
Multidisciplinary Studies

The Multidisciplinary Studies major may be earned as a BS or BA degree depending on the design of the program of study

Requirements

Program Director, Dorothy Bergeron
Professor of Medical Laboratory Science

Students with a GPA of at least 2.5 who wish to pursue in depth a particular topic or area of study not available in an established major may choose the Multidisciplinary Studies (MDS) major. MDS allows students to combine course work in two or three disciplines to create their own major, in consultation with a faculty advisor and the Director of Multidisciplinary Studies. Considerable latitude is allowed in the design of the program of study, and course work, studios and laboratories from any of the colleges may be included, as long as one of the Core disciplines is in Arts and Sciences. Examples of topics or themes chosen by MDS majors are

Communications/Advertising
Communications/Photography
Environmental Studies
Society and Aging
International Relations/Business
Sociobiology
Consumer Psychology/Marketing

Multidisciplinary studies is intended as an option for students who have some familiarity with college-level study. Thus it is available only to students who have completed at least one semester of college work, and not to entering freshmen. Transfer applicants with a minimum of 15 transferable credits may receive admission, if otherwise qualified, upon the recommendation of the MDS Director, based on a personal interview. The earlier a program of study is designed, the greater the flexibility in scheduling the required courses. As with most other changes of major, requests from seniors can rarely be accommodated. Students may not double-major with MDS.

The Multidisciplinary Studies major is built around a thematic program of study that encompasses two or three disciplines, one of which must be in the College of Arts and Sciences. The program will consist of a minimum of 36 credits in the selected disciplines, 30 of which must be at the 300 level or above and constitute the Core courses of the major. (Experiential learning and courses in pedagogy may not be included in the 300- and 400-level courses.) Ordinarily only three credits of either independent study or directed study may be included in the 30 credits of Core courses.

To become a Multidisciplinary Studies major students must, before the end of the Junior year:

1. Identify a faculty member who will act as academic advisor and who, along with the Director, will assist in the design of the program.
2. Write a one-page description of the proposed program of study and complete a change of major form with the Director. The description should include the objectives of the program and a rationale for how each of the Core courses will help meet the objectives.
3. Develop, with the Director, a Contract containing the description and a list of the courses that will comprise the program. Substitution for courses in the Contract is allowed only with prior written approval by the faculty advisor and the Director.

Interested students should contact the Director of Multidisciplinary Studies, at 508 999-8584.

Multidisciplinary Studies Major BA degree

For the BA degree, students must satisfy all College of Arts and Sciences requirements for that degree, along with the program of courses listed in the Contract.

Multidisciplinary Studies Major BS degree

For the BS degree, students must satisfy all College of Arts and Sciences requirements for that degree, along with the program of courses listed in the Contract. The Contract must contain the components of either of the two options given below:

Option 1

- a) 36 credits in two or three sciences,* 30 of which are at the 300-level or higher.
- b) A two-semester sequence of mathematics, if mathematics is not a component of a) above.

Option 2

- a) 15 credits at the 300-level or above in one or two sciences.
- b) 15 credits at the 300-level or above in one or two disciplines other than science.
- c) 9 credits in sciences at any level, other than disciplines included in a) above.
- d) A two-semester sequence of mathematics, if mathematics is not a component of a) or c) above.

*For these options, "sciences" include Biology, Chemistry, Computer and Information Science, Mathematics, Medical Laboratory Science, and Physics.

General Education Departmental Requirements

Students majoring in Multidisciplinary Studies must pay special attention to selecting courses so as to satisfy both their general education and college distribution requirements. Courses used to satisfy major and college distribution requirements may also be used to satisfy specific University General Education requirements.

The University General Education requirements in categories C and S, and Tier 1 of categories I and W are automatically met through the BA or BS versions of the Arts and Sciences college distribution requirements. Special care must be taken to identify specific courses that satisfy the D, E, and G categories. Students will normally satisfy "departmental" requirements in the Tier II General Education categories (I and W), and in Oral Communication, through one of the Core discipline departments chosen for the major. Students are ultimately responsible for meeting all distribution and General Education requirements and should consult with their advisors on both major and General Education requirements.