

# PROPOSAL TO FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR A NEW ONLINE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN INTEGRATED SOCIAL SCIENCES

## Proposed Catalog Entry for Bachelor of Arts in Integrated Social Sciences

### Admission Requirements

Admission to the ISS program is competitive. To be considered for admission to the Undergraduate Online Degree Completion program, students must meet the following minimum admission requirements:

- Completion of a minimum of 75 [transferable quarter credits](#) with:
  - a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 in all courses applied to major requirements at the time of application; and
  - a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00 in all transferable college coursework.
- Completion of the [College Academic Distribution Requirements](#).
- Demonstrated progress toward University and College of Arts and Sciences general education requirements.
  - Those applicants who have not completed A&S general education requirements but can reasonably meet them through coursework in the UW Online Degree Completion Program will be considered for admission. Those who cannot reasonably meet those requirements within the program will be advised to complete general education coursework elsewhere and reapply.

Completion of minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the university. In addition, applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Overall academic record;
2. A personal statement;
3. Likelihood of success in an online-format program, based on a separate application question;

### Graduation Requirements

60 credits as follows:

- 1) *Social Science Theory in Context* (5 credits): ISS 301
- 2) *Portfolio Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences* (10 credits), to include:
  - a) ISS 350 (2 credits); and
  - b) ISS 355 (2 credits, repeated for at least 8 total credits)
- 3) 40 additional credits of coursework from the disciplines in the ISS program, with the following limitations:
  - a) Students must complete at least 5 courses covering 5 out of the 7 thematic areas of

inquiry in ISS. No course can be used to meet more than one thematic area. A list of courses by thematic area can be found on the ISS website.

- b) ISS-prefix courses do not apply toward these credits.
- c) At least 30 credits must be upper division.
- 4) ***Integrated Social Sciences Capstone*** (5 credits): ISS 401, including completion of the Learning Portfolio.
- 5) Cumulative GPA of 2.0 in courses applied to major requirements.
- 6) A minimum of 45 credits applied to major requirements taken in the UW ISS Program.

## Overview

The College of Arts and Sciences proposes to create a Bachelor of Arts degree in Integrated Social Sciences. The degree will be offered online, and is intended to provide access to a quality undergraduate education for qualified students for whom our specially designed courses and integration plan will open new opportunities for completing a college degree. Our choice to offer this degree in an online format is further motivated by our recognition that undergraduate online education offers a large set of new opportunities for pedagogical and technological innovation. We believe that the University of Washington has both the quality faculty and enabling context needed to become a global leader in this arena.

The online format also enables us to expand the university's teaching mission to those for whom location, employment demands and a variety of other personal situations (including having a family or military service) have created barriers to completing an on-campus undergraduate degree. We know that roughly 1 million citizens of the state of Washington and over 50 million people nationally have earned college credits but have not yet completed a B.A. degree. Of these, many would like to secure the benefits of improved employment and civic opportunities that degree completion is widely understood to confer. Selecting from this pool of potential applicants, we will admit students with at least 2 years of college credits (our planned enrollment numbers are to begin with a first year cohort of 300 full time equivalent students with an anticipated expansion to 800 over 5 years). Knowing that all these students will have already faced challenges with degree completion in the past, our organizational approach and pedagogical strategies will in turn be strongly focused on student support, retention and degree completion. And for these reasons Integrated Social Sciences (ISS) will place an emphasis on *integration* in three signature ways.

First, the degree will be integrated in the sense of deliberately enabling students to link-up their learning between all the online courses and their broader life goals, challenges and experiences. It will be distinguished in this way by the use of integrative seminars designed to help students both reflect on their learning and stay with the program through to completion. Second, the degree will maximize the benefits of interdisciplinary integration across the broad sweep of the social sciences to address the wide diversity of student learning and life goals. And third, in integrating online opportunities for feedback and constant connectivity into all our teaching and assessment strategies, we plan to build new bridges between the personalized evaluation of student progress and the ongoing evaluation and improvement of overall program outcomes.

By emphasizing all three forms of pedagogical, interdisciplinary and internet-enabled *integration*, we also aim at re-articulating the 'social' and 'science' in social sciences. We want our students to learn

about the complexity of social relations, social research and social justice in ways that are faithful to the enduring love of knowledge, theory, debate and critical thinking that animates all social science. Cultivating these capacities in an online environment where we want to fashion an inclusive and diverse educational community, our approach will also aim at fostering inter-cultural communication skills and other forms of social media competency. For these reasons, the learning goals for the program are broad and inclusive. By their completion of the degree we will expect all students to be able to:

- 1) Explain social scientific research in terms of questions, theories, methods and findings.
- 2) Construct, debate, and communicate arguments about social phenomena.
- 3) Evaluate, integrate and critique information.
- 4) Collaborate with diverse communities.

In order to deliver on these goals we have developed the detailed program plan provided here. We begin by outlining university support and authorization for our proposal, and how this connects to our efforts to overcome barriers to higher education by increasing access for students with only partially completed degrees (a population for which we provide WA state demographic data). This leads into our proposed curriculum, its structure and its signature emphases on integration. The proposal proceeds to outline the program governance structure, budget and staffing plans, before concluding with our overall assessment and quality control plan, including the linked objectives of personalized student assessment and program-wide evaluation of educational outcomes, retention rates, and completion patterns.

### **Authorization and Impetus**

Our proposal for Integrated Social Sciences has developed out of an idea initially suggested and opened for deliberation by President Young and Provost Cauce. A year-long and extensive process of dialogue with diverse faculty and departmental chairs organized by Dean Howard in the College of Arts and Sciences has led to the detailed plan we are outlining here. The proposal now therefore comes before the Faculty Senate Committees with the full support of both central administration and the College. It also includes ideas generated by ongoing conversations with faculty, administrators and support staff such as advisors and librarians on all three UW campuses, while at the same time establishing a leadership and governance structure within the College of Arts and Sciences that is described below. Working together we believe we are going to be able to offer a high quality online program in the social sciences that advances three significant institutional interests:

1. To provide access to a broader population of students who may not otherwise have opportunities to pursue a high quality UW baccalaureate degree.

2. To promote our institutional mission of discovery by building on pedagogical and technological innovations in internet-enabled education across the university.
3. To develop the promise and potential of a 21st century liberal education through an intentionally interdisciplinary program built across the breadth of the social sciences.

### **Anticipated Audience and Demographics**

As noted one important impetus for the proposed degree is the need for the University of Washington to help address the higher education access challenges that are a common cause for concern amongst Washington state citizens and our political leaders in Olympia. Focusing in on the access challenges facing a particular subset of the population - those who started but did not complete college (specifically those who have between 75 and 90 credits, but no BA) - we believe that the degree we are proposing meets a very real need. Its online format will be ideal for students who do not live close enough to the Seattle, Bothell and Tacoma campuses to attend college in person - a spatial obstacle that often precludes moving from community college to university. And our program's additional temporal flexibilities in terms of 24/7 course materials access will enable our students who have other work and family obligations to manage their online learning in ways that on-campus schedules often prohibit - a time-management challenge that is also often an obstacle for people who are older than traditional college students. In short, our approach to addressing the access challenge is premised on providing both spatial and temporal flexibility in an online program aimed at students with at least 75 credits in college level courses, but without a completed Bachelor's degree.

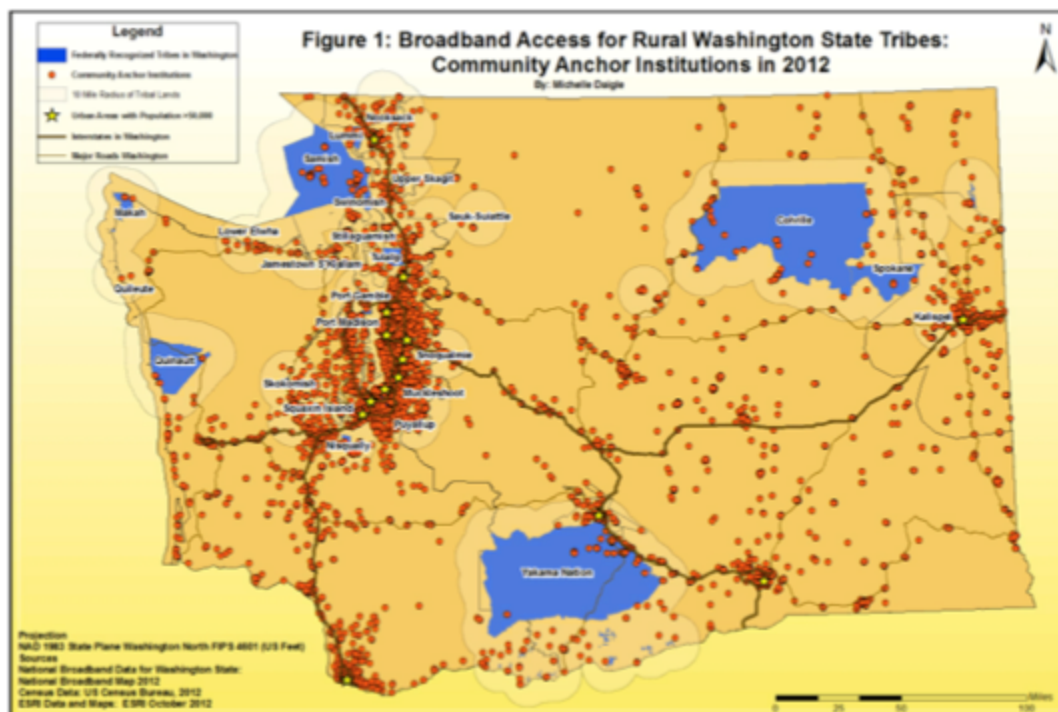
Our identification of an audience defined by having between 75-90 college credits raises obvious questions about the size, location and demographic characteristics of this population. To answer these questions we have already undertaken a review of census data, and are working with UWEO's marketing specialists to complete two further surveys: one, a survey of current students at community colleges across the state; and second, a survey of students who matriculated in A&S over the past ten years, accumulated at least 60 college credits, and then discontinued their enrollment for at least one year. The results so far are as follows:

