

# INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES, PH.D.

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The Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) Ph.D. program is designed for highly motivated students whose goals for research and classwork do not fit into one of The University of Alabama department-based Ph.D. programs. There is no such thing as a "typical" IDS Ph.D. student. Students have ranged in age from 22 to 85. Although many IDS Ph.D. students pursue their studies full time, others are working professionals who balance their studies with full time employment. As a pre-requisite to admission, IDS Ph.D. students work with the Graduate School to identify faculty members who can help guide the proposed research. The Graduate School also works with prospective students to make sure that we can support your research goals with classes that are offered at The University of Alabama.

## Course of Study

The UA Graduate School requires that Interdisciplinary Studies Ph.D. students must complete a minimum of 48 hours of coursework. The Interdisciplinary Ph.D. coursework should reflect two or more distinct academic areas, 24 hours of dissertation research, and a minimum of 15 hours in research methods or research theory and design. The majority of courses should be at the 600 level. Up to 24 hours of graduate courses may be transferred from other institutions. All students are encouraged to take AHE 591 Seminar Higher Education if the course is offered during the first 4 semesters of coursework.

## Degree Progression

Interdisciplinary Studies Ph.D. students must ensure that coursework is completed in a timely manner and that satisfactory progress is made towards completing all degree requirements (coursework, comprehensive exam, admission to candidacy, dissertation proposal, dissertation research, and final oral examination). All requirements must be completed within the time limits specified in the Graduate Catalog at the time of admission.

## Progress Review

During each semester of the program, the student must meet with the Advisory Committee to review progress. At the end of the spring semester the student and his/her Advisor should prepare an annual written summary of progress towards degree and submit to the Assistant Dean of the Graduate School.

## Dissertation Proposal

The purpose of the dissertation proposal defense is to evaluate the potential of the student to complete the dissertation research project. It comprises an oral presentation of a written dissertation proposal, focusing on areas relevant to the dissertation research. The dissertation proposal defense will be taken during the second year of full-time enrollment in the Ph.D. program and may be retaken once.

## Comprehensive Exam

The content and administration of the comprehensive exam are the responsibility of the Advisory/Dissertation committee and should be thoroughly discussed with the student prior to admission. Typically, the comprehensive examination is taken just before the completion of all coursework. It is expected that the comprehensive examination for the Interdisciplinary Studies Ph.D. will be as rigorous and use the same general procedures as the doctoral exams in the departments in which coursework is taken. The specifics of the examination (including where the exam will be taken, the number of questions, the number of evaluators, the grading process, the process for reporting results to

the student, etc.) should be detailed in the admission materials (see Admission Procedures). The Committee Advisor/Chair should inform the Graduate School Registrar of the results of the comprehensive exam.

## Admission to Candidacy

When the Advisory Committee certifies to the Graduate School that the comprehensive exam has been passed and all other requirements set out in the Plan of Study (except the dissertation) have been satisfactorily completed, the Graduate School admits the student to candidacy.

## Dissertation

The dissertation must be completed and defended within the time limits specified by the Graduate School at the time of admission. If human subjects are involved, the student and his/her advisor/chair are responsible for complying with the Institutional Review Board requirements before beginning research.

## Final Oral Examination

The final oral exam for the Ph.D. is administered and evaluated by the Advisory Committee. The Graduate School should be notified of the date of the oral examination at least one month in advance. Final oral examinations are open to the University community. It is important that the examination should be scheduled such that a representative from the Graduate School may attend.