INTRODUCTION TO STUDIES - BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA)

The Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies is an online degree that is being offered as part of a partnership between the School of Education and the Division of Continuing Education.

The Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies fosters academic inquiry and allows students the flexibility to tailor the degree to personal and professional goals with a focus on education and youth development.

Distinguishing Features Include:

- 100% online modality, in order to support motivated and qualified nontraditional learners who otherwise may not have access to the university.
- An interdisciplinary emphasis with a broad, liberal arts core addressing the arts and humanities, social and behavioral studies, and the natural sciences and mathematics; three foundation courses in interdisciplinary studies; and a requirement for two interdisciplinary areas of emphasis, one of which is in education.
- Curricular flexibility to accommodate students’ transfer credits and to maximize a student’s ability to customize the program to academic and professional interests.

Requirements

Admission and Transfer Standards

To be admitted to the interdisciplinary studies major, students must, at a minimum, meet the academic standards for transfer admission to CU Boulder.

This includes:

- A high school diploma or GED
- The minimum credit requirements for transfer admission eligibility
- A cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher for all college coursework, with consistent or improving grades
- Completion of the admissions application and submission of all required documents by published deadlines

Former and current CU Boulder students may apply to the interdisciplinary studies major if they meet the standards for an intra-university transfer (IUT; 2.0 GPA, interest in completing their degree entirely online). Fall, spring and summer start dates will be offered for both transfer admission and IUT.

Areas of Emphasis

The interdisciplinary studies major at CU Boulder requires students to select at least one area of emphasis from among the two offered by the School of Education and one additional area of emphasis from the seven other options.

The available areas of emphasis include the following:

**Two Areas of Emphasis Offered by the School of Education**

Students must select at least one of these for the CU Boulder interdisciplinary studies major:

- Teaching and Learning
- Human Development

**Six Areas of Emphasis Offered in Collaboration with CU Denver and UCCS**

- Cultural Diversity (Languages, COMM, GEOG, HIST, RLST, SOCY, WMST)
- Global Studies (Languages, GEOG, HIST, IAFS, PSCI)
- Health, Science & Society (ANTH, EBIO, EDUC, IPHY, NRSC, PHIL, PSYC, SOCY)
- Organizations & Leadership (Business, COMM, EDUC, ORGL/HR, PSYC)
- Research Methods & Data Analysis (Research Methods, Business, ECON, MATH)
- Social Justice Studies (PSYC, SOCY)

Required Courses and Credits

Students in the interdisciplinary studies major are expected to meet the following requirements for graduation:

- Successfully complete a total of 120 credit hours in fulfillment of degree requirements, of which 45 credit hours are upper-division (courses numbered in the 3000s and 4000s).
- Maintain an overall 2.00 (C) grade point average in all University of Colorado work and in all major coursework, with no less than a C- in any course applied toward the major.
- Successfully complete 30 credit hours of upper-division work at CU Boulder, including 21 upper-division credit hours in the major.
- Complete a minimum of 45 credit hours at CU Boulder, including 30 credit hours in the major.

School of Education students who take approved CU Boulder coursework to fulfill their general education requirements must take those courses for a letter grade and receive a passing grade of C- or higher. Students may not use thesis hours, independent study, internship or practicum courses to fulfill any of the general education requirements.

The requirements of the interdisciplinary studies major are below. Interdisciplinary studies students will typically transfer in courses that apply toward the degree’s general education requirements. They may transfer in any combination of coursework, as long as they meet the requirements specified above.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credit Hours**
--- | --- | ---
**General Education Requirements**
Interdisciplinary Breadth
- Arts & Humanities 12
- Social, Behavioral & Professional Studies 12
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Math 12
**Skills Requirements**
- Written Communication 6
- Quantitative Reasoning & Math Skills (QRMS) 3
- Foreign Language 1 8-10
**Diversity**
- Diversity - U.S. 3
- Diversity - Global 3
**Major Requirements**
- Interdisciplinary Studies Core
Overview

The General Education curriculum consists of three basic categories of requirements: Skills, Distribution and Diversity.

- **Skills Requirement**: 9 credits (6 Written Communication, 3 Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematical Skills, plus foreign language proficiency); courses taken to fulfill this requirement **may not also count toward the Distribution or Diversity Requirements**.
- **Distribution Requirement**: 36 credits (12 Arts & Humanities, 12 Social, Behavioral & Professional Studies, 12 Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- **Diversity Requirement**: 0—6 credits; courses taken to fulfill this requirement **may also count toward the Distribution Requirement**.

