

DISTRIBUTED STUDIES PROGRAM

Program Tracks

Disciplinary & Divisional (D&D) Track

Admission to the disciplinary and divisional (D&D) track of the distributed studies (DIST) major requires completion of 60 credits or more, a one-year break in the student's academic career and permission from the College of Arts & Sciences dean's office.

The D&D track is intended for students who are returning to CU Boulder to complete their degree, have previously completed a significant number of credits toward the completion of one or more arts and sciences majors, are not able to continue and complete any A&S major and have taken a break in their academic career.

Students pursuing the D&D track must complete 54 total credits hours in the major broken down in the following way: They must complete 24 credit hours, including 12 at the upper-division level, in one of the disciplines offered by the college (e.g., chemistry, English, environmental studies or sociology) with grades of C- or better and complete 30 credit hours, including 15 at the upper-division level, in one of the college's three divisions (Arts and Humanities, Natural Sciences or Social Sciences) with grades of C- or better. Courses used to fulfill the disciplinary requirement in the major cannot also be used to fulfill the divisional part of the major.

Students must have a grade point average of at least 2.000 in all courses taken in both the disciplinary area and the divisional area of the major in order to graduate.

Individually Structured Major (ISM) Track

An individually structured major (ISM) track also is available. Admission to this track of the distributed studies (DIST) major requires permission from the College of Arts & Sciences dean's office.

Before applying to pursue the ISM track, students must discuss their options with their A&S academic advisor and must work with a A&S faculty member to construct a major that focuses on some of aspect of the arts and sciences not adequately addressed by any other major, minor or certificate offered by the college or any combination of those majors, minors or certificates. An ISM cannot focus on an academic discipline taught in a different college at CU Boulder. (I.e., a student could not do an ISM focusing on some aspect of engineering, business, environmental design, education, music, communication, media or information science since other schools and colleges at CU Boulder offer majors in those fields.)

Any major constructed by a student pursuing the ISM track must meet the college's minimum major requirements of 30 credit hours and 18 upper-division credit hours in major coursework. Of the 18 upper-division credits 12 have to be in Arts & Sciences courses taught on the CU Boulder campus. Most ISMs, however, exceed these credit minimums. Students pursuing the ISM track must write and defend a thesis based on original scholarly or creative work. This thesis, which is overseen by the student's faculty sponsor, can be completed either by taking ARSC 4909 Senior Thesis for Individually Structured Major or in certain circumstance in a departmental honors program.

Additional Information

Students pursuing either track in the distributed studies major cannot declare an additional major, minor or certificate and cannot pursue a double degree either within the College Arts and Sciences or in conjunction with another school or college at CU Boulder. No first-year course in a foreign language or a lower-division Written Communication course may be used to fulfill any requirements in a distributed studies major.

For more information about either of the tracks in the distributed studies major, students should consult with their College of Arts & Sciences academic advisor.