Graduate Handbook 2023-2024

Interdisciplinary Studies MA Program
Graduate School and International Education
University of Arkansas

Interdisciplinary Studies MA Program– University of Arkansas

Graduate Program in Interdisciplinary Studies

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INTRODUCTION

As the state's flagship and land grant university, the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville is committed to supporting student success and providing opportunities for graduate education to diverse student populations within Arkansas and beyond. Growth of graduate education has been one of the University's guiding priorities as has the expansion of access to Arkansans of graduate and undergraduate education.

The Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies fills a gap within the University's graduate offerings. Further, by providing a flexible program of study with online options, increases access to graduate education for Arkansas residents across the state. The Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies supports graduate students whose academic interests and career goals are not currently serviced by existing degree programs or span two or more subject areas. This type of interdisciplinary study has been pioneered by the Graduate School & International Education.

Like the other interdisciplinary graduate programs, the Master of Arts degree in Interdisciplinary Studies will require research and coursework in at least two disciplines and challenges students to thematically link their graduate program of study through an interdisciplinary thesis or capstone research project. This coursework will be offered by faculty from every college at the University.

APPLICATION TO THE PROGRAM

All prospective students are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, looking at a variety of factors including GPA, statement of purpose, and the appropriateness of our current faculty and other resources to student interests.

For admission, graduate work at the master's level presupposes an undergraduate degree with at least a 3.0 GPA on the last 60 hours of undergraduate work. GRE scores are not required to apply. Applicants to the MA program in interdisciplinary studies must apply through the Graduate School. Students must submit a statement of purpose describing their goals in graduate study along with transcripts of all prior academic work completed.

M.A. Program Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and are due by August 1 for Fall semester start, December 1 for a Spring semester start, and April 15 for a Summer semester start.

Applicants must:
Complete an application online through the University of Arkansas Graduate School. Applications can be accessed online and are available at https://application.uark.edu/. As part of that application, applicants must submit the following:

- An application fee to the Graduate School
- Transcripts of all prior academic work, either graduate or undergraduate

- A statement of purpose (in PDF) not to exceed 1000 words in which you describe your reasons for seeking this admission to this degree program. Applicants must specifically what their potential areas of interest are for their program.

It is the applicant's responsibility to make certain that the Graduate School have received all materials by the deadline. Applications cannot be processed until all materials are received. Applicants may contact the Interdisciplinary Program Director via email in order to confirm receipt of materials.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All graduate students are responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Graduate School as stated in the most recent issue of the Graduate Catalog of Studies. Graduate students must also abide the rules and regulations of the University of Arkansas. Please refer to the Code of Student Life.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Most students indicate their proposed fields of study in their application. Graduate students should strive to create an intellectually-coherent program when selecting their primary and secondary focus areas. They should consult with the program director and other faculty when making this decision and think ahead to the type of employment they hope to find after graduation.

GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

All graduate students must follow the requirements of the Graduate School, including enrollment and time limits. The Department observes those requirements and has some specific rules of its own. Refer to the Graduate Catalog of Studies for Graduate School requirements. This Handbook details specific program requirements.

Advising

When admitted to the program, students are assigned a faculty advisor, usually the Program Director. The director will provide initial advising for the student and encourage them to enroll in GRSD 5113 in their first semester to help support the creation of a student success plan. Students who choose the thesis option are responsible for securing a faculty member with the appropriate graduate faculty status to serve as their thesis advisor. Thesis students will be advised by both the Program Director and their thesis advisor.

Students should consult with their advisor and/or the program director about course selection each semester. Enrollment holds are placed on first year MA students. The Program Director can remove holds once the student has been advised. Students enroll through UA Connect.

Enrollment

Full-time enrollment for graduate students at the MA level consists of a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester. Graduate students who hold GA positions may carry 6 hours per semester and still be considered full-time. While continuous enrollment is not required, students who do not enroll in either a fall or spring semester will be discontinued with the Graduate School and will require a longer time to reactivate their accounts to continue to enroll.

Graduate students in the thesis option who have completed all required coursework and thesis hours may petition the Program Director for affiliate status. Affiliate status allows students to retain library access while completing their thesis.

Essential Documentation

- **Progress Report Form**
  Graduate students must complete, in full, their progress report forms late in the spring semester each calendar year. These forms allow feedback between the student and the Program Director about the student's academic progress within the program. They also assist the Program Director in filling out evaluation forms for the Graduate School each year. If a student receives two unsatisfactory reports in consecutive years, the Program may dismiss the student from the program.

- **Degree and Committee Forms**
  It is the student's responsibility to make sure all forms are filled out and filed with the Graduate School. For thesis students, these include the Master's Thesis Committee and Title Forms, the Doctoral Advisory Committee and Title Forms, and others.

