

Interdisciplinary Studies Program



Programs of Study

The Interdisciplinary Studies (ISP) program offers alternatives for students interested in emerging fields of study and, more generally, for students whose academic needs and interests do not conform to a traditional academic major. These Interdisciplinary Studies alternatives include a student-designed, personalized curriculum option or concentrations in the following areas: Youth Development, Renewable Energy and Biofuels Technology; Renewable Energy and Wind Technology; and Renewable Energy Policy, Planning, and Management.

- Student designed multidisciplinary degree option.** The Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies is a creative alternative in which students are encouraged and supported to take an active role in designing their own educational experience. The curriculum is tailored to the personal academic and professional objectives of the student. The program is interdisciplinary/cross-disciplinary in spirit and practice and, thus, challenges students to make deliberate, thoughtful, and meaningful choices in developing a coherent plan of study that draws on resources from two or more academic departments. Interdisciplinary Studies graduates pursue a variety of careers or graduate school programs. Career opportunities include but are not limited to advertising, public relations, college student personnel, retail sales, sports management, counseling, management, ministry, medicine, hospitality/conference services, law, paraprofessional health care, and human services.

Admission Requirements: Students interested in admission to this self-designed Interdisciplinary Studies program must have a curriculum proposal reviewed and approved by the ISP office. Applicants must be in good standing and have earned at least 24 semester hours of credit. Students who have earned more than 75 semester hours will be admitted only by exception granted by the Interdisciplinary Studies Appeals Committee and only if the student has a grade point average of 2.0 or better. Students admitted by exception must complete at least 24 semester hours of credit after admission to the Interdisciplinary Studies program.

- Youth Development.** The BA or BS in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Youth Development provides the opportunity to develop skills necessary in a broad range of careers in nonprofit youth and human service organizations working with youth. Professionals in these organizations play pivotal roles in making a difference in the youth of their communities and in the lives of others. Students choosing this option might pursue careers in community nonprofit youth organizations.
- Renewable Energy Concentrations (Bachelor of Science only)**
 - Biofuels Technology** – This concentration focuses on the technological aspects of using plant materials to produce ethanol and biodiesel. Students will take an array of courses in agriculture, chemistry, biology, physics, GIS, and finance. Students will be expected to understand the fundamentals of feedstock production, fermentation, fractionation, supply chain management, and plant management. Students choosing this option might pursue careers in private sector or cooperative biofuel production facilities. They might also find jobs in local planning agencies, nonprofit advocacy groups, nonprofit environmental groups, state agencies, or federal regulatory departments.
 - Policy, Planning, and Management** – This concentration emphasizes the numerous public policies that affect the development and utilization of renewable energy. Students will understand how laws, contracts, and regulations operating at the local, regional, state, federal, and international level affect renewable energy development. They will also gain an understanding of many technical aspects of renewable energy, such as commodity and energy markets, facility site location, and the general operations of biofuel processors and wind turbines. Students choosing this option might pursue careers in local planning agencies, nonprofit advocacy groups, nonprofit environmental groups, state agencies, federal regulatory departments, or the private sector.

- *Wind Technology* – This concentration emphasizes the technological aspects of using wind to generate electricity. Students will be required to take a series of technical courses in physics, engineering technology, GIS, meteorology, materials science, management, and finance. They will understand how to locate, finance, develop, and manage a community-scale or utility-grade wind power facility. Students pursuing this concentration can expect to find jobs working for private sector wind consulting companies to locate and develop wind projects, for municipal and state planning agencies, or in the nonprofit sector, among a range of other career options.

Internships

ISP concentrations require internships. Students designing their own interdisciplinary curriculum may elect to incorporate an internship experience into their academic plan to further enhance their career preparation. Most Interdisciplinary Studies graduates have completed internships as part of their curriculum.

Interdisciplinary Studies Advising

The Interdisciplinary Studies office is located in Horrabin Hall, room 6, in the administrative offices of the School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach. Advisers work closely with students, assisting them in planning course selection and monitoring progress toward degree completion. Youth Development students are advised by the Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration adviser in Currens Hall 403a, (309) 298-1689.

Honors Program

Students eligible for participation in the Centennial Honors College will complete specific requirements for designation as an Honors Scholar. In the Interdisciplinary Studies program, honors students take courses for honors credit and, as seniors, prepare an honors thesis or honors project under the direction of a faculty member in the student's area of study.

For More Information

Contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Office by calling 309.298.1929 or by emailing ISP@wiu.edu.

Higher Values in Higher Education

Located in Macomb (population 20,000), with a campus in the Quad Cities (Moline, IL), Western offers a caring and supportive learning environment to more than 10,000 students in west-central Illinois. Western students have all the advantages of a large public university—strong faculty, state-of-the-art technology and facilities, and a wide range of academic and extracurricular opportunities—in an atmosphere free from distractions. Western offers a broad-based athletics program, sponsoring 19 NCAA Division I intercollegiate varsity sports. Football competes in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision through the Missouri Valley Football Conference; all other varsity sports compete at the Division I level through The Summit League. Western's presence in the Quad Cities spans more than 40 years, and that campus offers undergraduate and graduate programs to more than 1,400 students. The core values that are at the heart of the University are academic excellence, educational opportunity, personal growth and social responsibility.

Western's GradTrac and Cost Guarantee programs ensure that students can achieve their degrees within four years while paying a fixed rate for tuition, fees and room and board.

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes discrimination based on an individual's membership in the following classes: sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, genetic information, veteran status, and any other classes protected by state or federal law.

Campus Visits

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available on Mondays and Fridays at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, and individual appointments can be made on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Campus tours are conducted at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Appointments with advisers, faculty, or a financial aid adviser may be arranged separately during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10:00 AM, and a campus tour is conducted at 11:00 AM. You may schedule your visit or tour online at wiu.edu/admissions by selecting "Visit Campus." You may also schedule a visit, tour, or individual appointment by calling toll free (877) PICKWIU (742-5948) or (309) 298-3157, or by e-mailing admissions@wiu.edu.



wiu.edu/isp

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