Our own census-based survey of the Washington State population has revealed some useful demographic data about the people who comprise our most likely anticipated audience for the degree. In short, this is what we know at a very broad demographic level about Washington State residents between 18-75, identified in the 2007-2011 American Community Survey as having "some college" (1 year or more) or an AA but who are not currently enrolled in school.

The majority (57%) are between the age of 36-60, and include slightly more women than men.

Non-Latino whites are approximately 81% of this population (vs. 76% of the state population as a whole). This population is more likely to be married or divorced. The majority have no children; 32.5% have 1-2 children in the household. Approximately 70.4% are employed; over half work 31-50 hours per week. Approximately 16.2% work in “Education, Health, and Social Services,” 10.4% work in “Retail Trade,” 8.8% work in “Construction,” and 8.7% work in “Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services.” Approximately 25% of this population live in King County and another 25% live in Snohomish or Pierce County.

The geographical location of the population is worth noting because, although geographic proximity to the UW is not logically relevant for an online degree, studies suggest that there is a proximity effect even for enrollment in online programs. Nevertheless, we do not want to be limited by a narrow focus on proximate populations in our outreach effort. Thus as the program is developed we also hope to design special outreach to tribal populations, Latino communities, and military personnel. UWEO already has a [Yakima Valley partnership](#) that will provide invaluable outreach opportunities with nearby tribes and farmworker communities, and the research conducted by UW geographer Michelle Daigle shows that most tribal communities elsewhere in the state already have the necessary web connectivity to support online learning (see Figure 1 below).



Once the results of UWEO’s marketing and community college surveys are available, we will share them immediately, including any implications they may have vis-a-vis the slight preponderance of white women identified as possible students in the American Community Survey data noted above. In the

meantime, we will continue to evaluate both the access opportunities and challenges for a variety of other occupationally and demographically distinct audiences, including (but not limited to) military personnel, African Americans, Mexican Americans and Latinos, and disadvantaged communities of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

### **Curriculum Structure and Integrative mechanisms**

There are two main organizing principles that together provide coherence and an integrative system for our the proposed curriculum in integrated social sciences. (1) First a set of seven thematic areas of interdisciplinary inquiry out of which students must successfully complete courses covering 5 of the areas; and (2) second a suite of integrative mechanisms (centered around e-portfolio development and assessment in ways that build on the learning portfolio experiences of UW Honors, UW Bothell IAS, and UW Tacoma IAS) that will allow students to map personalized pathways through the thematic courses and the degree in a way that will also ensure they can assess and articulate the ways in which they have met the 4 main learning goals of the BA. We will here describe each of these organizing principles in turn.

#### (1) The seven thematic areas of interdisciplinary inquiry

Based on an extended deliberative process with Social Science departmental Chairs and faculty (through 2012-13), and in further deliberation with the Center for 21st Century Liberal Learning in the College of Arts and Sciences, we have identified seven main thematic areas of inquiry which we believe provide a broad-based interdisciplinary training in the social sciences.

- i) Information and technological society
- ii) Population dynamics and movements
- iii) Conflict and cooperation
- iv) Diversity and global justice
- v) Societal inequalities and power relations
- vi) Social contexts of health and risk
- vii) Societies and environments

By degree completion, students will be required to have passed courses in 5 out of 7 of these areas. We believe this is a number that will ensure a broad-based social science education while also being practicable in terms of providing student access to the necessary range of courses. It is also important to underline in this regard that most of our courses help build knowledge and skills in more than just one thematic area, and so ensuring educational engagement in 5 areas should not become a roadblock to degree completion. The broad educational goals for students studying in each of the thematic areas are

as follows:

i) Information and technological society

*Demonstrate knowledge and critical assessment of the issues associated with the increasing availability of information, 'big data', and multiple technologies and social media shaping communication globally.*

ii) Population dynamics and movements

*Demonstrate knowledge about population parameters, including density, and shifts across a range of times, spaces and scales (e.g. historic migrations, rural-urban, regional-global), as well as the diverse political, economic, geographic and cultural factors associated with these patterns and movements.*

iii) Conflict and cooperation

*Demonstrate knowledge of the diverse social factors, histories and geographies that create conflicts, and the equally varied social factors, struggles and movements that have promoted peace across space and time.*

iv) Diversity and global justice

*Demonstrate knowledge of how local and global inequalities organized by race, class, sexuality, gender and other systems of social hierarchy have led to movements for social justice, including knowledge of how such movements are tied to local and global interdependencies and solidarities.*

v) Societal inequalities and power relations

*Demonstrate knowledge of the multiple power relations and processes through which social inequalities are produced and contested, including the changing but connected historical, cultural and geographical contexts in which such social dynamics unfold nationally and globally.*

vi) Social contexts of health and risk

*Demonstrate knowledge of health systems and the social influences on health, including the ways in which health risks and structural vulnerabilities are at once created and managed amidst global ties old and new.*

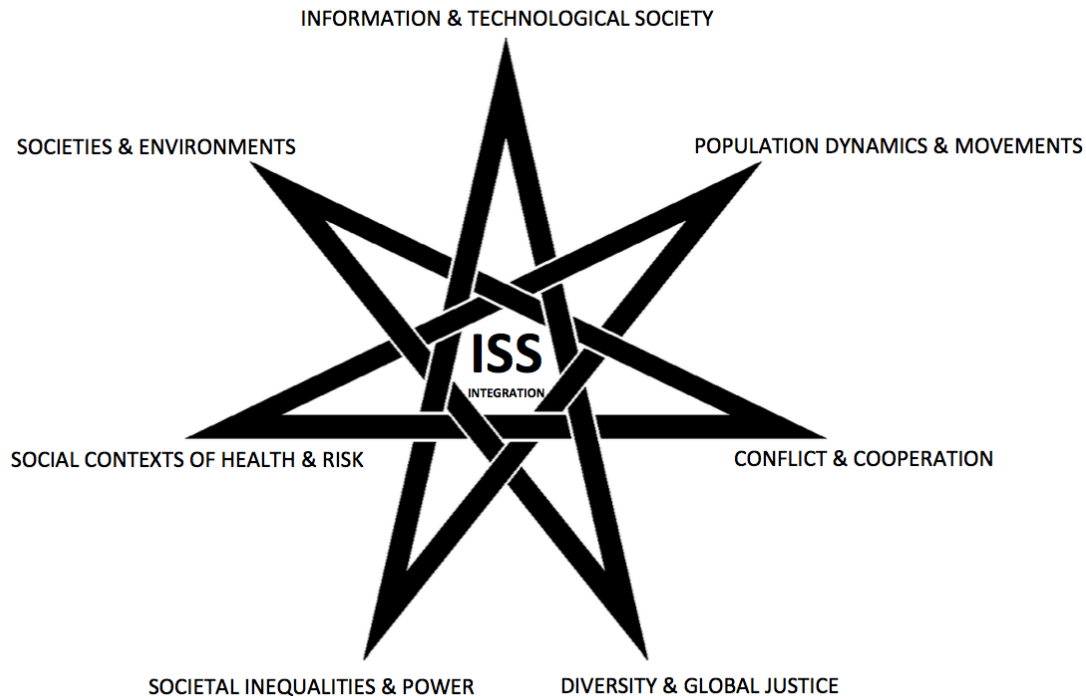
vii) Societies and environments

*Demonstrate knowledge about the social dimensions of the environmental challenges facing humans and other forms of life both historically and amidst contemporary global climate change,*



*including evolving strategies of human and global sustainability.*

The interdisciplinary integration of these seven thematic areas is best illustrated with a diagram.



