
Interdisciplinary Studies

Administered by the Graduate Division

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General Information

When the existing advanced degree programs of the University do not adequately meet certain special needs and interests, a student may propose a Master of Arts or Master of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. This degree program provides the unusually well-qualified student an opportunity for individualized graduate study composed of coursework in at least two but not more than three departments or schools at SDSU. The Graduate Division administers this program following procedures established by the Graduate Council.

The proposed program must not be substantially available in a current graduate program offered at the University, and it must have adequate focus and coherence in cognate disciplines. Prerequisite courses will be required to support the courses in the student's program of study.

A graduate supervisory committee and a field of study shall be chosen, subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate Division, in consultation with the Student Affairs Committee of the Graduate Council. The supervisory committee shall consist of not less than three full-time faculty representative of the areas in which the student intends to pursue the degree. The graduate dean or designee shall serve as an ex officio member of the committee.

Since the inception of this program in 1977, individual students have undertaken graduate programs in such subjects as paleobiology, folklore and mythology, molecular biology, museum studies, infant development, animal behavior, sports psychology, environmental resource management, environmental economics, primitive Christianity, and learning interface design.

Admission to Graduate Study

In addition to satisfying the requirements for admission to the University with classified graduate standing, as described in Part Two of this bulletin, the student must (1) possess an academic background appropriate to the proposed program and have achieved an undergraduate grade point average of 3.0; and (2) complete the GRE General Test with a satisfactory score on the verbal and quantitative sections. Since an approved course of study is required for classified admission of this major, applicants may be admitted to the University in conditionally classified status pending formal approval of a program of study. Students admitted conditionally must meet with the Associate Dean of the Graduate Division as soon as possible after admission to the program. If the proposed curriculum is not approved, the student will have the option of applying for admission to an alternative advanced degree program.

Students applying for admission should electronically submit the University application available at www.csumentor.edu and the following documentation as a complete package:

- (1) Two sets of official transcripts (in sealed envelopes) from each university attended;
- (2) A statement of purpose describing proposed study plan.

Mail or deliver your complete admissions package to:
Assistant Dean, Graduate Division
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-8020

Advancement to Candidacy

In addition to satisfying the general requirements of the University for advancement to candidacy, as stated in Part Two of this bulletin, the student must satisfy the special requirements for advancement defined by the supervisory committee in the official program of study.

Specific Requirements for the Master's Degree

(Major Code: 49993)

1. In addition to satisfying the requirements for classified graduate standing and the basic requirements for the master's degree, as described in Part Two of this bulletin, the student must complete a graduate program of at least 30 units of courses acceptable for advanced degree credit.
2. The official program of study must reflect careful and deliberate planning. The selection and level of courses will be based on the best standards and practices of the disciplines involved. Normally no more than six units taken prior to approval of the official program of study may apply to the degree.
3. In consultation with the supervisory committee, the student will determine the subject of the research for a thesis that will be completed as the culminating experience in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

General Procedures for the Program

1. After meeting with the Associate Dean of the Graduate Division, a student interested in being formally considered for the Interdisciplinary Studies program should complete and follow the instructions on the form, "Request for Permission to Pursue an Interdisciplinary Studies Master's Degree," which is available in the Graduate Division. The applicant must initially seek out a potential faculty adviser and two additional faculty members who have the expertise and interest in advising and supporting the applicant in the proposed program of study.
2. When the student's portion of the form has been completed, the major adviser selected, and other potential supervisory committee members contacted, an appointment with the Associate Dean of the Graduate Division should be arranged. Both the applicant and the proposed major adviser should be present at this meeting. Other proposed committee members are welcome to participate in these discussions.

Interdisciplinary Studies

3. Following this meeting and after making any modifications to the proposed program eventuating from it, the student must present for approval the "Request for Permission to Pursue an Interdisciplinary Studies Master's Degree" to the chairs of departments in which courses are being proposed and to the deans of colleges responsible for these academic units.
4. The student will then present the "Request," endorsed with appropriate departmental and college recommendations, to the Graduate Division, where it will be reviewed by the Student Affairs Committee of the Graduate Council. Upon the recommendation of that committee, the "Request" will be forwarded to the Graduate Dean, whose final endorsement will certify that the "Request" has been approved as an official program of study, that the supervisory committee has been formally appointed, and that the student has been granted classified graduate standing for the purpose of pursuing the interdisciplinary major.
5. Virtually all other requirements for this major are the same as those for other master's degree programs, as specified in this bulletin. Special questions should be directed to the chair of the supervisory committee or to the Graduate Division.

GRADUATE COURSES (INT S)

797. Research (1-3) Cr/NC/RP

Prerequisite: Advancement to candidacy.

Independent research in a specialized subject. Maximum six units applicable to a master's degree.

798. Special Study (1-3) Cr/NC/RP

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Independent study. Maximum credit six units applicable to a master's degree.

799A. Thesis or Project (3) Cr/NC/RP

Prerequisites: An officially appointed thesis committee and advancement to candidacy.

Preparation of a project or thesis for the master's degree.

799B. Thesis or Project Extension (0) Cr/NC

Prerequisite: Prior registration in Thesis 799A with an assigned grade symbol of RP.

Registration in any semester or term following assignment of RP in Course 799A in which the student expects to use the facilities and resources of the university; also the student must be registered in the course when the completed thesis or project is granted final approval.

