



**UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
SOUTHEAST**

MEMORANDUM
June 23, 2017

To Richard Caulfield, UAS Chancellor
Karen Carey, UAS Provost

From Robin Walz, Professor of History

Copy Karen Schmitt, Dean of Arts & Sciences

Re Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts

The summer work group has completed its work on the Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts degree. The members of the work group: Daniel Monteith (Assoc. Prof. Anthropology), Lora Vess (Asst. Prof. Sociology), Richard Simpson (Asst. Prof. English), Sol Neely (Assoc. Prof. English). I organized and moderated the work group sessions, May 22-June 23, and have compiled the attached documents as our deliverables.

What we accomplished. The fundamental legwork for the entire baccalaureate degree has been completed. The group's work was informed by information and recommendations submitted by the Enhancing the Baccalaureate Experience work groups over the past year (Workshops January & March 2016, EBE Work Group June 2016, EBE Work Group Fall Semester 2016, Faculty Feedback Spring 2017). The attached draft documents represent our work:

- **Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts: Mission, Vision, Values, Objectives, Outcomes, Assessment.** The first third of our work was spent defining these foundational aspects of the baccalaureate degree program. These foundations guided our subsequent work.
- **Degree Structure.** The Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts is better conceptualized, organized, academically scaled yet flexible, and more responsive to student needs and goals than the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and B.A. in Social Science degrees it incorporates and replaces. We devoted the second third of our work to creating that design. The **common degree structure** for all track options (Alaska Native Language & Studies, Creative Expression, Cultural Studies, Outdoor and Adventure Studies, Social Inquiry) provides an interdisciplinary cohesion that surpasses previous liberal arts and multidisciplinary degrees at UAS (BLA, BASS). That cohesion is established through: recommended and required GERs during the first two years, a common interdisciplinary core for all Interdisciplinary B.A. students, a common structure and interdisciplinary dimensions to the major requirements (track, focus, project).

Supporting documentation on **track** and **focus** options provide examples of how those might be realized within the degree major. For the moment, these are only examples; the actual curriculum maps for each track option and student-faculty contracts for the focus area need to be developed at Fall Convocation.

- **Program Proposal Summary for SAC and BOR.** In the final portion of our work we completed BOR Policy R10.04.020.C as far as possible. We have confidence that you will be pleased with the outcome, and that the completed portions will require minor or no revisions.

As scheduled, available members of the work group and I will meet with you on Friday, June 30, 12:30 p.m., to clarify and elaborate upon these documents and our work.

What remains to be done. In order to begin offering the Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts in Fall 2018, the following steps need to be accomplished during Fall 2017:

- **Acceptance or Rejection at Fall Convocation.** This summer's work group will give a brief presentation on the proposed Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts degree to the entire UAS community at Convocation (15-20 minutes with Q&A period). At this point, it needs to be determined whether faculty, administration, and relevant staff agree to moving the degree forward or not. In this, the support of Humanities and Social Science, as the faculty most involved in the degree program, is paramount.
- **Curriculum Maps for Track Options & Focus Contracts.** If accepted, we request an entire morning or afternoon at Convocation be devoted to A&S faculty working on curriculum maps for each major track (Alaska Native Language & Studies, Creative Expression, Cultural Studies, Outdoor and Adventure Studies, Social Inquiry). Clear guidelines and a student-faculty contract for the focus areas need to be developed as well. Follow up work may need to be completed before the end of September in preparation for submission to Curriculum Committee. However, without foundational work being completed at Convocation, the September deadline will not be possible.
- **Curriculum Committee.** The proposed degree, new courses required by the degree program (i.e., INDS 200, INDS 300, INDS 499), and any changes required to existing courses (i.e., ANS 101 and ANS 263 as GERs), must be submitted to Curriculum Committee by October 1.
- **Faculty Senate.** As a new degree at UAS, Faculty Senate approval is required.
- **Registrar.** Working closely with the Registrar is necessary to produce copy for the academic catalog and to organize DegreeWorks along degree requirements.
- **SAC & BOR.** This is work for upper administration. We rely upon you for budget calculations, form completions, and SAC and BOR presentations, assisting you to whatever degree is possible.

Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts

Mission

The Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts provides integrated and experiential courses of study that relate multiple ways of knowing to empower students to advance environmental awareness, cultural responsibility, artistic expression, and social justice.

Vision

The Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts aspires to define and shape emerging relations in the 21st century, from the local to the global, by cultivating pedagogical innovation, indigenous intellectual authority, public dialog, social action, and by healing the wounds of historical violence.

Values

Indigenous Intellectual Authority. We value and respect Alaska Native heritage across the state, especially the indigenous cultures unique to Southeast Alaska. Indigenous knowledge holds a genius of place that impacts and transcends disciplinary structures.

Collaborative Teaching & Learning. Collaboration is a fundamental practice of education and understanding. Collaboration cultivates a learning environment that creates, nurtures, and inspires better dialogs and communication to address complex problems and issues.

Community Engagement. The university bears responsibilities to the communities in which it is situated. We engage and support the educational, cultural, and environmental vitality of these communities on local, regional, national, and global levels.

Experiential Learning. Experiential learning educates the whole person. Through creative activities, field studies, independent and mentored research, the performing arts, outdoor and urban studies, and exchange programs, students develop personally, academically, and professionally.