Our emphasis on interdisciplinary integration in the BA is important. The seven thematic areas are clearly not the sole ‘jurisdictions’ or ‘provinces’ of particular disciplines, and different disciplines approach and study each of these areas in distinct ways. Nevertheless, the areas are common foci of inquiry across diverse social science disciplines. As a result, while our individual courses and instructors will still bring diverse disciplinary insights to ISS teaching, our students will be navigating integrative journeys through these courses in ways that cumulatively create interdisciplinary competency in 5 of the 7 areas. Beyond these thematic area requirements, the integrative cultivation of interdisciplinary insights will be further enhanced by the process of e-portfolio development and the other integrative mechanisms and opportunities for formative assessment described below. But it will be based at the same time on the multi-disciplinary diversity of the ways in which our substantive social science courses ‘cover’ the content, or, put better, enable our students to dis-cover new knowledge in the thematic areas. The fact that many of our courses address more than just one thematic area is important in this regard too. We fully expect students to keep coming back to the same themes in different courses while connecting them in new ways to other thematic areas of inquiry. Indeed, this is also why our degree requirements insist that any one course may not ‘count’ for more than one thematic area. As a result, students will not be able to just take a couple of courses in a couple of disciplines and declare they have met the 5 out of the

7 thematic area requirement. Instead the deeper and overarching goal which we want students to identify and internalize themselves is interdisciplinary integration. By BA completion they should therefore have developed an interdisciplinary perspective built upon all the educational benefits of approaching substantive topics of inquiry from diverse social science perspectives.

Social science faculty have completed or are in the process of developing online courses (most of them based on what they also teach on campus in their respective departments) in each of the seven thematic areas as listed below. Please note, though, that we are continuing to build our inventory of courses. This means that the following lists are set to expand in the year before the planned launch date in Fall of 2014. Numerous faculty across the social sciences are still considering whether to develop online course contributions, and to help make the process more transparent to them, we have created a College of Arts and Sciences website that explains the opportunity structure, and provides an online portal that faculty can use to propose a new course <http://admin.artsci.washington.edu/online-degrees>. In addition, Social Sciences Dean Judy Howard and the ISS Director Matt Sparke continue to work with departments and conduct outreach with individual faculty who have shown interest. This full group of faculty involved to date includes some of the most skilled instructors in the Division, as we detail below. In the Fall of 2013 we will also work with the steering committee and chairs, to explore other possibilities for course development. Longer term we anticipate that the community of faculty who are involved in teaching online will therefore expand. As it does, we plan to further foster this community with regular workshops, where, as well as sharing best practices and concerns about online teaching challenges, colleagues will be able to collaborate on ongoing curriculum additions and innovations. For the moment, though, these provisional lists show how our online courses offer instruction in each of the seven thematic areas.

i) Information and technological society

COM	468	Journalism Ethics
COM	4xx	Creative Advantage
COM	220	Introduction to Public Speaking
COM/AES/GWS	389	Race, Gender & Sexuality in the Media
ECON	200	Introduction to Microeconomics
ECON	201	Introduction to Macroeconomics

ECON	382	Introduction to Econometrics
GEOG	381	Mapping Health
JSIS	4xx	Putting the World on a Couch
PHIL	360	Topics in Philosophy of Science
SIS	436	Ethnic Politics and Nationalism

ii) Population dynamics and movements

ANTH	3xx	History of Anthropology (and the Future of Social Science)
ECON	201	Introduction to Macroeconomics
ECON	382	Introduction to Econometrics
GEOG	380	Geographical Patterns of Health
GEOG	381	Mapping Health
GEOG	478	Social Justice and the City
HIST	485	Comparative Colonialism
PHIL	102	Contemporary Moral Problems
SIS	436	Ethnic Politics and Nationalism

ii) Conflict and cooperation

COM/AES/GWSS	389	Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Media
ECON	201	Introduction to Macroeconomics

GEOG	323	Globalization and You
GEOG	478	Social Justice and the City
HIST	485	Comparative Colonialism
JSIS	331	Political Economy of Development
JSIS	4xx	Failed States
JSIS A	435	Japanese Politics
JSIS A	454	History of Modern China
JSIS C/CHID	380	Theories In the Study of Religion
PHIL	102	Contemporary Moral Problems
PHIL	343	Environmental Ethics
PHIL	415	Advanced topics in animal welfare
POL S	3xx	American Political Thought
POL S/JSIS	432	Political Islam and Islamic Fundamentalism
SIS	436	Ethnic Politics and Nationalism

iii) Diversity and global justice

AES/GWSS/COM	489	Black Cultural Studies
COM	468	Journalism Ethics
COM	4xx	Creative Advantage
COM/AES/GWS	389	Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Media

GEOG	323	Globalization and You
GEOG	478	Social Justice and the City
HIST	485	Comparative Colonialism
JSIS	331	Political Economy of Development
JSIS	4xx	Putting the World on a Couch
JSIS	4xx	Failed States
JSIS A	435	Japanese Politics
JSIS A	454	History of Modern China
JSIS C/CHID	380	Theories In the Study of Religion
PHIL	102	Contemporary Moral Problems
PHIL	343	Environmental Ethics
PHIL	360	Topics in Philosophy of Science
PHIL	415	Advanced topics in animal welfare
POL S	3xx	American Political Thought
POL S/JSIS	432	Political Islam and Islamic Fundamentalism
SIS	436	Ethnic Politics and Nationalism
SOC	362	Race and Ethnicity in the US

iv) Societal inequalities and power relations

AES/GWSS/COM	489	Black Cultural Studies
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COM/AES/GWSS	389	Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Media
ECON	201	Introduction to Macroeconomics
GEOG	323	Globalization and You
GEOG	380	Geographical Patterns of Health
GEOG	381	Mapping Health
GEOG	478	Social Justice and the City
HIST	485	Comparative Colonialism
JSIS	331	Political Economy of Development
JSIS	4xx	Putting the World on a Couch
JSIS A	435	Japanese Politics
JSIS A	454	History of Modern China
PHIL	415	Advanced topics in animal welfare
POL S	3xx	American Political Thought
POL S/JSIS	432/40	Political Islam and Islamic Fundamentalism
SIS	436	Ethnic Politics and Nationalism
SOC	362	Race and Ethnicity in the US

v) Social contexts of health and risk

ANTH	3xx	Sustainability, Culture and Society
ECON	382	Introduction to Econometrics

GEOG	323	Globalization and You
GEOG	380	Geographical Patterns of Health
GEOG	381	Mapping Health
JSIS B	351	The Global Environment
JSIS C/CHID	380	Theories In the Study of Religion
PHIL	102	Contemporary Moral Problems
PHIL	343	Environmental Ethics
PHIL	360	Topics in Philosophy of Science
PHIL	415	Advanced topics in animal welfare

vii) Societies and environments

ANTH	3xx	Sustainability, Culture and Society
GEOG	323	Globalization and You
GEOG	380	Geographical Patterns of Health
GEOG	381	Mapping Health
JSIS	331	Political Economy of Development
JSIS B	351	The Global Environment
PHIL	102	Contemporary Moral Problems
PHIL	343	Environmental Ethics
PHIL	360	Topics in Philosophy of Science

PHIL	415	Advanced topics in animal welfare
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In addition we are also in the process of negotiating sections/access and concurrence options for the following list of other online courses hosted by UWEO. Many of these also offer education in our seven thematic areas, and/or serve to deliver ways of meeting general education requirements. Importantly, a number of the courses among both these additional online options, and the courses already developed or in development for the ISS Degree will also meet the new Diversity Requirement, particularly those in the Diversity and Global Justice; Societal Inequalities and Power Relations; and Conflict and Cooperation thematic areas. The diversity requirement is met by courses that “focus on the sociocultural, political and economic diversity of human experience at local, regional, or global scales.” These themes are at the core of the Social Sciences and thus we anticipate that a significant number of the ISS courses will meet this requirement. (Colleges are currently developing procedures to identify which existing courses will meet the requirement.)

Group Start Pilot Courses (courses with \* are available to meet general education requirements)

COM	340	History of Mass Communication
COM/AES/GWSS	389	Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Media
COM/POL S	440/461	Mass Media Law
GEOG	102	World Regions
GEOG	200	Introduction to Human Geography
GEOG/JSIS	123	Introduction to Globalization
LING	200	Introduction to Linguistic Thought
PHIL	115	Practical Reasoning
POL S	270	Introduction to Political Economy
POL S	321	American Foreign Policy



PSYCH	101	Introduction to Psychology
PSYCH	202	Biopsychology
PSYCH	205	Behavior Disorders
PSYCH	206	Human Development
PSYCH	203	Introduction to Personality and Individual Differences
SOC	360	Introduction to Social Stratification
SOC	364	Women in the Social Structure
SOC	371	Criminology
STAT	311	Elements of Statistical Methods
*DANCE	100	Understanding Dance
*DANCE	101	Dance and the American Experience
*DRAMA	103	Theatre Appreciation
*ESRM	100	Introduction to Environmental Science
*MATH	124	Calculus with Analytic Geometry I
*MATH	125	Calculus with Analytic Geometry II
*MATH	126	Calculus with Analytic Geometry III
*MUSIC	120	Survey of Music
*MUSIC	162	American Popular Song
*MUSIC	331	History of Jazz

## (2) The integrative mechanisms

Students in the Integrated Social Sciences program will have the flexibility to build an individual pathway through the areas of thematic inquiry outlined above. The 20-credit program core (ISS 301, 350, 355, and 401) serves in turn to integrate these courses. It spans students' full career in the major, beginning in their first quarter in the program and concluding with the capstone in their final quarter.