- **Application to Graduate form**
  Students who intend to graduate must fill out an application for graduation on UA Connect. Pay attention to deadlines for summer, fall, and spring graduations. All pertinent forms can be found here.

Evaluation

Students are advised to maintain close contact with the program director and, if in the thesis option, their advisor, and committee members concerning their performance and progress toward the degree.

Grades are assigned in whole letters (A, B, C, D, F). All graduate students must hold a 2.85 GPA or better at the time of graduation in order to complete their degree. The Program adheres to the Graduate School's Academic Probation Policy as stated in the current version of the Graduate Catalog.

Academic Misconduct

The Program adheres to the University policy on Academic Integrity. Students can find a full description of what constitutes violations of academic integrity here. Professors who suspect an act of academic dishonesty are required to report the alleged offense to the Academic Integrity Monitor (AIM) of the Graduate School. The AIM collects supporting material and meets separately with the professor and the student. The subsequent process is described in the policy linked above and the sanction rubric laid out by gravity of offense can be found at honesty.uark.edu.

Course of Study

Students pursuing the MA degree in Interdisciplinary Studies choose from two options, Thesis OR Non-Thesis, to earn their 30 hours of credit towards their degree.

For the **Thesis Option** students must complete 30 graduate credit-hours at the 5000-level and above. These courses should include the following and must be approved by the program director:

GRSD 5113: Introduction and Methods of Interdisciplinary Inquiry
Graduate Coursework in Primary Focus Area (12 hours)
Graduate Coursework in Secondary Focus Area (9 hours)
GRSD 600V: Master's Thesis (6 hours)

For the **Non-Thesis Option** students must complete 30 graduate credit-hours at the 5000-level and above. These courses should include the following and must be approved by the program director:

GRSD 5113: Introduction and Methods of Interdisciplinary Inquiry
Graduate Coursework in Primary Focus Area (12 hours)
Graduate Coursework in Secondary Focus Area (9 hours)
Graduate Electives in any Area (3 hours)
GRSD 5203: Capstone Seminar in Graduate Interdisciplinary Studies

Only three hours of independent study/directed reading/special programs may be counted towards the degree.

Time Limits

The Department adheres to the Graduate School time limit policy. Master's students must complete their degrees within six consecutive calendar years from when the credit was earned. Requests to extend these time requirements must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Dean, following procedures detailed in the Graduate Catalog of Studies.

Primary and Secondary Focus Areas

Master's students should declare a primary and secondary focus area to concentrate their coursework in. These should ideally be thematically linked areas of study that are identified early in the program and allow the student to prepare for the either the masters' thesis or the capstone seminar research project, essentially a 20-30 page original research paper.

Primary and secondary focus areas should be chosen based on the student's interests, the availability of classes, and the ability of the student to enroll in those courses. Many departments have pre-requisite requirements and will not allow students outside of their degree programs to enroll. Therefore, it is encouraged that students choose from one of the below pathways, though other

options may be available. Consult the Program Director for further guidance. If a student chooses to concentrate in an area where they can earn either a graduate MicroCertificate or Graduate Certificate, they must apply and be accepted into that certificate program. Courses may be used to satisfy both the MA requirements and the certificate requirements simultaneously.

Possible Primary and Secondary Focus Areas:

Business Analytics/Data Analysis

- Graduate Certificate in Enterprise Systems (12 hours)

Occupational/Workforce Development

- Any courses with alpha code ADLL or HRDE that have no prerequisites

Project/Operations Management

- Graduate Certificate in Project Management (12 hours)
- Graduate Certificate in Operations Management (12 hours)
- Graduate Certificate in Lean Six Sigma (12 hours)

Homeland Security/Cybersecurity

- Graduate Certificate in Enterprise Systems (12 hours)
- Graduate Certificate in Homeland Security (12 hours)

Professional Communication

- Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing and User Experience Design (12 hours)
- Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (12 hours)

Leadership

- ADLL 6123: Leadership and Ethics in Adult and Lifelong Learning
- ADLL 6183: Organization Development, Learning, and Change
- CCLE 5023: Organization and Leadership in Community Colleges (with instructor consent)
- EDLE 5043: Leadership Ethics
- EDLE 5093: Effective Leadership for School Improvement
- ETEC 5253: Technology, Innovation, and Leadership
- HRDE 5113: Foundations of Human Resource and Workforce Development
- CIED 5253: Moral Courage
- AGLE 5033: Developing Leadership in Agricultural Organizations
- AGLE 5153: Survey of Leadership Theory in Agriculture
- AGLE 5163: Leadership Analysis Through Film
- OMGT 5253: Leadership Principles and Practices

