**Weber State University**

BIS 2800—Foundations of Integrated Studies (3 credit hours)

**Course Syllabus**

**Catalog Description**

Foundations of Integrated Studies provide students with theories and methods used in cross-disciplinary inquiry. Course components include: connections between academic studies and student interests, methods associated with integrated studies, and planning future employment and life-long learning goals.

**Course Description**

This class teaches students to: (a) define components of interdisciplinary study, (b) use and implement methods of academic inquiry, (c) determine and report key research studies from professional literature bases, (d) and develop life-long learning and career plans. The course’s culminating project is to demonstrate mastery of these components by writing an interdisciplinary study project.

**General Class Topics**

1. *Learning about different models of interdisciplinary work*
2. *Incorporating the logistics of beginning an interdisciplinary study project*
3. *Learning about and using appropriate methodologies for interdisciplinary study*
4. *Learning about and using professional knowledge bases*
5. *Creating action plans for academic success*
6. *Determining appropriate career goals based on academic study and excellence*
7. *Critiquing interdisciplinary texts for development of toolkits and frameworks*

### Imbedded throughout course topics and assignments are LEAP (2013) Essential Learning Outcomes, Repko’s (2013) Interdisciplinary Outcomes, and BIS Program Outcomes.

For more information about LEAP (Liberal Education and America’s Promise) Essential Learning Outcomes see:

<http://www.aacu.org/leap/principles_of_excellence.cfm>

For more information about Allen Repko’s (2013) Interdisciplinary Outcomes see:

[www.aacu.org/meetings/integrative\_learning/documents/Repko.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/meetings/integrative_learning/documents/Repko.pdf)

**BIS Program Outcomes**

1. Make multiple connections and conclusions across three disciplines (interdisciplinary work)
2. Identify an issue, topic, or creative process and create a Capstone Experience that shows depth of understanding (Critical Thinking Skills-Conceptualization)
3. Use, synthesize, and report key research, theory, and/or skills from three academic emphases (Critical Thinking Skills-Methods and Creativity)
4. Provide analysis, results, conclusions and/or final artifacts that demonstrate superior learning and/or creativity (Critical Thinking Skills-Analysis/Conclusions)
5. Organize and use human resources and time-management skills for completion of Capstone Projects (Professional Attributes)
6. Create and Implement a plan for life-long learning and career growth (Professional Attributes)

**Course Requirements**

BIS students are expected to demonstrate professionalism by:

1. **Attending class regularly and on time.**
2. **Modeling acceptable oral and written communication skills.**

All written work is to show evidence of effective written communication. Students who are concerned with their writing skills should utilize WSU writing centers to help improve and polish written assignments. Oral presentations must also reflect professionalism and quality. Assigned readings must be completed before class for optimal class discussion on topics meant to be internalized and personalized.

1. **Accepting the dignity and self-worth of others.**

In order to promote a thoughtful class and demonstrate professional attributes, the opinions and beliefs of other students must be respected and a fair degree of tolerance allowed. Please do not engage in any put-down comments, negative non-verbal communication, or argumentative stances.

1. **Acceptable Use of Technology**

Students are expected to use technology in an appropriate manner in class. This means computers, tablets, etc. may be used in class as part of classroom learning. *Using technology for text messaging, surfing the web, or any other inappropriate activity will result in a loss of participation points per infraction.*

1. **Assignment due dates**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the course syllabus, unless adjustments are made for the entire class. Late work will NOT receive full credit. If you are ill, please email your work.

**ADA Disclosure**

Any student requiring accommodations or service due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

**University Ethics Disclosure**

Failure to maintain academics ethics/academic honesty, including the avoidance of cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and falsification will result in an E in the course and may result in charges being issued, hearing being held, and/or sanctions being imposed. Any violation of the WSU student code of conduct may result in a failing grade in the course and/or withdrawal of the student’s admission from the Bachelor of Integrated Studies Program.

**Grading and Assessment**

BIS 2800 uses the University grading system: A, A-, B+, etc.

**Course Outcomes and Assessments**

1. Conceptualize an understanding of what interdisciplinary studies are and how interdisciplinary studies work to enhance ability to solve or understand complex problems or phenomena. *Assessment*: Weekly discussion prompts will be used to probe student understanding about the components of interdisciplinary study. The professor will holistically assess students’ growth in conceptualizing interdisciplinary concepts. (BIS Program Outcome #1—Interdisciplinary Work)
2. Students will identify what traits and skills are characteristic of interdisciplinarians, how obtaining these skills will benefit them in their careers.

