



Interdisciplinary studies major allows students to personalize their degree plan

BY: ELLA BARRY / ON: FEBRUARY 20, 2024 / IN: FEATURES

Unlike any other major, UCCS' interdisciplinary studies degree provides students with the opportunity to combine multiple areas of study and personalize their degree plan.

INDS director Janice Thorpe said the degree is designed for students who have specialized interests or career goals that encompass two or more areas of study and cannot be accomplished with other majors.

"We have students whose interests cross multiple areas and that can't be satisfied with one single department. So, instead of having them need to take all of their other interest areas as electives, we put together sort of a customizable degree plan," Thorpe said. "It allows students to merge their interests with a clear pathway to a career."

The INDS degree requires 36 credit hours within the major, 27 of which must be upper division. Students in the program still need to complete their compass curriculum requirements and electives. Additionally, students must complete a project, internship or study abroad related to their area of study.

Students interested in the INDS degree must fill out an [INDS course worksheet](#) that acts as a proposal for their personalized degree plan, including an explanation of their career goals and a list of courses they'd enroll in.

"[Students should] think carefully about what they want to do with this degree because they build the courses with a career path in mind," Thorpe said.

Filling out the worksheet is just the first step. Students must meet with Thorpe and their academic advisor to complete their degree plan. While Thorpe has never rejected a student for the program, she has denied first drafts of degree plans and worked with students to narrow their focus.

"It is a little more work for students. I mean, they have to go and do the research and put the courses together and look up the course content, sort of present their pitch to me, as you know, and to academic advisors," she said.

In reference to the degree plan, Thorpe said, "It's sort of like a puzzle and I'm here to help you put the corner pieces, but you got to figure out what your puzzle looks like."

Because the degree is designed by the student and requires a large project, internship or study abroad, it takes more work than other majors, and Thorpe said it's important for students to be self-motivated.

While the INDS degree is more work for the student, Thorpe explained the benefits for students with unique career goals.

FOLLOW



LATEST STORIES



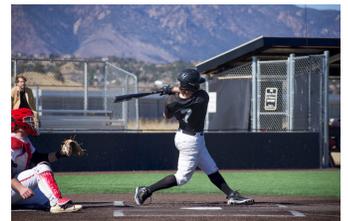
OPINION | UCCS mishandles student death



Double Discourse: 'Drive-Along Dolls' transcends the Bechdel test



Lacrosse team prepares for start of 2024 season



PHOTOSPREAD | Baseball goes 1-3 in final week of games before conference play

“I had a student not too long ago, who was really focused on art therapy, and wanted to prepare herself for grad school or a career in counseling, but with a focus on children’s art therapy,” Thorpe said. “She wanted the opportunity to pair psychology courses with art, sculpture, those kinds of courses, and the INDS degree was a perfect opportunity for her to bring together classes from both departments to create the degree that worked best for her.”

Thorpe reflected on some of the most memorable degree plans she has seen. “I actually had a student who was half engineering, half psychology ... and some anthropology. He really wanted to study the linguistic patterns of hackers.”

The most common areas of study center around cybersecurity or language. According to Thorpe, since UCCS only offers a Spanish language major, there have been many students who focus their studies on other languages.

“We’ve had a lot of students who are very focused on Japanese language or Asian studies to be an interpreter or a translator or teach English in Japan,” she said.

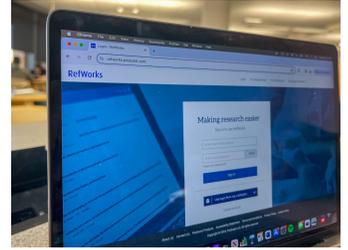
While the major is meant to be student-structured, there are two concentrations with existing degree plans, cybersecurity and cognitive archaeology, which can be found on the INDS [website](#).

Students interested in learning more about the program should reach out to Thorpe via email at jthorpe@uccs.edu.

UCCS Sign on Clyde Way. Photo by Lillian Davis.



Dean of the College of Public Service set to retire next fall



Kraemer Family Library decides to transition away from citation service

Previous Post: [UCCS hosts Day of Healing](#)

Next Post: [BSU and ASA recognize their community during Black History Month](#)

Scribe@uccs.edu

University Center Room 106
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

[About Us](#)

Designed using Magazine News Byte Premium. Powered by [WordPress](#).