- 1) In the first quarter of the program, each student will take two courses: **ISS 301** (*Social Science Theory in Context*), which considers the broad role of the social sciences and their application to the world outside of the university; and **ISS 350** (*Portfolio Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences*). Together, these two courses will provide a common foundation for the program. They will also introduce the **Learning Portfolio**, developed individually by each student, that will integrate the coursework of that student's individual area of study.
- 2) Students will register for **ISS 355** in at least four additional quarters (for a total of at least 8 credits), excluding their final quarter. In ISS 355, students will continue to develop the Learning Portfolio to articulate not only what they have learned in the courses they have chosen, but also the intellectual rationale for selecting those courses and why and how they are related to each other.
- 3) In their final quarter, students will take **ISS 450** (*Integrated Social Sciences Capstone*), in which they will complete their portfolios and prepare a final presentation, aimed at external audiences, articulating a final synthesis of what they have learned and demonstrating that they have met the 4 main program learning objectives.
  1. Explain social scientific research in terms of questions, theories, methods and findings
  2. Construct, debate, and communicate arguments about social phenomena
  3. Evaluate, integrate and critique information
  4. Collaborate with diverse communities

The process of portfolio development and presentation will add an important and integrative element of self-assessment to the overall degree. In addition, evaluating student presentations of their portfolios will also enable us to conduct a substantive form of program-wide evaluation of learning outcomes, and, by linking up these two forms of assessment - the personal and the programmatic - in the capstone teaching experience, our aim is to add another form of feedback to the overall system of quality control and improvement described in the section on program assessment below.

### *Rationale for Curriculum Structure*

Our aim of integrating personal and programmatic assessment reflects the systematic emphasis we are

putting on fostering both personalized learning opportunities and shared meta-learning (or ‘meta-cognitive’) capacities at the same time. The Integrated Social Sciences major is therefore built around two elements: a set of courses enabling students’ engagement with 5 out of the 7 thematic areas of the degree; and a program “core” designed to provide coherence and integration to those courses, to ensure that students meet program learning objectives, and to do so by maximising opportunities for critical self-reflection, self-description, and self-assessment of learning all the way along.

The thematic areas as we have organized them for the degree provide for interdisciplinary engagement, diversity and breadth while also allowing for flexibility in matching coursework with students’ personal interests. One risk in providing this flexibility is that the actual pathways from one course to another may not always ‘scaffold’ or build on one another in a logical, ordered way. There is also slight danger that more instrumentally-minded students may not even choose courses with the goal of interdisciplinary integration or intellectual exploration across the social sciences.

For these reasons, the other key component of our curriculum design is the integration work built into the core coursework. The purpose of these core ISS courses is to engage our students themselves in the work of intellectual integration, and to give them the pedagogical space, support and meta-learning skills to carry out that work. This kind of integrative learning from and about the learning experience is difficult work, and traditionally, students have neither the time, nor skills nor the motive to do such work. Thus we have focused on building a rigorous structure that will (a) give students shared responsibility and personal accountability for their learning and (b) provide a structure within which they can learn how to do that work.

This integration is the most important part of the program; indeed, it will provide our students’ overarching intellectual road map. Without it, the substantive courses in a student’s chosen pathway through the thematic areas may well remain disconnected. Through the core, we hope students will be able to find the full value of the interdisciplinary insights they learn in their substantive courses (by learning to see the connections among those courses, and by building a coherent narrative over their career in ISS), and come to take full and life-long ownership of their learning – perhaps the most important goal of a liberal education for contemporary global citizenship. Doing this in a way that is also informed by social science teaching on the historical and socio-economic development of the globalized world into which students will be taking their learning, we further aim to give them the intellectual resources they need to understand how even the ideas of life-long learning and personalized educational responsibility are themselves products of the social changes set in motion by globalized competition and labor markets.

As noted, the program core consists of four courses: ISS 301, 350, 355, and 401, totaling a minimum

of 20 credits. (ISS 355 may be repeated for more than the required 8 credits.) Brief course descriptions follow below.

### *The Learning Portfolio*

The e-portfolio is the most important pedagogical tool of integration in the program, so it is a graduation requirement for all students. To satisfy the requirement, student e-portfolios must capture three elements:

1. A *personalized learning plan and justification*, including (most importantly) the intellectual rationale that binds the courses chosen to satisfy the 5 out of 7 thematic area requirement. This represents the individual equivalent of a curriculum plan, including (by the end of a student's career) all the courses taken, and the rationale for taking them (for example, rather than other courses that could have been taken). By the end, this should provide the intellectual justification for the learning plan, and, by doing so, articulate the personalized learning goals of the student with the program learning objectives of the BA.
2. A *detailed survey of substantive integration* connecting the content learned (through the substantive courses) in the chosen subset of 5 thematic areas. In this way the eportfolio will enable students to engage and connect the content of their substantive courses.
3. A *reflective narrative*, developed over the course of the program, that allows students to pull out the meta-cognitive 'learning about learning' they have developed through their progress towards degree completion. We want students to have become much more self-aware and self-critical learners when they complete the program.

In sum the eportfolio has 3 goals: to help students learn, to demonstrate that they have learned, and to cultivate the self-critical capacity to learn about learning along the way. For most of the students' careers, we will focus on the first goal. ISS 350 will introduce the portfolio goals and begin students on their path. ISS 355 will rely fundamentally on peer evaluation – evaluation of individual learning portfolios by peers in each section of 355. (Both ISS 350 and ISS 355 will be limited to 25 students.) Through this work, students will learn to articulate their learning for others; improve their own portfolios based on feedback from others; and learn how to give effective feedback. These are foundational skills of the kind of education we seek, because they mirror the kind of work in which we expect our students to excel at after graduation. This peer feedback will be structured in ISS 355 each quarter, and monitored by the ISS advisors with whom students will work over the course of their careers in ISS. This will create a unique relationship between students and the program, based not only on conventional advising, but also on a deep knowledge of students' development as learners, including all the information provided by the online learning analytics described below in the section on assessment.

The eportfolios will also provide evidence of students' overall learning (i.e., the degree to which students

meet program goals), and in so doing, a collective opportunity for summative program assessment too. As described further in the assessment section below, we will therefore also use eportfolios to articulate our personalized approach to qualitative student assessment into the overall iterative process of program evaluation and improvement too. This is because our systematic use of eportfolios will provide us with a deep base of empirical evidence about what and how students are learning in the program, and we will be able to mine these qualitative and quantitative data for program evaluation. To conclude with a cartographic metaphor, the eportfolios will not only provide personalized road maps for the program for individual students, but intellectual maps of integrated social sciences that are simultaneously shareable and assessable themselves.

### Core ISS Courses

#### **ISS 301. *Social Science Theory in Context* (5)**

This will be less a survey of substantive social theories or methods than an effort to contextualize the practice of rigorous social science in the world in which the students live (and from which many of them will bring experience and expertise to the online classroom). It will be taken in the first quarter by all incoming students, and will be the only common content-defined course taken by all students (all students will also take the capstone, but that experience will not be based on common content). Content covered will include a range of works from classical to contemporary social theory that afford multiple perspectives on how the subjects of social science (including social theorists themselves) are socially constructed in different ways in different times and places. The focus of this course is not particular concepts or theories, but understanding social science as an enterprise and practice that is evolving amidst historical transformations. The unequal social experience of today's global ties will also be introduced in this way with a view to helping students come to terms with how their own learning and student 'response-abilities' are structured by the contemporary global context.

ISS 301 will also introduce the program learning goals, even if only to locate the program itself in the larger context, and establish the expectation that the individual area of study will reflect not simply a survey of content, but a rigorous exploration of social phenomena based on a theoretical basis that also allows for reflexivity about how the learning experience is itself being restructured amidst the global social transformations of the 21st century. This rationale will provide the glue of the Learning Plan.

#### *Learning Goals*

1. Introduce the importance of theory in general, and social science theory in particular, to understanding the world
2. Establish program learning goals
3. Establish criteria on which final portfolio will be evaluated

### **ISS 350. *Introduction to Portfolios in Social Sciences (2)***

All students will take ISS 350 in their first quarter, concurrently with ISS 301. The focus will not be substantive social science (covered in ISS 301). Instead, it will emphasize the practice of integrated learning: what does it mean to integrate learning over time and multiple courses? How can students build a coherent plan of learning, when they do not know anything about social science yet? It will also establish the portfolio practice – what goes into the portfolio, how and when to do that work, and most importantly, how to collaborate.