*Assessment*: Students will write an intellectual autobiography identifying interests and skills that have led them to chosen disciplines. Imbedded in the paper will be student life-long learning plans. The professor will use a scoring rubric to assess student professionalism, growth, and life-long learning plans. (BIS Program Outcome #6—Professional Attributes)

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to read, comprehend, and use professional literature from subject-area texts to improve content knowledge in three targeted disciplines. *Assessment*: Students will write an interdisciplinary literature review identifying crucial perspectives from three academic areas and how that knowledge will be woven into a potential interdisciplinary study. Student peer review will be used to gain feedback before final paper submission. The professor will use a scoring rubric to assess student knowledge and use of professional literature bases. (BIS Program Outcome #2—Critical Thinking Skills—Conceptualization)
2. Students will develop the ability to apply Repko’s (2013) “Cognitive Toolkit” to the interdisciplinary literature review written for objective #3 by adding: (a) a detailed proposal for implementing future study/service/creativity, (b) a proposed method for exploring or creating a project, and (c) a tentative plan for reporting, analyzing, and sharing the final proposed project. *Assessment:* The professor will critique the additions and assign extra points for the “Cognitive Toolkit” additions.(BIS Program Outcome #3—Critical Thinking Skills-Methods and Creativity and Outcome #4—Critical Thinking Skills-Analysis/Conclusions)

**Final Grading and Assessment**

The following is a breakdown of how final grades will be calculated:

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| --- | --- |
| **Course Assignment and Outcome** | **Possible Points** |
| 1. Attendance and participating in weekly discussion prompts (#1) | 30 |
| 2. Intellectual Autobiography (#2) | 20 |
| 3. Interdisciplinary literature review from three academic areas (# 3) | 30 |
| 4. Elements of Cognitive Toolkit added to Interdisciplinary literature review | 20 |
|  | **Total possible points: 100** |

Grades are broken down in percentages that correlate to the following grades:

A 94-100 B 83-86 C 73-76

A- 90-93 B- 80-82

B+ 87-89 C+ 77-79

**Required textbook:**

Repko, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to interdisciplinary studies.*  Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

**BIS 2800 Assignment Descriptions**

1. *Attendance/Participation.* Students are expected to attend every class and actively participate. Learning the process of integration will take time and many examples of the process will be modeled. The primary objective of both in class and homework assignments will be for students to learn this process, and this will require student presence and active involvement to be successful. Each day of attendance will be worth 10 points for 15 weeks is 150 points (15% of total grade). (Course outcome #1). Students will receive 5 points for being there, one point taken if late, another point taken if they leave early. Participation will be graded on how focused involvement is and that students are respectful and collegial with one another.
2. *Homework questions* Students will respond to related questions from class for the instructor to gauge student understanding and to review concepts as needed. Homework questions will be assigned at the end of every class and due at the beginning of the next class. These will be worth 10 points each for 15 weeks is 150 points (15% of total grade). (Course outcome #1) Grading will be based on how well the student answered the question (0-4 points), that they showed depth of reflection and thought (0-4 points), as well as adequate grammar and writing mechanics (0-2 points).
3. *Intellectual Autobiography* Students will write about what their intellectual journey has been thus far in their lives, and where they project it going to develop into a career. This document will require self-reflection about which interdisciplinary traits one already possesses, and which ones are get to be acquired. This document will allow students to explicitly assess their journey to becoming interdisciplinary. The scoring rubric for this assignment can be found on pp. 269-271. An example will be given as a guide. This assignment is worth 200 points (20% of total grade). (Course outcome #2)
4. *Literature Review* A selected topic will be researched with three disciplines/perspectives looking at the narrow problem/phenomenon. Students will identify each area’s assumptions, conflicting views, common ground to form an integration of the three views to create a clearer understanding or a solution to the complex problem or phenomenon, as well as identifying which methodology would best suit inquiry related to the problem. A peer review will take place and time for revision before final submission to the instructor. This is worth 300 points (30% of total grade). (Course outcome #3)