Skills Requirement

This requirement is designed to assure that each student has attained a minimum level of competency in foreign language, quantitative reasoning & mathematical skills, and written communication. Students may not use a course to fulfill any area of the Skills requirement and also use this course to fulfill part of the Distribution or Diversity requirements. This includes first-semester foreign language courses taken as prerequisites to a second-semester language course.

Foreign Language (second-level proficiency)

All students are required to demonstrate, while in high school, second-level proficiency in a single modern or classical foreign language.

Students who have not met this requirement at the time of matriculation will have a MAPS deficiency. They may make up the deficiency only by passing an appropriate second-semester college course that is part of a two-course sequence of at least 8 semester credit hours or by passing a CU Boulder-approved proficiency examination.

The goal of the language requirement is to encourage students to confront the structure, formal and semantic, of another language, and one or more aspects of the culture lived in that language. This enables students to understand their own language and culture better, analyze texts more clearly and effectively, and appreciate more vividly the dangers and limitations of using a translated document. The language requirement is a general education requirement and so concentrates on reading. In some languages, other abilities may be emphasized as well.

Students who are under the General Education requirements, but not subject to MAPS, must complete the Foreign Language Gen Ed Skills requirement to meet degree requirements.

Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematical Skills (QRMS) (3 credit hours)

This requirement has two principal objectives. The first is to provide students with the analytical tools used in core curriculum courses and in their major areas of study. The second is to help students acquire the reasoning skills necessary to assess adequately the data that will confront them in their daily lives. Students completing this requirement should be able to: construct a logical argument based on the rules of inference; analyze, present and interpret numerical data; estimate orders of magnitude as well as obtain exact results when appropriate; and apply mathematical methods to solve problems in their university work and in their daily lives.

To fulfill the QRMS Gen Ed Skills requirement, students must pass one of the approved QRMS courses or sequences of courses, or pass any 3 credits of mathematics courses numbered MATH 1300 and above or applied mathematics courses numbered APPM 1350 and above, or pass the CU Boulder QRMS proficiency exam.

Written Communication (3 lower-division and 3 upper-division credit hours)

Writing is a skill that is fundamental to all intellectual endeavors. In fulfilling this requirement, students hone their communication skills by writing for various purposes (informing, instructing, persuading) and audiences (academic, civic, professional). They learn to design their message ethically and effectively using appropriate evidence and technologies.

Lower-division Written Communication courses focus on the central rhetorical elements of purpose, audience and context to help students craft effective writing in a variety of situations. They emphasize the relationships among these elements, including a writer’s choices of content, style and use of language conventions. In addition, courses in this area develop students’ analytical reading skills and introduce them to principles and practices of information literacy.

By the end of a lower-division Written Communication course, students will:

- Demonstrate their rhetorical knowledge through their writing choices
- Construct effective and ethical arguments
- Analyze texts in a variety of genres
- Refine and reflect on their writing process
- Practice information literacy
- Apply appropriate language conventions, including grammar, spelling, punctuation and format

In upper-division Written Communication courses, students apply the rhetorical elements of purpose, audience and context to investigate and practice writing using disciplinary language, forms and genres. These courses emphasize the application of students’ disciplinary knowledge to a variety of writing situations, adjusting content, format, style and language conventions to accomplish specific purposes and communicate with specific audiences.

By the end of an upper-division Written Communication course, students will:

- Demonstrate specialized rhetorical knowledge through composing texts in a variety of disciplinary forms and genres for specific audiences and purposes
- Argue persuasively and with evidence, using discipline-specific forms and genres to present ideas and information
• Demonstrate enhanced critical reading skills
• Refine and reflect on their writing process
• Demonstrate specialized information literacy through applying research to disciplinary questions/issues
• Apply language conventions appropriately, including format, documentation, spelling, grammar and punctuation

To fulfill the lower-division part of the Written Communication Gen Ed Skills requirement, students must pass or receive placement credit (as determined, for example, by scores on AP or IB exams) for a 3-credit course approved as Skills – Lower-Division Written Communication or earn an International Baccalaureate diploma. To fulfill the upper-division part of this requirement, students must pass a 3-credit course approved as Skills – Upper-Division Written Communication, or pass a Written Communication proficiency exam.

