

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

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www.mcla.edu/idst/ (<http://www.mcla.edu/idst/>)

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Interdisciplinary Studies Major

The Communications, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Modern Languages Department offers a four-year program leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. Students majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies can pursue one of the following options:

B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies (Self-Designed Program)

MCLA's unique B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies (Self-Designed) program offers motivated students the option to create their own, self-designed degree, for example by focusing on a thematic area of interest, a geographic region, a complex issue, or by combining two or more academic fields into a multidisciplinary major. Examples of a self-designed program could include, but are not limited to: European Studies, Film & Theatre, Psychology & Business, Arts & Psychology, Science & Communication, etc.

B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies (for Educators)

MCLA students can combine an education major at the early childhood or elementary school level with a program in interdisciplinary studies that will prepare them for teaching across the curriculum. At the middle school level (5-8), we offer programs in general science, math and science, as well as humanities in conjunction with an education licensure program.

B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies (Pre-designed Programs)

Students may opt to pursue a pre-designed interdisciplinary program. These interdisciplinary programs are based on pre-structured study-plans and include:

- Cultural Studies
- American Studies
- International and Global Studies

Students graduating with a major in Interdisciplinary Studies will be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced critical thinking, academic research, writing, and oral presentation skills;
- Have an understanding of how knowledge is created within different fields of inquiry;
- Study important issues in societies past and present in local and global contexts from the vantage point of different disciplines and through interdisciplinary frameworks;
- Study complex issues in society from ethical perspectives;
- Analyze texts in cultural, social, and historical contexts;
- Apply methods, approaches, and insights from different disciplines and interdisciplinary frameworks to the analysis of a given theme/issue and to the development of creative solutions to complex problems;
- Have developed skills for lifelong learning;

- Have acquired extensive knowledge of human societies and cultures, and will have developed an intercultural competence and awareness of global cultural diversity;
- Assume an informed, critical, and responsible position as citizens of our increasingly interconnected world.

Interdisciplinary Studies Programs

- Critical Ethnic Studies Minor (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/interdisciplinary-studies/critical-ethnic-studies-minor/>)
- Cross-Cultural & Social Justice Minor (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/interdisciplinary-studies/cross-cultural-social-justice-minor/>)
- Interdisciplinary Studies (Pre-Designed) - American Studies Area of Concentration, B.A. (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/interdisciplinary-studies/interdisciplinary-studies-pre-designed-american-studies-area-concentration-ba/>)
- Interdisciplinary Studies (Pre-Designed) - Cultural Studies Area of Concentration, B.A. (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/interdisciplinary-studies/interdisciplinary-studies-pre-designed-cultural-studies-area-concentration-ba/>)
- Interdisciplinary Studies (Pre-Designed) - International and Global Studies Area of Concentration, B.A. (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/interdisciplinary-studies/interdisciplinary-studies-pre-designed-international-global-studies-area-concentration-ba/>)
- Interdisciplinary Studies, B.A. (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/interdisciplinary-studies/interdisciplinary-studies-ba/>)

Interdisciplinary Studies Courses

IDST 150 Introduction to Cross-Cultural & Social Justice Studies 3 cr

Opens up a perspective on culture diversity in local and global contexts. Takes an interdisciplinary approach to consider how historically shaped intersections of race, class, gender, and ethnicity inform the contemporary and past experiences of individuals and groups in society. Considers social justice and (in)equality by studying themes such as racism; classism; migration; globalization and labor rights; human trafficking; Islamophobia; and environmental justice.

Attributes: Cross-Cultural and Social Justice (CCSJ), Core Human Heritage (CHH)

IDST 150H Honors: Introduction to Cross-Cultural and Social Justice 3 cr

Opens up a perspective on cultural diversity in local and global contexts. Takes an interdisciplinary approach to consider how historically shaped intersections of race, class, gender, and ethnicity inform the contemporary and past experiences of individuals and groups in society. Considers social justice and (in)equality by studying themes such as racism; classism; migration; globalization and labor rights; human trafficking; Islamophobia; and environmental justice.

Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)

