you are in class. Expect to devote on average of twice that amount of time, if you aspire to get an "A" or "B" in the course (ideally, you'd spend 3 hours on homework for each in class hour per week).
2. Ready to go -- Come prepared to all class sessions, having completed any homework assignments that may be due and having completed the assigned readings. Bring your texts / reader to class every session. This is important for general class discussion as well as for you to make the best use of any time I give you in class to work in groups on the group or team projects.
3. Play nice -- Provide respectful consideration of other students (including the instructor) in the course by fulfilling your responsibilities in small groups (when applicable) and respecting others, even if you disagree with their point of view (i.e., criticize the perspective, not the person). And no beepers, phone calls, reading or eating in class, or anything that is annoying or disruptive.
4. Do things well & be honest -- To expend significant mental energy, and to do your own work. This includes properly crediting outside sources, not representing the work done by others (students and/or authors/scholars) as your own.
5. Be on time – Arrive punctually and hand in all assignments on time. Problem? Tell me.
6. Communicate -- To provide effective input and feedback to the instructor regarding your perceptions of how effectively the course is progressing. And to let me know if you are having trouble as I cannot read minds (as much as I try!). Let me know if you are having any sort of issue.
7. Finally, to come to class with the right psychological and physiological “*attitude*”. I expect you to have a high energy level while in class and be ready to participate actively in discussions and activities.

Be responsible & plan ahead – This class is do-able and can be fun if you keep up and plan ahead. If you can't get out of it—get into it! Intend to get a lot out of this class and enjoy doing it, and you strongly improve your chances that you will do just that.

Grades

The plan is to base your final grade on 1000 points though occasionally an assignment gets added or deleted changing the final number of points available.

- 200 Attendance (including participation, being prepared with assigned material, readings, etc.)
- 130 Ticket Ins
- 50 Exam – must be passed with a “C” or better
- 100 Personal Narrative
- Core Writing Assignments and the Accompanying Speeches/Presentations
- 120 Concentration Area Reports and Intra – Cross Presentation
- 150 Multi – Interdisciplinary Paper and Presentation
- 150 Interdisciplinary Group Presentation
- 100 Portfolio including Presentation
- 1000