Collaboration is the foundation of the portfolio practice in ISS. The portfolio seminars will be small (~20-25 students). Each quarter, students will present their learning portfolios to peers in their seminars. This will serve both to raise the stakes for their own portfolio work (because they will be publicly accountable), and a source of feedback and learning (as they see what their peers are doing). The first quarter will emphasize process over content, as students will have little knowledge of social sciences. Instead, students will be expected to focus on molding their “interests” into learning goals that will guide the courses they choose and eventually evolve into their areas of study.

#### *Learning goals*

1. Build a learning portfolio
2. Begin developing individual learning goals
3. Build community among peers who will help develop that portfolio over time

### **ISS 355. *Portfolio Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences (2, max 20)***

Students will continue to register for ISS 355 in subsequent quarters, for at least 8 more credits. We expect that very few students will enter the program with highly structured and articulated interests in any substantive area. Instead, most students will need some period of exploration, and even those who enter with focused interests should experience significant evolution in their understanding over time, such that the plan with which they entered should change over time.

ISS 355 is where we expect this evolution to occur. Each quarter, students will continue to develop their Learning Plans, integrating the work of the past quarter (in Winter, students would reflect on the Autumn courses they had just completed) into the ongoing narrative and plan. They should be able to evaluate and reflect upon both the substantive content and the rationale for having selected the courses they selected.

#### *Learning goals*

- 1) Continue to develop a learning portfolio in collaborative practice
  - a) The practice is thinking about what you have learned

- b) Learn to critique own learning by articulating it to others; this is the eventual work of the end of the program
- c) Learn to integrate learning
- d) Learn to critique others
- 2) Demonstrate learning of
  - a) Substantive content from courses
  - b) Connections among courses
  - c) Rationale for courses selected
- 3) Provide ongoing evidence of program learning objectives
  - a) Connections updated every quarter
- 4) Connect to outside problems (this could be problem-, group-based work)
- 5) Work toward a final presentation in the capstone seminar

This is the intellectual work of integration, which must occur outside of the substantive courses, and over the full length of their careers in the program.

#### **ISS 401. Capstone Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences (5)**

In ISS 401, students will complete their Learning Portfolios, building on the reflective and integrative work done over the past quarters to produce a final synthesis. The final version of the portfolio, constructed through intensive faculty feedback and peer work, will articulate two complementary elements of their learning. First, it should demonstrate, through a substantive synthesis of their engagement with 5 thematic areas, their *substantive competence*, both at the program level (their broad understanding of social sciences, reflected in the program learning objectives) and the individual level (as articulated in their individual pathway through the thematic areas of study).

Second, it will also document the *process* of learning, evidenced in students' own evolution over the course of the program (and the subsequent reflection thereupon). In the portfolio seminar, students will develop a summary narrative of what they learned, and how they learned it, aimed at audiences outside the university, honed and practiced with their peers, and showcased in a public forum at the end of the academic year. Students' ability to connect their academic learning to career or other post-graduation goals depends on this work, and by the time they take the capstone seminar, they will have multiple years' of integrative work on which to draw.

In short, the portfolio should demonstrate that they have met both program and individual learning goals, and as such, will provide a unique mechanism of program evaluation. We will regularly evaluate (at least a sample of) student portfolios as a systematic means of assessing the program, in a way that can go beyond students' subjective experiences to include progress toward substantive learning objectives.

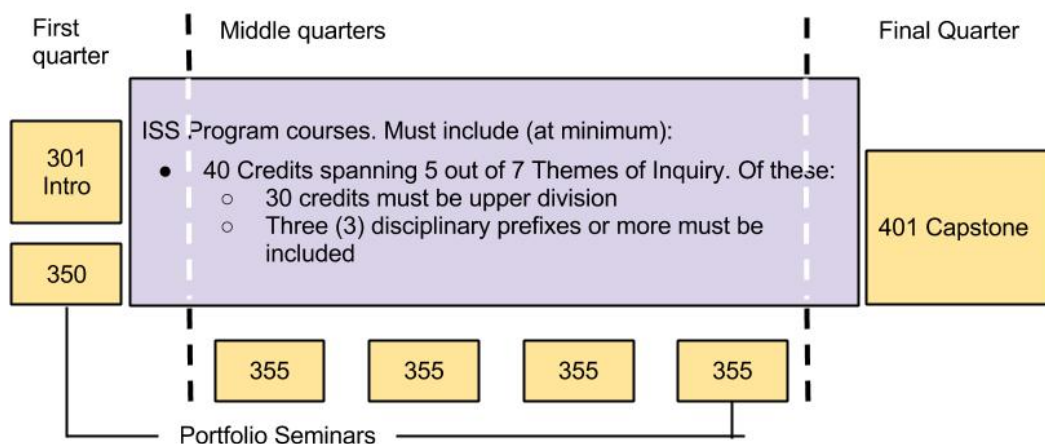
### *Learning goals*

1. Demonstrate having met program learning goals
2. Demonstrate having met individual learning goals
3. Effectively articulate overall learning narrative for external audiences

As has been outlined above, our core courses and integrative mechanisms, including the eportfolios, provide the overall framework and curricula infrastructure in which all these content courses will be integrated into the learning plans of individual students. There will therefore be as many different personalized program maps as there are students, and part time students will obviously move more slowly along their pathways than full time students.

To provide an overall sense of what a model student pathway through this ISS course landscape will look like, we include the following diagrams.

### **Overview of Pathway**



ISS 301: Social Science Theory in Context (5)  
ISS 350: Portfolio Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences (2)  
ISS 355: Portfolio Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences (2, max 20)  
ISS 401: Capstone Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences (5)



# 'Operationalizing the Core' memo

In this memo we would like to answer a number of programmatic and practical questions about how we will operationalize the core design and core courses of ISS. This includes making the case that there are a good number of precedents for interdisciplinary social science degrees both in the US and abroad, as well as those exemplified by already existing UW programs ranging from JSIS, GWSS and AES on the Seattle campus to Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at Bothell. Our plan to operationalize a core built around e-portfolio reflection and theoretical skills development also builds on the Bothell model (as well as on the use of portfolios in UW Honors, CEP and Engineering), offering an integrative infrastructure that is sometimes missing from other online degrees. We want to explain this further in what follows, and so we have organized this detailed review of our plans into three sections.

- 1) *Precedents and practices of social science integration*
- 2) *Core course syllabi and example of an e-portfolio*
- 3) *Capacity and staffing*

Before proceeding to these sections, we also want to clear up a possible misconception about how we are twinning the portfolio infrastructure with a content-based approach to social science integration (and thus most definitely *not* relying on the eportfolio alone to define the degree). Our 7 thematic areas give coherent interdisciplinary content to the degree. We must also therefore emphasize that they are the antithesis of traditional 'vertical' tracks through a major (which often tend to create silos of technical specialization in other degrees). Our 7 interdisciplinary areas are better conceptualized as 'horizontal' networks across the major. We are demanding that ISS students take courses in 5 out of the 7 thematic areas because we want them to build integrative expertise, and we want them to do so, moreover, in an interdisciplinary way (for example, coming at a question about social inequality through the lens of Economics in one course, and then coming back to it through the lens of

Anthropology, International Studies or Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies in other courses). This means that we actively want to push students to develop content-based learning across multiple disciplines. They cannot count one course for more than one thematic area, and so they will have to keep sampling courses across disciplines and generally find it very hard to stay in any single disciplinary groove. Their trajectory across the interdisciplinary areas of the degree will have to be purposeful, assessed as such in the 355 courses, and in the same way, made open for revision and improvement along the way.

Finally we should clarify that we are demanding *more* than the common 30 upper division credits found in a range of other undergraduate degrees offered at UW. Indeed, we are actually asking for almost double this by the end. If you include – which we do – all 20 credits in the ISS core courses, this adds up to a minimum of 50 upper division credits. Moreover, given the course options we are providing our students, it would be very hard indeed for them to take just 10 courses (6 content courses and 4 core courses) in ISS and graduate. In reality, they will end up taking more than this because there are so few lower level courses on offer in the program. Relatedly UW rules currently only allow 90 credits of online coursework to count toward a degree. Following the model of ECFS, we therefore need a waiver from this rule in order to operationalize ISS.