Distribution Requirement

For the Distribution requirement, students must pass, with a C- or better, a minimum of 12 credits in each of the three divisions (Arts & Humanities; Social, Behavioral and Professional Studies; and Science, Technology, Engineering & Math). At least four different course prefixes must be represented in a student’s distribution requirement coursework. No more than two lower-division (1000- and 2000-level) courses with the same course prefix may count toward the distribution requirement.

As part of, or in addition to, the 12 credits in the Science, Technology, Engineering & Math division, students must meet the lab requirement.

Arts & Humanities (12 credits)

Courses in the Arts & Humanities explore the variety of human creative and intellectual experiences, as well as the history and foundations of culture, through the examination of human languages, literatures and other artistic, material, social, cultural and political products, the forms they have taken in different places and eras, and the way these have changed over time. As a result, these courses cultivate perspectives and intellectual skills necessary to comprehend and respond adequately to the world in which we live, offering frameworks for thinking critically about the universe and the smaller societies we inhabit. In particular, these courses help students develop the ability to appreciate and evaluate human efforts to explain, translate and transform their diverse experiences of the world, as these efforts take shape in language, literature, philosophical systems, historical contexts, religious experience, material culture, images, sounds and performances.

The Arts & Humanities Gen Ed Distribution requirement is meant to ensure that students:

• Study the fundamental intellectual and ethical dimensions of human experience
• Investigate the relations between artistic, humanistic, and scientific inquiry and interpretation
• Understand and are prepared to navigate successfully the complex and ever-changing world in which we live

To fulfill the Arts & Humanities Gen Ed Distribution Requirement, students must pass a minimum of 12 credits in courses approved as Distribution – Arts & Humanities courses.

Social, Behavioral & Professional Studies (12 credits)

Social, Behavioral & Professional Studies courses examine the individual, social, ideological, cultural, political and economic dimensions of human activities and behaviors. They address a broad range of topics through diverse theoretical and empirical approaches. As a result, these courses cultivate perspectives and intellectual skills necessary to apply qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry to issues of societal significance. Students in social science courses are taught to analyze and interpret data from many different sources, such as fieldwork, interviews, surveys, peer-reviewed literature, published and unpublished repositories, and electronic media. These courses also discuss applications of the social and behavioral sciences, which range from developing fundamental theories of the social world to solving problems and informing advocacy and activism.

The Social, Behavioral & Professional Studies Gen Ed Distribution requirement is meant to ensure that students:

• explore the development of the institutions and functioning of human society;
• understand the interpersonal relationships of individuals as members of social groups; and
• gain experience with social science vocabulary, methods and tools in systematic studies of the social world.

To fulfill the Social, Behavioral & Professional Studies Gen Ed Distribution requirement, students must pass a minimum of 12 credits in courses approved as Distribution – Social Sciences courses.

Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (12 credits including a lab)

Science, Technology, Engineering & Math courses examine the physical and biological world, exploring the nature of matter, life and the universe. They are designed to demonstrate that science is not a static list of facts, but a dynamic process that leads to knowledge. By combining observation, experimentation and theory, students learn to formulate interpretations and conclusions through unbiased, critical application of scientific principles. Through a combination of lecture courses and laboratory or field experiences, students gain hands-on experience with scientific research. They develop expertise in measurement techniques and data interpretation, and learn the relevance of this expertise to the formation and testing of scientific hypotheses. As a result, Science, Technology, Engineering & Math courses cultivate perspectives and intellectual skills necessary to enhance knowledge of one or more scientific disciplines, and to probe scientific issues in the context of important past discoveries and new developments.

The Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Gen Ed Distribution requirement is meant to ensure that students:

• Understand the evolving state of knowledge in at least one scientific discipline
• Gain experience in scientific observation and measurement, in organizing and quantifying results, in drawing conclusions from data, and in understanding the uncertainties and limitations of the results
• Learn sufficient general scientific vocabulary and methodology to acquire additional information, evaluate it critically and make informed decisions

Laboratory or Field Experience: The Laboratory or Field Experience requirement is satisfied with a stand-alone lab of at least one credit, or another course with a substantial lab component, as approved by the Natural Sciences division. The lab requirement is broadly defined to include different types of hands-on learning, including—but not limited to—bench work, field work, instrumentation and data analysis.

To fulfill the Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Gen Ed Distribution requirement, students must pass a minimum of 12 credits in courses
Development

Areas of Emphasis in Teaching and Learning & Human Foundations courses, two areas of emphasis and electives.

Interdisciplinary Studies - Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Diversity Requirement

For the Diversity requirement, students must pass a minimum of 3 credits in each of the two Diversity categories for a total of 6 credits in courses that have been identified as fulfilling diversity learning goals. Students may use the same course to fulfill one of the Diversity categories and part of the Distribution requirement.