Critical Inquiry. We strive to create meaningful relationships between people, places, and socio-economic activities across personal identity, nationality and transnationality. We seek to engender interdisciplinary practices inspired by decolonial modes of inquiry.

Program Objectives

Interdisciplinarity. Students will identify interconnections between people, places, and socio-economic activities in ways that transform personal identity and transcend geographic, political, and even disciplinary boundaries.

Local and Global Intersectionality. Students will establish multiple connections between everyday life at the local level and the larger economic, social, and cultural forces that network them into a global community.

Communicative Competency. Students will develop a robust communicative competency through a foundation in argumentation, symbolic and institutional dimensions of discourses, media analysis, and also by attending to cultural practices and wisdoms of listening and responsiveness.

Decolonization and Social Justice. Students will analyze the roots and manifestations of colonialism, historical trauma, systemic inequalities, and experiences of discrimination that impact both victims and perpetrators and foster relationships that transform society and promote social justice, cultural safety, and equity.

Community Engagement. Students will develop a heightened sense of their responsibilities, power and purpose as public scholars, community members, and global citizens through relationship building with Alaska Native partners, private enterprises, non-profit organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies.

Research and Creative Activity. Through rich mentoring relationships with faculty, students will participate in substantial research or creative endeavors that demonstrate engagement and competency in their course of interdisciplinary study.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts degree fulfill program objectives by demonstrating the ability to:

- Enact academic learning beyond the university classroom.
- Participate in public presentations, seminars, and workshops that demonstrate the reciprocal skills of listening and articulation.
- Contribute in meaningful ways to redress historical violence and social inequity.
- Perform innovative analyses of diverse texts, forms, and practices by drawing upon indigenous ways of knowing and interdisciplinary methodologies.
- Apply critical thinking, persuasion, and argumentation toward socially responsible scholarship, professional development, and global citizenship.

Program Assessment

Ongoing assessment of the Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts will be conducted upon:

- Student self-report of academic, personal, and professional goals completed at mid-program (INDS 300).
- Student self-evaluation of academic, personal, and professional accomplishments completed at program's end (INDS 499).
- Faculty evaluation of each student's culminating project in relation to program learning outcomes (scoring rubric and narrative evaluation).
- Written and oral exit interviews with graduates to gather information about each student's academic course of study, future career and study plans, demographic data, and program satisfaction.
- Annual discussion and comprehensive five-year program review of assessment materials by the Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts work group composed of the degree and major track coordinators.

Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts Common Degree Structure

1. Common Set of General Education Requirements (GER)

Year 1

Fall

HUM 120 Sense of Place* (Hum GER)
WRTG 111 (Writing GER)
MATH 113/STAT 107 (Math GER)
(MATH 105 or Placement)

Spring

ANS 101 Intro** (Soc Sci GER)
Social Science (Soc Sci GER)
Lab/Non-Lab Science (Nat Sci GER)
Lab: BIO 103 or GEOL 104

Year 2

Fall

ANS 263 NW Coast Art & Culture**
(Fine Arts GER)
COMM 111 Fundamentals of Oral
Communication (Comn GER)

Spring

WRTG 211/212 (Writing GER)
Additional Hum/Soc Sci GER
Lab/Non-Lab Science (Nat Sci GER)
Lab: BIO 103 or GEOL 104

*Recommended GER for all Interdisciplinary BA Students.

** Required GER for all Interdisciplinary BA Students

2. Fundamentals of Interdisciplinary Inquiry

Required cohort courses for all Interdisciplinary BA students to complete by the third year of study.

Year 1

Language Competency (1-Year Sequence or Equivalency)

Year 2

INDS 200 Interdisciplinary Inquiry (Fall Semester)
GEOG 210 Cultural Geography (Spring Semester)
100/200-Level Major Track Prerequisites (e.g. MATH 105, PSY 101)

Year 3

INDS 300 Interdisciplinary Theory & Practice (Fall Semester)

3. Major Requirements (Years 3 & 4 – 45 Credits)*

Concentrations in the Interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts are:

- Alaska Native Language & Studies
- Creative Expression
- Cultural Studies
- Outdoor & Adventure Studies
- Social Inquiry

* Students with completed AA or transfer/returning/non-traditional students with 45+ credits begin degree program here. Begins with INDS 300 Interdisciplinary Theory & Practice (INDS 200 & GEOG 210 waived). May require outstanding introductory prerequisite courses, including language competency. Any outstanding UA GERs may need to be completed.

Concentration Core (27 Credits; Upper-Division 15 Credits Minimum)

The fundamental courses for each concentration. Includes content coursework, theory and application (experiential learning).

Focus (15 Upper-Division Credits)

Intensive study design between faculty advisor and student created in INDS 300 Interdisciplinary Theory & Practice. May focus either on interdisciplinary inquiry, transdisciplinary theme or problem, disciplinary depth or field experience immersion.

Culmination Project (3 Upper-Division Credits)

Completion and presentation of a significant project to demonstrate fulfillment of degree program outcomes through enrollment in and completion of either: INDS 499 Capstone, ENGL 499 Thesis, or GEOG 499 Capstone (currently GEOG 490).