

Interdisciplinary Studies BIS

Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (BIS)

The Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree (B.I.S.) provides a flexible, individualized program of study for the self-directed learner. It is developed by each student with advisement by UMSL professional advisers and faculty, and it is intended for students who have unique educational goals that cannot be met by any other UMSL degree program.

Oversight of the B.I.S. degree is the responsibility of the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee, composed of faculty and professional staff, including representatives from Arts and Sciences (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences), Business, Education, Fine Arts and Communication, Nursing or other divisions. The Interdisciplinary Studies Committee will be convened and supported by the Office of the Provost.

Admission Requirements for the B.I.S. Program

Candidates for the B.I.S. degree must complete an application for admission to the program. The Interdisciplinary Studies Committee approves applications.

Approved programs of study are well-designed, coherent, structured to meet the student's unique educational goals, and not readily available under any other UMSL degree program.

Students must have demonstrated the equivalent of academic proficiency required for any other undergraduate degree at UMSL.

Degree Requirements for the B.I.S. Program

General Education Requirements

Students must complete the university's general education requirements. For details refer to the general education requirements section of this Bulletin.

Area of Study

In consultation with faculty and staff advisers, students will carry out an area of study of at least 36 advanced semester hours of graded credit that meets their educational goals. Graded credit consists of degree credit courses in which the student received a letter grade C- or better. The area of study must include at least nine hours at the 3000-level or above; these courses may be in one or more disciplines.

Hour and Grade Requirements

The degree requires completion of 120 semester hours with a 2.0 campus grade point average overall and in the area of study. No more than 15 hours may be taken in one department. At least 45 hours must be earned in courses beyond the introductory level. A minimum of 24 hours of graded credit must be completed in residence at UMSL, of which 15 hours must be in the area of study and completed after admission to the B.I.S. program. Each candidate must be in residence for 24 of the last 30 hours of graded credit (exclusive of courses taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis).

Supervised Professional or Service Internship and Independent Research

Credit not exceeding 6 hours may be earned for department-approved professional internship, service internship, or independent research. The projects or activities must be formulated by the student and carried out under the supervision of a faculty member with the approval of the adviser. Students must submit a written report approved by the supervisor upon completion of the projects or activities.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- Communicate effectively and professionally, in writing, in preparing presentations, and in interactions with others in their field.
- Prepare persuasive reports and documents that are well-organized and carefully edited.
- Work with advanced technologies in settings appropriate to their current and future workplaces.
- Engage in informed dialogue about their chosen fields, and clearly articulate their aspirations for their future success.
- Conduct research for their areas of academic focus and on avenues for career advancement and evolving opportunities in their professions.
- Negotiate details related to planning for future steps toward their professional development, and work productively with advisors, mentors, and colleagues to maximize their strategic impact.
- Network with professionals in their field to prepare for the job market and gain a thoroughly realistic perception of their potential.
- Undertake a variety of projects independently, and develop coherent and innovative plans to launch those projects.
- Design innovative approaches to solving problems, and explore solutions that merge disparate ideas and concepts and encourage collaboration and risk-taking.