Interdisciplinary Studies Degree

A student who has received a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution and whose credentials indicate the ability to pursue graduate work may develop an interdisciplinary studies major. The proposed program must differ significantly from and may not substitute for an existing UAA graduate degree program. The student may select no more than one half of the program credits from one existing graduate degree program, and courses must come from two or more disciplines (i.e., subjects). All interdisciplinary students must be "homed" in an existing graduate program.

In addition to the General University Requirements for Graduate Degrees [http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/degreerequirements], students must comply with the following procedures:

1. The student submits a UAA Graduate Application for Admission (as an interdisciplinary studies major) with the appropriate fee to the Office of Admissions. This application will be reviewed by the Graduate School for determination of acceptance to graduate study, contingent on items 2-5 below.

2. The student invites a faculty member to chair their graduate studies committee and to serve as the student’s graduate advisor. The student must be "homed" in an existing graduate degree program and the chair shall normally be a full-time faculty member from that graduate degree program. The chair must agree to serve and must be approved by the Graduate School dean or designee. Faculty members may be co-chairs if they are from non-graduate programs.

3. The student proposes a graduate studies committee of at least three faculty members (including the chair) from the appropriate academic disciplines. The committee members and chair must represent all concentration areas of 9 credits or more. The committee members must agree to serve and be approved by the Graduate School dean or designee by submitting an Appointment of Committee Form. Faculty from non-graduate programs may participate as co-chairs or committee members.

4. The student develops an interdisciplinary proposal, including a paper graduate studies plan (GSP) specifying the degree (MA/MS) and title or concentration. In developing this proposal, the student should review all graduate degree policies and procedures. To receive an interdisciplinary studies master’s degree from UAA, the student must incorporate into his or her proposal all General University Requirements for Graduate Degrees and any college requirements applicable. No more than 6 thesis credits should be included. The graduate committee may require a master’s thesis, research project or capstone.

5. The student presents the proposed GSP along with the master’s thesis, research project or capstone proposal to the committee and chair for preliminary review and approval. If the committee and chair support the GSP and research proposal, it will be forwarded to the Graduate School dean or designee for approval in consultation with the affected graduate programs.

6. Students work with their advisors and graduate committees to ensure that satisfactory progress is made toward completing degree requirements.

7. The student must complete all requirements established in the official interdisciplinary GSP, and must pass a written and/or oral comprehensive examination, an evaluation of independent scholarship, and/or a project or thesis defense or similar final evaluation as established by the graduate program. The examination, evaluation or defense must be approved by all graduate committee members as passing the requirement and by the dean of the Graduate School or designee. All theses and projects must have final approval by the dean or designee of the Graduate School.

8. During the semester of the project or thesis defense or similar final evaluation, the student must apply for graduation in a timely fashion. The diploma will indicate that it is an interdisciplinary degree, as well as the applicable subjects/concentration.

9. All theses and projects must meet formatting requirements as established by the Graduate School.