### *1) Precedents and practices of social science integration*

Many other universities have already pioneered degrees in integrated social sciences. We know from these programs both that there is widespread student demand and that the actual practice of offering such integration with an interdisciplinary curriculum is well-established. Our distinction is not experimental novelty, therefore, but rather our commitment to combining content based interdisciplinary integration with our portfolio based infrastructure for pedagogical integration. With our 7 thematic areas of interdisciplinary concentration, and with our core courses centred on student

e-portfolios, we are offering an especially clear set of navigation and integration tools for our students. In other words, we are making an interdisciplinary, enquiry-based approach to social science integration that much more coherent. Relatedly, we think that the care that has gone into our design of the degree completion process offers more monitoring and student support than many other universities. But these distinctions noted, our basic approach of offering a degree in integrated social sciences follows the lead of many other programs. Here then is a list of some of the US examples:

Michigan State University - Integrative studies core curriculum in social science - <http://www.cis-ss.msu.edu/iss/index.php>

Florida Atlantic University - BA Social Science - <http://www.fau.edu/artsandletters/socscidegree.php>

University of Wyoming - Social Sciences - <http://www.uwyo.edu/as/current-students/social-science-degree-program.html>

University of Pittsburgh - Social Sciences (BA) - <http://www.cgs.pitt.edu/node/358>

New York University - B.A. in Social Sciences - <http://www.scps.nyu.edu/academics/departments/mcghee/undergraduate/ba-social-sciences.html>

Florida State University - BA/BS Social Science - [http://www.academic-guide.fsu.edu/social\\_science\\_interdisciplinary.htm](http://www.academic-guide.fsu.edu/social_science_interdisciplinary.htm)

California State University San Bernardino - BA in Social Sciences - <http://ssba.csbs.csusb.edu/>

California State University Stanislaus - Social Sciences B.A. - [http://catalog.csustan.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=3&poid=359](http://catalog.csustan.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=359)

Washington State University - Social Sciences: General Studies -  
<http://admission.wsu.edu/academics/fos/Public/field.castle?id=1637>

Outside of the US there are also the much older examples of interdisciplinary social science degrees such as the venerable 'PPE' or Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Oxford (which is also now emulated around the world at other universities such as Yale-NUS in Singapore and Waseda in Japan). Back in the US, Yale itself has the 'EPE' or Ethics Politics and Economics degree. And, as of 2011, the University of Cambridge has a new interdisciplinary degree HSPS - Human Social and Political Science that comes still closer to our design (see <http://www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/>).

Also based in the UK, another important precedent and model for us is the world leader in online social science teaching, the UK's Open University. Amongst its other BAs, the OU offers a degree in Combined Social Sciences  
<http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/qualification/q69.htm>

The OU degree description usefully lists the following values of this education vis-à-vis a global labor market, and the list also emphasizes the capacity of students graduating from such a degree to “integrate rather than compartmentalise knowledge.”

## **Career relevance and employability**

Employers rate social science graduates particularly highly for the diversity of their transferable skills and breadth of mind. This interdisciplinary BA (Hons) Combined Social Sciences incorporates breadth – enabling you to understand the contexts of your studies – as well as depth. The range of subjects and perspectives covered will demonstrate your adaptability and versatility to employers, who'll also value your ability to evaluate data and evidence in a variety of ways, and to integrate rather than compartmentalise knowledge. You'll also be able to draw together ideas about a range of issues affecting individuals and society, including the economy; work; gender; race; social inequalities; social norms; crime; policy; environment; international studies; and relationships.

This degree course develops valuable transferable and work-related skills including:

- using ICT to research, select and present information
- analysing and evaluating data

- clear, concise written communication
- assembling reasoned arguments for particular audiences
- using a range of formats: essays, presentations, reports, collaborative working, online forums
- valuing critical feedback to reflect on progress and improve your work
- working under your own steam and without constant direction

Graduates may find employment in such areas as:

- national and local government and public administration
- health and social care
- education
- charitable organisations
- public relations, media and market research
- planning and environmental management
- police, law and criminal justice
- business and commerce.

Back in the US other online degrees in integrated social sciences exist which, if nothing else, make clear that there is a need and 'market' for what we are developing:

University of Maryland - Major in Social Science -

<http://www.umuc.edu/academic-programs/bachelors-degrees/social-science-major.cfm>

California State University - BA in Social Science Online -

<http://rce.csuchico.edu/online/ba-social-science>

University of North Dakota - Bachelor of Arts in Social Science Online -

<http://distance.und.edu/degree/?id=socialscience2>

Portland State - Social Science Degree -

<http://www.pdx.edu/extended-campus/social-science-degree>

Of course, back at UW, evening degree also offers another example of a UW precedent. But it is a precedent from which ISS is doubly distinct. Unlike Evening degree ISS offers a set of clear interdisciplinary thematic areas in which students develop social science expertise. And also unlike Evening degree, ISS offers a coherent approach to integration through the core courses. It is to the design and details of these that we now turn.

## *2) Core course syllabi*

As is explained in the formal proposal for ISS, the integrative core of the degree consists of 4 courses. These are:

**ISS 301. *Social Science Theory in Context* (5)**

**ISS 350. *Introduction to Portfolios in Social Sciences* (2)**

**ISS 355. *Portfolio Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences* (2, max 20).**

**ISS 401. *Capstone Seminar in Integrated Social Sciences* (5)**

Draft syllabi for each of these courses have been developed, and these are included here below. They have also already been shared with the ISS teaching faculty with a view to gathering faculty feedback before submitting the courses for formal approval. We have received some of this feedback already, and for 301 the faculty were very enthusiastic about recording on venue video lectures aimed at demystifying theory in context. So this is already written into the syllabus for 301. We will also let further feedback guide our final proposals for the other courses in an ongoing iterative process of review and revision. The ISS steering committee will also be able to join this review and revision process after their initial meeting on Oct 22nd. These therefore are not the final drafts (and relatedly it is worth noting that we will have plenty of time to develop the ISS 401 capstone for some time after the degree launches). However, we want to include the syllabi here to communicate the content and conceptualization of the core courses as we are currently planning them.

In addition, provided here below the 4 syllabi is a mock-up model of what an e-portfolio might look like for an ISS student. It is not based on any real student's work, and is simply meant to provide an illustrative idea of how the ISS e-portfolios will work. In this respect, we also want to emphasise that there are 3 distinct components of these particular learning portfolios:

- i) an *Introspective* element of ongoing reflection and learning plan refinement;
- ii) a *scaffolding* element of building links of interdisciplinary expertise & insight;
- iii) a *showcasing* element using archived work to describe a student's learning.

Put together, the I of Introspection, the S of Scaffolding and the S of Showcasing are the ISS of the ISS portfolio. Each element is important, and cannot be reduced to the others. Moreover, each element will contribute to an ongoing iterative process of planning and reflection. For these reasons, our model example here can only provide a snap-shot of the ongoing process we envision unfolding as the students move iteratively through each of the 3 ISS portfolio elements.

## **ISS 301: SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORY IN CONTEXT**

### Draft Syllabus

#### *Course description:*

This course offers an introduction to integrated social sciences, providing ways for students to conceptualize how the vast diversity of social relations – economic, political, cultural, sexual, racial, spatial and historical relations, all included – interact in the real world contexts that social scientists research. By directly addressing the social context of social science, the course also aims at demystifying theory and reflecting on its philosophical implications for scholars from different disciplines researching similar social conjunctures. In this way, it also provides the basic vocabulary and skills students need to integrate their own experiences and social knowledge into their development as self-reflective social scientists. Overall, the course gives all incoming students into ISS a shared intellectual experience and common language, setting the stage for interdisciplinary engagement across the degree's thematic content courses. It also thereby lays the necessary foundations for creating a coherent learning plan and successful eportfolio experience.

The course introduces theories about the social construction of social science knowledge, as well as the

two-way interpretive relay (the so-called ‘double hermeneutic’ or ‘reflexivity’) that generally distinguishes the social sciences from natural sciences. Since members of society can think, make choices, and use new information to revise their understandings and actions, they often use social science theories to change their practices. To come to terms with these feedback loops, we explore how the social sciences a) study what people do, b) study how people understand their world, and c) study how that understanding in turn shapes social practice. In order to do all this in a way that integrates diverse disciplinary traditions, ISS 301 also introduces regularly updated theoretical introductions and recommendations from ISS teaching faculty.

The ISS faculty introductions and recommendations come in 3 different forms:

First: a set of short video lectures by individual ISS faculty highlighting how they theorize particular social situations and sites in context;

Second: a suite of recorded conversations *between* ISS faculty from different disciplines, discussing how they make sense of particular social questions and real world contexts in both diverging and converging ways; and,

Third: another set of short video lectures by individual faculty about their own theoretical interests and how these inform their research and their teaching in the degree.

Ranging from the classical to contemporary, and the local to the global, this integration of examples from across all the social sciences affords insight into how the subjects of social science (including social scientists themselves) are socially constructed in different ways in different times, places and disciplines. By introducing social science as a reflective theoretical enterprise, the course shows how such theorizing continues to respond to changing real world contexts, historical shifts, and growing global interdependencies. At the end of the course, it will be possible for students to understand how their own ability to respond to such changing contexts can be enhanced by understanding social science theory as both an analytical and collective form of response-ability to our fast changing world.

Key learning goals for ISS 301 include:

1. Understanding the role of social theories in relationship to social scientific knowledge construction.
2. Gaining an appreciation for how different disciplinary perspectives can be integrated to better understand social complexity.
3. Coming to terms with how social science theory responds to social contexts in ways that are also both conditioned by and consequential for those contexts.
4. Developing an initial social science vocabulary as a foundation for coursework.

More generally because 301 serves as an introduction to the ISS degree, it also introduces the overall



degree learning goals that must be reached by graduation.

1. Explain social scientific research in terms of questions, theories, methods and findings
2. Construct, debate, and communicate arguments about social phenomena
3. Evaluate, integrate and critique information
4. Collaborate with diverse communities

For these reasons too, the course should be taken in conjunction with ISS 350: *Introduction to the ISS Portfolio*.