Social Justice/Diversity/Community Development

- SCWK 5163: Human Behavior and the Social environment I
- SCWK 5263: Impact of Policy on Addiction
- ADLL 5103: Diversity and Inclusion in Adult and Lifelong Learning
- ADLL 6223: Workforce and Community Development
- CCLE 5033: Diversity and Inclusion in Community Colleges (with instructor consent)

- HRWD 5133: HRWD Diversity Issues
- CIED 5053: Multicultural Issues in Elementary Education
- CIED 5553: Social Justice and Multicultural Issues in Education (with instructor consent)
- SPED 5733: Inclusive Practices for Diverse Populations

Adult Education/Workforce Development

- Adult Education Licensure Plan
    - ADLL 5113: Perspectives in Adult Education
    - ADLL 5123: Principles & Practices of Adult Learning
    - ADLL 5133: Curriculum Development in ABE and ASE
    - ADLL 5143: Instructional Strategies and Assessment in Adult Education
    - ADLL 5153: Organization and Administration of ADLL Programs
- ADLL 6213: Signature Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning in Community Colleges
- ADLL 6233: Survey and Significance of the American Community College
- CCLE 5063: Teaching and Learning in Community Colleges (with instructor consent)
- CCLE 5053: Students in Community Colleges (with instructor consent)

Online Teaching

- Graduate Certificate in K-12 Online Teaching (12 hours)

K-12 Teaching and Learning

- Dyslexia Endorsement Plan (15 hours)
- EDLE 5003: Schools and Society
- ETEC 5203: Foundations of Educational Technology
- ETEC 5213: Designing Educational Media
- ETEC 5303: Teaching with Technology in the K-12 Classroom
- ETEC 6253: Teaching and Learning at a Distance
- CIED 5022: Classroom Management Concepts
- CIED 5223: Learning Theory (with instructor consent)
- CIED 5263: Assessment, Evaluation, and Practitioner Research (with instructor consent)
- CIED 5333: Curriculum Theory and Development for Educators (with instructor consent)
- CIED 5363: Teaching in K-12 Online and Blended Classrooms
- SPED 5413: ABA and Classroom Management for Teachers
- SPEED 5633: Curriculum Development and Instructional Planning
- English as a Second Language Endorsement Plan
    - CIED 5923: Second Language Acquisition
    - CIED 5933: Second Language Methodologies
    - CIED 5953: Second Language Assessment
    - CIED 5943: Teaching People of Other Cultures
    - SPEED 5673: Teaching Students with Disabilities in the Content Areas
- AGED 5053: Philosophy of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Gifted and Talented Endorsement Plan
    - CIED 5803: Nature and Needs of the Gifted and Talented

    - CIED 5813: Curriculum Development in Gifted and Talented
    - CIED 5823: Gifted and Talented (structure) practicum
    - CIED 6163: Social and Emotional Components of Gifted and Talented Students
    - CIED 6143: Differentiated Instruction for Academically Diverse Learners
    - CIED 6073: Seminar in Developing Creativity
- K-12 Special Education Endorsement Plan
- Reading Specialist Endorsement Plan
- Special Education Educational Examiner Endorsement Plan courses (up to 12 hours)
- Special Education Resource Endorsement Plan

The MA Thesis and Thesis Committee

Master's students in consultation with their thesis advisor ought to identify a research topic in the first year of their program. A thesis is usually based on primary research and ranges from 50-100 pages depending on the topic. Students in consultation with their advisors will form a thesis committee of at least three faculty members holding appropriate graduate faculty status. It is the student's responsibility to secure an advisor and a graduate committee willing to serve.

Satisfactory completion of all coursework (with at least a 2.85 overall GPA), satisfactory defense of the thesis, submission of the approved thesis and all forms to the Graduate School will result in conferral of the MA degree in Interdisciplinary Studies.

*The Use of Copy Editors in Theses and Dissertations**

The Graduate School at the University of Arkansas does not forbid the use of copy editors (see definition below) for theses and dissertations under the following conditions:

1. Any use of copy editors for theses and dissertations must be approved by the thesis/dissertation committee and the department/program chair/head/director.
2. The student understands that there is a difference between legitimate editing and violations of academic integrity policies and is responsible for ensuring that the line is not crossed.

*Note: The Graduate School considers it to be a violation of our academic integrity policy to use copy editors in any Graduate School required exam (e.g. comprehensive exam, candidacy exam). Definition of copy editors: copy editors review written material for accuracy, readability, coherence and relevance as well as for errors of spelling and grammar. This policy refers to the provision of such services regardless of by whom they are provided and regardless of whether the copy editor is paid or unpaid. (Members of the thesis/dissertation committee are exempt from this definition.)