<p>IDST 205 Youth Social Movements 3 cr</p> <p>Studies youth-lead social movements from around the world as we develop essential skills for college success. Discusses social movements and social justice as well as examples of social movements like Black Lives Matter; H.I.J.O.s, UndocuQueer, 1960's Civil Rights movements and organizing on college campuses more generally. Topics that are difficult to talk about, like race, class, gender, sexuality, racism, and systemic injustice will be discussed.</p> <p>Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH)</p>	<p>IDST 320 Methods in Interdisciplinary Studies 3 cr</p> <p>Provides students with competencies in interdisciplinary research methods. Students will be introduced to the interdisciplinary research process and engage in research projects, applying disciplinary and interdisciplinary methods, theories, and concepts to the study of complex themes that cannot be understood through the lens of a single disciplinary lens. Course topics vary and are identified by subtitle (e.g. City & Social Space; Global Refugees of the 21st Century).</p> <p>Prerequisite: Junior/senior status</p> <p>Repeatable: Unlimited Credits</p>
<p>IDST 250 Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies 3 cr</p> <p>Introduces students to the world of Interdisciplinary Studies. Draws on selected academic disciplines (such as sociology, history, political science, psychology, and cultural studies) to develop interdisciplinary frameworks applied to the study of complex issues in society that cannot be understood or solved through the lens of a single academic discipline. Course topic is identified by subtitle.</p> <p>Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS)</p> <p>Repeatable: Unlimited Credits</p>	<p>IDST 350 World History in Contexts 3 cr</p> <p>Studies themes related to a geographic area, nation, epoch, or selected social group in historical contexts. Students will critically engage with a variety of sources, such as written historical documents, oral histories, literary texts, music and cinematic representations of past and present human experience in local and global (particularly non-Western) contexts. Course topic identified by subtitle.</p> <p>Prerequisite: Junior/senior status</p> <p>Repeatable: Unlimited Credits</p>
<p>IDST 251 Introduction to Urban Studies 3 cr</p> <p>Traces cities back to their origins and ends with the present day where urbanization is happening faster than ever. Following a chronological order, we will examine how global forces and local communities are intimately connected. The course draws from various academic disciplines and introduces students to basic concepts such as density, zoning, gentrification, and urban renewal. The goal is to help students become informed thinkers critical of urban designs and suburban lifestyle.</p> <p>Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS)</p>	<p>IDST 351 Race and Racism from a Global Perspective 3 cr</p> <p>Deconstructs the global construct of race by focusing on the tangled connections between state, race, culture, and identity. Relying on materials from across disciplines, the course aims to deepen students' understanding of the complexity of race and racism and the importance of interdisciplinary approaches. After a theoretical section, the course will explore the global dissemination of race and formations of racial identities, and will end with a case study on Sino-Africa engagement.</p> <p>Prerequisite: Junior/senior status</p>
<p>IDST 251H Honors: Introduction to Urban Studies 3 cr</p> <p>Traces cities back to their origins and ends with the present day where urbanization is happening faster than ever. Following a chronological order, we will examine how global forces and local communities are intimately connected. The course draws from various academic disciplines and introduces students to basic concepts such as density, zoning, gentrification, and urban renewal. The goal is to help students become informed thinkers critical of urban designs and suburban lifestyle.</p> <p>Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)</p>	<p>IDST 352 Environmental Justice 3 cr</p> <p>Explores the concept of environmental justice through interdisciplinary lenses, including historical, sociological, scientific, literacy, and philosophical perspectives. Examines the history of the EJ movement as a response to environmentalist movements that failed to consider differentiated impacts on people based on race, gender, and economic status. Historic and current case studies from around the world serve as concrete examples to enable us to grasp patterns and economic connections.</p> <p>Prerequisite: Junior/senior status</p>
<p>IDST 252 Introduction to Critical Ethnic Studies 3 cr</p> <p>Applies interdisciplinary critical race and ethnic studies approaches to investigate how society is culturally and institutionally constituted by ideas like race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and nation.</p> <p>Attributes: Cross-Cultural and Social Justice (CCSJ), Core Human Heritage (CHH)</p>	<p>IDST 360 Topics in Culture and Society 3 cr</p> <p>Explores complex and controversial topics in culture and society from the vantage point of at least two different academic disciplines (such as sociology, history, psychology, literature, and cultural studies) and through interdisciplinary perspectives. Course topic identified by subtitle.</p> <p>Prerequisite: Junior/senior status</p> <p>Repeatable: Unlimited Credits</p>
<p>IDST 252H Honors: Introduction to Critical Ethnic Studies 3 cr</p> <p>Applies interdisciplinary critical race and ethnic studies approaches to investigate how society is culturally and institutionally constituted by ideas like race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and nation.</p> <p>Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)</p>	<p>IDST 361 Madness and Society 3 cr</p> <p>Studies how understandings of mental health and illness are inextricably linked to society, culture, space, and time. Draws on theories, concepts, and insights from history, sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology, and media studies to study topics such as the history of mental illness; the influence of gender and social class on mental well-being; mental illness across cultures; and media representations of mental illness.</p> <p>Prerequisite: Junior/senior status</p>
<p>IDST 280 Introduction to the Interdisciplinary Studies Major and Degree Plan 1 cr</p> <p>Provides beginning interdisciplinary majors with the opportunity to develop a sense of agency and ownership of their educational pathway through the creation of an individualized degree plan. Students will familiarize themselves with the IDST program at MCLA and engage with themes such as: conceptualizations and definitions of interdisciplinarity; the history of academic disciplines and the emergence of interdisciplinary studies; the interdisciplinary research process.</p> <p>Prerequisite: IDST 250-259 or IDST 150</p>	

IDST 362 Chinese Urban Cultures 3 cr

Seeks to understand the socio-cultural changes in China following economic reforms in the 1980s. Exploring topics such as youth culture, gender and sexuality, and rural migration, we will focus on the shifting relationship between the state and common people's cultural life. The course uses a multi-disciplinary approach and incorporates various interesting materials including cultural analyses, anthropological research, a mystery fiction, and founding notes of a utopic community.

Prerequisite: Junior/senior status

IDST 401 Senior Seminar 3 cr

Available only to senior interdisciplinary studies majors, this seminar requires students to carry out supervised research projects within their areas of study and to share the progress and results of their research with seminar participants.

Prerequisite: Senior IDST Major

IDST 500 Directed Independent Study 1-3 cr

Open to junior and senior IDST majors who wish to read in a given area or to study a topic in depth. Written reports and frequent conferences with the advisor are required.

Prerequisite: Junior/senior status, department approval

Repeatable: Maximum of 12 credits

IDST 540 Interdisciplinary Internship 1-6 cr

Offers seniors field experience that actively and extensively draws upon the concepts, principles, and skills of at least two different disciplines. The internship must include a strong writing component in which the student interprets his/her field experience with reference to key ideas and themes of the relevant disciplines.

Prerequisite: Senior status, department approval

Repeatable: Maximum of 15 credits

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: TEACHER LICENSURE

Students majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies (with a liberal arts area of study) may opt to pursue initial teacher licensure as an early childhood teacher or elementary education teacher. Also, Interdisciplinary majors may pursue initial licensure as a middle school teacher of humanities, general science or math and science. Please see Education major for more details.