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| **Component** | **Criteria** | **Points** |
| Identification of topic | Topic demonstrates complexity and interdisciplinary methods are proven as a need | 40 |
| Identification of three academic disciplines | For each discipline students will identify:  The perspective related to the topic  Discipline assumptions and common methodologies | 60 |
| Common ground (threads) and conflicts | Students will identify if there are any conflicts in perspectives, as well as the common ground (threads) from the three disciplines. | 60 |
| Synthesis | Students will synthesis the threads from the identified common ground to identify a solution to the topic’s problem or bring a meaningful insight to better understand the phenomenon. | 60 |
| Identification of appropriate methodology | Students will identify what methodology would be appropriate to continue inquiry to complete a more comprehensive paper or project related to the chosen topic. | 40 |
| Writing mechanics and APA | Standard English mechanics and grammar will be used appropriately. Appropriate APA, no more than 3 errors. | 40 |
|  |  | Total points: 300 |

*Critique of Literature Review with “Cognitive Toolkit” assessment.* Students will assess how their thinking has changed over the semester and if they have gained the skills described in the Cognitive Toolkit. They will critique their literature review and explain how they will continue to apply these skills for future research. (Course outcome #4)

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| Aspect | Criteria | Points |
| Reflection of cognitive toolkit development | Students will reflect on where they were before this class started and where they are presently in becoming interdisciplinary | 45 |
| Critique of perspective taking ability | Students will assess their literature review on how well they were able to differentiate perspectives from their chosen disciplines related to their topic. Students will identify how they can improve this ability. | 45 |
| Critique of critical thinking skills | Students will critique how well they were able to critically think when they composed their literature review and how this critical thinking will continue to grow and evolve. Students will identify how they can improve this ability. | 45 |
| Critique of integration | Students will critique how well they integrated insights to form a new perspective or solution to the topic’s phenomenon or problem. Students will identify how they can improve this ability. | 45 |
| Writing mechanics and APA | Standard English mechanics and grammar were used appropriately. Appropriate APA, no more than 3 errors. | 20 |
|  |  | Total points: 200 |

**Class Schedule**

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| Week/Unit | Objectives/Reading | Activities | Homework |
| 1 | Intro to Integrated Studies  What it is not  IDS in the real world?  -Read Repko chapters 1-2 | -Discussion of what complex topics are. Examples of interdisciplinary metaphors.  Personal definition of IDS. | -Create two metaphors to describe IDS.  -Identify 3 complex problems IDS could address  -How can IDS help you after college? |
| 2 | IDS “Cognitive toolkit”  Intellectual Autobiographies  -Read Repko chapter 3 | -Examples of how toolkit will be applied to critiquing complex problems  -Examples of Intellectual Autobiographies | DQ p.61#’s 2-3 (application) |
| 3 | The rise of disciplines and IDS  Read Repko chapter 4-5 | p.119 2-6 critical thinking  Example of perspective taking on a chosen topic | DQ p.81 #2 (critical thinking) & 2-3 (application), p.119 #4-6 (application) |
| 4 | “DNA” of IDS-Theories, assumptions, epistemology  Read Repko chapter 6 | Examples of theories and assumptions  Expert panel on a narrow topic | DQ p. 137 #4-6 (critical thinking) & 1-3 (application) |
| 5 | Thinking about disciplinary perspectives and integration  Read Repko chapters 7-9 |  |  |
| 6 | IDS “Road Map”  Read Repko Chapter 10 | Discuss examples of steps 1 & 2 (p. 293 rubric) | DQ  Start finding resources for Literature Review |
| 7 | Identifying relevant disciplines and gathering information about the problem  Read Repko chapter 11 | Discuss examples of steps 3 & 4 |  |
| 8 | Analyzing insights and reflecting on process  Introduction to types of research  Read Repko chapter 12 | Discuss examples of steps 5 & 6  Discuss IDS texts | Intellectual Autobiography due |
| 9 |  | Discuss and critique IDS texts |  |
| 10 |  | Expert panel | Critique IDS insight |
| 11 |  | IDS Research | Critique IDS insight |
| 12 |  | IDS Research |  |
| 13 |  | Discuss and critique IDS texts | Peer Review final paper |
| 14 |  | Discuss and critique IDS texts | Literature Review due |
| 15 |  | Discuss and critique IDS texts | Critique of Literature Review Paper due |

\*Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS)

\*Discussion question (DQ)