*Assessment of student work:*

Class participation and quizzes 20%

Midterm online quiz 30%

Final online exam 30%

Social science dictionary entries 20%

*Reading:*

Possible selected readings from: Elgin Hunt and David C. Colander, *Social Science: An Introduction to the Study of Society*, New York: Pearson, 2010 (14<sup>th</sup> edition); Jeffrey Nealon and Susan Searls Giroux, *The Theory Toolbox: Critical Concepts for Social Sciences*, Lanham Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011; and Stuart Hall, David Held, Don Hubert and Kenneth Thompson, *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, 1996; and, Tony Bennett; Lawrence Grossberg, Meaghan Morris, Raymond Williams *New keywords: a revised vocabulary*, Malden, MA : Blackwell Pub., 2005.

*Weekly themes:*

The following themes provide an ordering approach to the component theories, theoretical challenges and terminology recommended for inclusion in the course by ISS faculty. It will be updated and iteratively improved based on the evolving advice of both faculty and students in the program. It will also be integrated into an interdisciplinary suite of pedagogic modules by an online 'MC' whose role will be to introduce and combine the disciplinary contributions of the faculty rather than offer a single authoritative argument about what theory is most important. As well as watching the faculty videos and completing the online quizzes each week, students must do the assigned readings to prepare for the

midterm and final. In addition for each week they must research and write 2 paragraph long definitions for their own personalized online social science dictionary. Subsequently this dictionary will be incorporated into an updatable and fully revisable addition to each student's eportfolio.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC/GOAL	ASSIGNMENTS
1	Introduction to UW online	Assignment: Watch the welcome videos by the President, Provost, Dean and Director
2	Opportunities and challenges in theoretically integrating social sciences	Assignment: How does theoretical reflexivity distinguish and integrate the social sciences?
3	Archives and the importance of interpretation	Assignment: Study examples from the ISS faculty
4	Statistics and the significance of counting	Assignment: Study examples from the ISS faculty
5	Models and the implications of prediction	Assignment: Study examples from the ISS faculty
6	Structure and the challenges of explanation	Assignment: Study examples from the faculty
7	Power and the diversity of identification	Assignment: Study examples from the ISS faculty

<b>8</b>	Discourse and the ethics of representation	Assignment: Study examples from the faculty
<b>9</b>	Assemblage and the aftermath of deconstruction	Assignment: Study examples from the ISS faculty
<b>10</b>	Theory-building, keyword definitions and your-self	Assignment: Develop the reflective essay to begin the learning portfolio

## **ISS 350: INTRODUCTION TO PORTFOLIOS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

### Draft Syllabus

#### *Course Description*

We live in a world in which we are continuously immersed in information. We have chosen to emphasize *Integrated Social Sciences* because we believe the *skill* of integration is essential to such a world. Content knowledge is no longer enough to successfully navigate today's world; we need people who can synthesize, contextualize, and connect that content.

Over the course of your degree, you will take courses from many disciplines across the social sciences. This is a strength of this program: you will choose your own path, taking courses that fit your interests and goals. But the path should not be a random walk; it should have a purpose. By the time you graduate, your story should tell not only where you have gone, but also why you chose that path, and what you learned along the way.

The portfolio is the tool you will use to build that narrative. More than that, the portfolio is where you will practice the work of integration. That is a skill unto itself. You will do that through your individual reflection, but also as part of a community of people engaged in that work. In a conversation of travelers, you will learn from the journeys of others about how to make sense of your own. In many ways this is the heart of the Integrated Social Sciences degree.

#### **LEARNING GOALS**

ISS 350 has three core goals:

1. Build a learning portfolio.

The learning portfolio is not a technological tool. It is not simply a place to store documents or artifacts. Nor is it simply a place for personal reflection. It serves both of those purposes. But more than that, it is a place where you will do a particular kind of work that you will not do anywhere else. You will take the content from the other courses you are taking, and draw connections between them and to the other courses you have taken. This quarter, we will create the portfolio, establish its goals within the program, and begin to build the habit and practice that will define its work throughout your time in this program.

2. Begin developing individual learning goals.

This program has some learning goals that will apply to all students. But because all students will end up with different sets of courses, you will also develop a more individual set of learning goals. You probably already have some ideas about what you want to learn over the coming years. But those will evolve over time as you take more courses and learn more about the social sciences and the specific areas therein. This first quarter in ISS 350, we will begin creating the framework within which you can develop your learning goals over time. You will continue that work each quarter in ISS 355.

3. Build community among peers who will help develop that portfolio over time.

This may be the most important part of the portfolio. Your portfolio itself will be individual. But the work of integration is social. You must rely on others to help you make sense of what you are learning. You will discover your own learning not simply through reflection, but also by articulating your learning to others, receiving their feedback, and answering their questions – in short, by seeing your own learning through others' eyes.

That kind of discussion, about questions you have, connections you are seeing across courses, and the evolution of your own goals, will be possible because of the work you have done on your individual portfolio. When you say “I want to learn about X,” it may seem clear enough to you. But when others ask why you want to learn about X, or what you mean by X, or how you can understand X without understanding Y, you will be forced to more clearly think through and articulate your own goals and understanding. This is the process that underlies the portfolio. The portfolio is the means through which to engage others in conversation about your learning. In the end, it is as much a social tool as an individual one, a means of engagement and community as much as individual growth or introspection.

This is a key claim of the program: integration is collective work, even when the content is unique to your own interests. Though in many ways you will pursue your own individual path, you need a community of like-minded travelers to make sense of it.

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

Most of the work in this class will focus on the individual portfolio work. But this individual work will also provide a foundation for discussion in your advisory groups (see below).

The work of this class will consist of two key elements: your weekly portfolio work, and several presentations to subgroups. You will be assessed on:

Completion of portfolio assignments	70%
Presentations	15%
Feedback on presentations	15%

#### *A note on advisory groups*

All students are assigned to a small (~25 student) **learning advisory group**, led by an advisor. Each advisor will lead 4-5 of these groups. Advisors will “meet” with each group weekly. The groups will continue throughout the students’ life in the program. Some standard advising work will be done in these groups, while other advising will be done individually. The advisor will also use the portfolios as a basis for discussion, small group work, and so forth. Over time, advisory groups will include a mix of junior and senior students, to facilitate mentoring across cohorts or “generations.”

Student work in the advisory groups will be separate, but symbiotic with the work in ISS 350. Work in the advisory groups will not be graded, but will be able to rely on portfolio work already completed in ISS 350 (and in subsequent quarters, ISS 355).

## **READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

We will read selections from:

Arum, Richard, and Josipa Roska. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Beyer, Catharine, Gerald Gillmore, and Andrew Fisher. 2007. *Inside the Undergraduate Experience: The University of Washington’s Study of Undergraduate Learning*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company.

Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, New York: Continuum, 2000.

Lave, Jean, and Etienne Wenger. 1991. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*.

New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, Etienne. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

These materials will also be used in ISS 355.

Each week will include a digital lecture on the topic, as well as pre-reading notes for the week's materials. The schedule of assignments is below, including brief assignment summaries; full assignment prompts and instructions are found on the course webpage.

The weekly lecture and materials will be available at 8 AM Monday morning at the beginning of each week. All assignments should be published (within your own portfolio) by 11:59 PM PST the following Sunday.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC/GOAL	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
1	Introduction What is a portfolio?	Assignment: First reflections. What are your goals in this program? Why are you here?
2	Why are you here? Individual learning goals	Assignment: What does it mean to learn? - after Paulo Freire
3	What are the social sciences?	Assignment: Finding connections 1 Connecting individual interests and the material covered in ISS 301
4	Reflection as introspective activity: What is reflection? Reflection as responsible and consequential activity that	Assignment: Presenting reflection Is reflection a phenomenon of individuals, or of communities, or both? How can you integrate your own social expertise

	integrates the social sciences	into reflections that also allow for intellectual growth?  How do learning goals “converse” with course content?
<b>5</b>	Reflection as collective activity  What is the practice? What is good feedback in this practice? Negotiating public and private	Assignment: Reflecting on others’ reflection  Reflection on the first several weeks of content; presentation to small group.  Feedback to peers in your small group, which should include a review of learning goals.
<b>6</b>	Portfolio scaffolding through iterative reflection	Assignment: build the foundations for interdisciplinary integration through iterative reflection on learning on similar topics in different disciplinary courses.  How do you know if you have learned something? we learn continuously, how can learning goals ever be “completed”?
<b>7-8</b>	What is integration?	Assignment: Finding connections 2  Articulate connections between substantive content from your other course(s), current and past. Iteration should include a revisiting of initial learning goals and reflections on how these are shifting and changing.  <i>Assignment: Iteration of weekly reflections</i>  Summary and synthesis of weekly reflections into single document.
<b>9</b>	Reflection as performance	Assignment: Publishing reflections  How does individual reflection relate to the public performance of learning? What does it mean to

		demonstrate that you have learned something? Who are the audiences for such work?
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## **ISS 355: ISS PORTFOLIO SEMINAR**

### Draft Syllabus

#### Course Description

In ISS 350 you began the process of developing a Learning E-portfolio in which you began to articulate connections between substantive content learned in your Social Science courses, as well as began a process of reflection on your learning in different contexts (private and public, individual and social.) ISS 355 is designed to continue the essential integration and reflection work on an intersecting trajectory with developing content and disciplinary knowledge over time. By the time you graduate, your story should tell not only where you have gone, but also why you chose that path, and what you learned along the way. Moreover, you should have developed the skills to communicate your learning in different ways to different audiences. This means that your repeated seminars in 355 should allow you over time to accomplish three distinct goals: namely, i) an introspective process of reflection on your learning, ii) an intellectual infrastructure-building or ‘scaffolding’ process through which you build interdisciplinary insights, and iii) a showcasing capability through which you will be able to communicate your learning to diverse audiences. Put together these three elements - **INTROSPECTION, SCAFFOLDING, & SHOWCASING** - comprise the ISS Portfolio.