The diversity requirement addresses the need to prepare students to navigate the complexities of living and working in a diverse and increasingly interconnected world. Diversity courses are designed to provide students with the necessary understanding and analytical skills to successfully function and lead in a multicultural, multiethnic, transnational and global society. The courses promote historical and/or contemporary understanding of how social differences shape, and have been shaped by, political, economic and cross-cultural relationships within the United States and the world. Generally, courses will explore the ways in which marginalization has occurred, and the reasons for this marginalization.

United States Perspective (3 credits)

United States Perspective Diversity courses promote historical and/or contemporary understanding of how social differences have shaped, social, political, economic and cross-cultural relationships within the United States. These courses must substantially address one or more forms of diversity (for example: race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, religion, disability).

To fulfill the U.S. Perspective Gen Ed Diversity requirement, students must pass a minimum of 3 credits in courses approved as Diversity - U.S. Perspective courses. Students who choose the Teaching and Learning Area of Emphasis will fulfill this requirement with EDUC 3013.

Global Perspective (3 credits)

Global Perspective Diversity courses address the need for students to learn and think critically about historical and/or contemporary global forces and transnational connections. These courses might: 1) focus in-depth on a particular country or culture outside the U.S., placing it within transnational and global context; 2) address a problem or phenomenon in the context of two or more countries, cultures, or regions; 3) examine global affairs through a comparative framework; 4) be part of a study abroad experience with a substantial cross-cultural component.

To fulfill the Global Perspective Gen Ed Diversity requirement, students must pass a minimum of 3 credits in courses approved as Diversity - Global Perspective courses.

Sample Plan of Study

The BA in interdisciplinary studies consists of 120 credits including a flexible array of general education courses, three interdisciplinary foundations courses, two areas of emphasis and electives.

Areas of Emphasis in Teaching and Learning & Human Development

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDUC</td>
<td>School and Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC</td>
<td>Introduction to Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEAD</td>
<td>Becoming a Leader</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC</td>
<td>Learning With Technology In and Out of</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC</td>
<td>Introduction to Bilingual/Multicultural</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>EDUC</td>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC</td>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY</td>
<td>Self in Modern Society</td>
<td>3</td>
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Skills Requirements

Written Communication 6

WRTG 1150 First-Year Writing and Rhetoric
WRTG 3040 Writing on Business and Society
Quantitative Reasoning & Math Skills (QRMS) 3
MATH 2510 Introduction to Statistics
Foreign Language 1

8-10 Requirement met in high school (example)

Diversity 2

Diversity - U.S. 3
See asterisked course under "Area of Emphasis 1" (below)
Diversity - Global 3
See asterisked course under "Interdisciplinary Breadth" (above)

Major Requirements

Interdisciplinary Studies Core 9
Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies
Experiential Learning
Capstone in Interdisciplinary Studies

Area(s) of Emphasis

Area of Emphasis 1: Teaching & Learning 15
EDUC 3013 School and Society *
EDUC 3XXX Introduction to Teaching and Learning
EDUC 4310 Social and Emotional Learning
LEAD 1000 Becoming a Leader
EDUC 3570 Learning With Technology In and Out of School

Area of Emphasis 2: Human Development 15
EDUC 4425 Introduction to Bilingual/Multicultural Education
EDUC 4112 Adolescent Development and Learning for Teachers
EDUC 2490 Child Development
PSYC 2506 Social Psychology
SOCY 3151 Self in Modern Society
Electives

20-36

Total Credit Hours

120

1 This requirement is waived for students who completed two years of a foreign language in high school.

2 This requirement is typically met using courses taken to fulfill other degree requirements.

Learning Outcomes

The BA in interdisciplinary studies will allow students to:

• Demonstrate the ability to bring a multidisciplinary perspective to several different professions, including education, to respond to the opportunities and challenges facing individuals, organizations, and society as a whole.

• Develop and apply strong critical thinking, analysis, communication, interpersonal/team-building, and problem-solving skills based on skills, knowledge and dispositions from across a range of disciplines.

• Demonstrate in-depth knowledge in the selected disciplines of study.

• Develop an awareness of, and appreciation for, diverse views, cultures and ideas as a means to becoming an informed and responsible global citizens.

• Value interdisciplinary academic inquiry as a means to developing intellectual curiosity and awareness and advancing one's professional circumstances.