INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES, PH.D.

The Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) Ph.D. program is designed for highly motivated students whose goals for research and classwork do not fit into one of The University of Alabama department-based Ph.D. programs. There is no such thing as a “typical” IDS Ph.D. student. Students have ranged in age from 22 to 85. Although many IDS Ph.D. students pursue their studies full time, others are working professionals who balance their studies with full-time employment. As a prerequisite to admission, IDS Ph.D. students work with the Graduate School to identify faculty members who can help guide the proposed research. The Graduate School also works with prospective students to make sure that we can support your research goals with classes that are offered at The University of Alabama.

Admissions

Prior to submitting an application to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program, each prospective student must meet with the Graduate School Associate Dean for Admissions, Recruitment and Fellowships.

Applicants to the Interdisciplinary Studies PhD program will submit an application to the Graduate School. Application materials will include:

1. Transcripts showing a completed master’s degree (at the time of admission) or equivalent from an accredited university. GPA of 3.3 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent. Admission with Permission to Continue is not permitted for the Interdisciplinary PhD program.
2. The email addresses of three recommenders.
3. A CV/resume.
4. Language scores (for non-native English speakers; conditional language admission is not permitted).
5. Statement of purpose. The statement of purpose is where the applicant will discuss professional/academic preparation, the reason for choosing The University of Alabama, research goals and intended future career path.
6. Statement of proposed research. A one to two-page document outlining the intended focus and significance of the proposed research to the integrated fields of study and the applicant’s professional goals.
7. The names and email addresses of five Advisory Committee members, including an Advisor/Chair. All committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty at The University of Alabama. The applicant’s Advisory Committee chair is expected to have competence in the proposed major area(s) of study and be willing to devote time to being an academic mentor for the student throughout the PhD program. The Advisory Committee chair and at least one additional committee member must have experience in directing and supervising doctoral-level research.
8. The name of the home department. The home department or program will include the Interdisciplinary Studies, PhD student in the intellectual-social life of the unit, e.g., department mailing lists, colloquia, social functions, etc. The home department may also consider an Interdisciplinary Studies, PhD student for Graduate Teaching Assistant and Graduate Research Assistant appointments, and for office space.
9. Proposed course list. In consultation with the Advisory Committee and Advisor/Chair, the prospective Interdisciplinary Studies PhD student will create a preliminary plan of study. This must include transfer classes, classes taken at The University of Alabama, and dissertation research hours

Curricular Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elective Courses</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methods or Research Theory and Design</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDGR 699 Dissertation Research</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Hours</td>
<td>66</td>
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The University of Alabama Graduate School requires that Interdisciplinary Studies PhD students complete a minimum of 48 hours of coursework reflecting two or more distinct academic areas. The coursework should include a minimum of 15 hours in research methods or research theory and design. The majority of this coursework should be at the 600 level. In addition, 18 hours of dissertation research must be completed. All students are encouraged to take AHE 591 Seminar Higher Education if the course is offered during the first 4 semesters of coursework.

Transfer Credit

Up to half of the required graduate coursework hours may be transferred from other institutions with the approval of the Advisory Committee.

Doctoral Plan of Study Requirement

For Interdisciplinary Studies PhD students, an initial Plan of Study was established during the admission process in consultation with the Advisory Committee and Advisor/Chair. Any changes to the Plan of Study require the approval of the Advisory Committee and Advisor/Chair and the submission of a new Plan of Study form.

Comprehensive Exam

The content and administration of the comprehensive exam are the responsibility of the Advisor and Advisory Committee and are determined at the time of admission. The comprehensive examination is taken just before the completion of all coursework. The comprehensive examination can be retaken once. The Advisory Committee Chair must inform the Graduate School Associate Dean for Admissions, Recruitment, and Fellowships of the results of the comprehensive exam and submit the completed IDS Comprehensive Examination Rubric.

Admission to Candidacy Requirements

When the Advisory Committee, using the Admission to Candidacy form, certifies to the Graduate School that the comprehensive exam has been passed and all other requirements set out in the Plan of Study (except
the completion of dissertation research hours) have been satisfactorily completed, the Graduate School admits the student to candidacy.

**Continuous Enrollment Policy**
Graduate School information on Continuous Enrollment.

**Dissertation Requirements**

**Human Subjects:** If human subjects are involved, the student and his/her Advisor/Chair are responsible for complying with the Institutional Review Board requirements before beginning research.

**Committee:** The Advisory Committee formed on admission to the program continues to serve for the duration of the program.

**Dissertation Proposal:** The purpose of the dissertation proposal defense is to evaluate the potential of the student to complete the dissertation research project. It comprises an oral presentation of a written dissertation proposal, focusing on areas relevant to the dissertation research. The dissertation proposal defense may be retaken once. All Advisory Committee members must be in attendance for the duration of the defense. The Advisory Committee Chair must inform the Graduate School Associate Dean for Admissions, Recruitment, and Fellowships of the results of the dissertation proposal.

**Dissertation Research Hours:** Interdisciplinary PhD students are not permitted to enroll in dissertation research hours (IDGR 699) prior to admission to candidacy. The required 18 credit hours must be taken as IDGR 699. Any IDGR 699 hours taken must be accompanied by a syllabus that includes: 1) specific learning outcomes for the semester; and 2) how the learning outcome must be satisfied to earn a passing grade. The instructor of record (normally the Advisor) must upload the syllabus to The University of Alabama Online Syllabus Management site.

**Final Oral Examination:** The final oral exam for the PhD is administered and evaluated by the Advisory Committee. The Graduate School must be notified of the date of the oral examination at least one month in advance. Final oral examinations are open to the University community. The examination must be scheduled such that a representative from the Graduate School can attend. The Committee Advisor/Chair should inform the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of the results of the final oral exam using the Doctoral Final Defense form and submit a completed IDS Final Oral Examination Rubric.

**Submission of Dissertation:** An outcome of the final oral examination is almost always additional edits to the dissertation. It is at this stage that Interdisciplinary Ph.D. students are encouraged to use a copy editor to ensure that the final dissertation meets the requirements of the Graduate School. Approval of the final version of the dissertation by the committee is indicated by the completion of the Committee Acceptance Form by the advisor. The student must upload a PDF-formatted version of the final dissertation to ProQuest. Should additional edits be required, the Graduate School will contact the student.

**Time Limits for Degree Completion Requirements**
Graduate School information on Time Limits.

**Student Progress Requirement**

**Degree Progression:** Interdisciplinary Studies Ph.D. students must ensure that coursework is completed in a timely manner and that satisfactory progress is made towards completing all degree requirements (coursework, comprehensive exam, admission to candidacy, dissertation proposal, dissertation research, and final oral examination). All requirements must be completed within the time limits specified in the Graduate Catalog at the time of admission.

**Candidacy:** It is expected that full-time students will have advanced to candidacy by the beginning of the third year in the program. Failure to advance to candidacy before the end of the fourth year in the program is grounds for dismissal.

**Degree Proposal:** The dissertation proposal requirement must be fulfilled no later than one year after advancement to candidacy. Failure to complete this requirement within one year of advancement to candidacy is grounds for dismissal.

**Advisory Committee Meetings:** During each year of the program, there must be at least one meeting between the student and the Advisory Committee to review progress. The student is responsible for scheduling this meeting such that all members can be in attendance either in person or virtually (e.g. via Zoom). Individual meetings or communications via email cannot be used as a substitute for this meeting.

**Annual Report:** Each Interdisciplinary Studies PhD student will, in collaboration with their Advisor, prepare an annual written summary of progress towards degree requirements. This report will be due to the Associate Dean for Admissions, Recruitment and Fellowships (amg@ua.edu) on the Monday following finals week each year.

**Annual Meeting:** Following submission of the progress report, the student will schedule a 60 minute meeting (to be attended by the student, Advisor, and Associate Dean for Admissions, Recruitment and Fellowships (amg@ua.edu)). This meeting must be completed by the end of May each year.

**Academic Misconduct Information**
Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

**Withdrawals and Leave of Absence Information**
Graduate School information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence.

**Academic Grievances Information**
Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

**Scholastic Requirements**
Graduate School information on Scholastic Requirements.

**Graduate School Deadlines Information**
Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

**Application for Graduation Information**
Information on the Application for Graduation.