Each subsequent quarter of ISS 355 (taken 4 times over the course of your degree) you will continue integrating the work of the past quarter (in Winter, students would reflect on the Autumn courses they had just completed) into the ongoing narrative and learning plan. The Learning E-portfolio is the tool you will use to build that narrative. More than that, the portfolio is where you will practice the work of integration and interdisciplinary scaffolding. This involves comparing and contrasting how similar social science issues are framed and examined in different ways in different disciplines. It is also a skill unto itself. You will develop this skill through your individual reflection, but also as part of a community of people engaged in that work. In a conversation of travelers, you will learn from the journeys of others about how to make sense of your own. In many ways this is the heart of the Integrated Social Sciences degree.

#### ***LEARNING GOALS***

ISS 355 has three core goals:



1. Continue to develop the Learning E- portfolio.

The Learning E-portfolio is a personalized web-based collection of work that documents, demonstrates, and contextualizes your experience in the ISS Program. As learning tools, portfolios do several important things. First, via the learning plan they allow you to better plan and track your progress toward your personal learning goals while also ensuring that you are meeting the requirements of the major and the UW. Second, they are integrative spaces that allow you to draw connections between different elements of your educational experience with feedback from instructors, advisors and peers. Third, they are reflective spaces where you can comment on your own work and see more clearly how you change and develop as you progress through your educational career. Fourth, they are records of your personal educational journey where you can display the skills, knowledge, and ability that you acquire during your time in the ISS Program. And fifth, they are a way for your instructors, advisors, and peers to view your work in a holistic format and provide you with feedback.

ISS 350 emphasized that learning is never “finished” but is a practice that unfolds over a lifetime. ISS 355 will reinforce and deepen this practice over time in a community of learners.

2. Continue to develop individual learning goals.

This program has some learning goals that will apply to all students. But because all students will end up with different sets of courses, you will also develop a more individual set of learning goals in the form of a learning plan. These goals are not static but will evolve over time as you take more courses and learn more about the social sciences and the specific areas therein. You will continue this work each quarter in ISS 355.

3. Build community among peers who will help develop that portfolio over time.

This may be the most important part of the portfolio. Your portfolio itself will be individual. But the work of integration is social. You must rely on others to help you make sense of what you are learning. You will discover your own learning not simply through reflection, but also by articulating your learning to others, receiving their feedback, and answering their questions – in short, by seeing your own learning through others’ eyes.

That kind of discussion, about questions you have, connections you are seeing across courses, and the evolution of your own goals, will be possible because of the work you have done on your individual portfolio. When you say “I want to learn about X,” it may seem clear enough to you. But when others ask why you want to learn about X, or what you mean by X, or how you can understand X without understanding Y, you will be forced to more clearly think through and articulate your own goals and understanding. This is the process that underlies the portfolio. The portfolio is the means through which

to engage others in conversation about your learning. In the end, it is as much a social tool as an individual one, a means of engagement and community as much as individual growth or introspection.

This is a key claim of the program: integration is collective work, even when the content is unique to your own interests. Though in many ways you will pursue your own individual path, you need a community of like-minded travelers to make sense of it.

**GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

Most of the work in this class will focus on the individual portfolio work. But this individual work will also provide a foundation for discussion in your advisory groups (see note on advisory groups below).

The work of this class will consist of two key elements: your weekly portfolio work, and several presentations and peer feedback to subgroups. Your instructor will assess you on:

Completion of portfolio assignments	50%
Portfolio presentations	25%
Peer review on other’s presentations	25%

**ASSIGNMENTS**

Your lecturer will send you weekly assignments, evaluate your completion of these assignments, and provide guidance towards future assignments. Brief assignment summaries are included below; full assignment prompts and instructions are found on the course webpage.

Assignments will be available at 8 AM Monday morning at the beginning of each week. All assignments should be published (within your own portfolio) by 11:59 PM PST the following Sunday.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>TOPIC/GOAL</b>	<b>READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>Assessment %</b>
<b>1</b>	Reflection #1: Your portfolio as a work in process	Assignment: First reflections. Look back at your portfolio from last quarter. Do you feel that it accurately reflects the work you did last quarter? How did your work address the 4 ISS learning Describe your goals for your portfolio this quarter.	Completion of Portfolio assignment: 10%
<b>2</b>	Reflection #2:	Assignment: Look back at assignment	Completion of

	Why are you here?	#1 from ISS 350 or ISS 355. Have your goals changed since then? What are your goals right now? Why are you here? Why did you sign up for the classes you did this quarter? Provide a narrative of your learning plan, past and present	Portfolio assignment: 10%
3	Portfolio presentation #1: Reconnect with community	Assignment: Present your portfolio, your learning goals and narrative of learning plan to small group. Provide peer feedback of reflections to members of your group.	Presentation: 5% Peer Feedback: 5%
4	Reflection #3 Negotiating public and private reflection	Assignment: Reflecting on others' reflection of your work. Feedback to peers in your small group.	Completion of Portfolio assignment: 10% Peer Feedback: 5%
5	Reflection#4: Articulating connections	Assignment: Articulate connections between substantive content from your other course(s), current and past. How will you represent this work here in the portfolio? Assignment: Iteration of weekly reflections Summary and synthesis of weekly reflections into single document.	Completion of Portfolio assignment: 10%
6	Reflection #5: Peer review (Presentation)	Assignment: Present your iteration of weekly reflection to small group. Provide peer feedback of weekly reflection to members of your group.	Presentation: 5% Peer Feedback: 5%
7	Reflection #6: Negotiating public and private reflection	Assignment: Reflecting on others' reflection of your work. Feedback to peers in your small group.	Completion of Portfolio assignment: 10% Peer Feedback: 5%
8	Portfolio presentation #2	Assignment: Present your portfolio and your learning goals to small group.	Presentation: 5% Peer Feedback: 5%

		Provide peer feedback of reflections to members of your group.	
9	Reflection # 7: Reflection on Portfolio performance	Reflect on week one and your goals for your portfolio this quarter. Have you met your goals or did you reframe new goals? How would you like to use your portfolio in the future?	Presentation of final Portfolio: 10%

## ISS 401: ISS CAPSTONE COURSE

### Draft Syllabus

#### Course Description

The ISS degree concludes with the ISS 401 Capstone. Taken in the student's final quarter, this 5-credit course allows you to take part in a culminating capstone project while at the same time showcasing your work to outside audiences. The goal of this course is to synthesize what you have learned throughout the degree as well as show people (including yourself) what you have learned and what you are capable of doing.

The ISS 401 Capstone consists of 3 parts:

- 1) Present a polished version of your Learning Plan. Up until now, starting in ISS 350 and continuing in multiple quarters of ISS 355, you will have completed several iterations of your Learning Plan. The plan should demonstrate evolution over time in ways that connect your learning intentions, connections across coursework, and learning outcomes--what you had hoped to have learned and what you actually did learn. The Learning Plan will be “finalized” in this quarter and presented in your portfolio.
- 2) Showcase your ISS Capstone Project. Up until now you will have planned and possibly partly executed your Capstone Project which you began to think about in ISS 350 and developed over multiple quarters of ISS 355. In ISS 401 you will focus on finalizing your project work and showcasing it to an outside audience of faculty, peers, advisors, and possibly other outside audiences. If you choose, it can be featured in your Capstone Portfolio as an example of your work.
- 3) Complete a Capstone Portfolio, which is a more public version of your Learning Portfolio for external audiences. Up until this year, the learning portfolio has served as an educational tool, which included documenting and reflecting on failures as much as successes. The portfolio developed in the

capstone course will include a translation of this learning portfolio to a more promotional portfolio where you can communicate persuasively about their learning and abilities with future audiences of potential employers, friends and family, or graduate school admissions committees.

ISS 401 is a writing intensive course. Students must receive a minimum course grade of 2.5 in the portfolio capstone to graduate.

### The Capstone Project

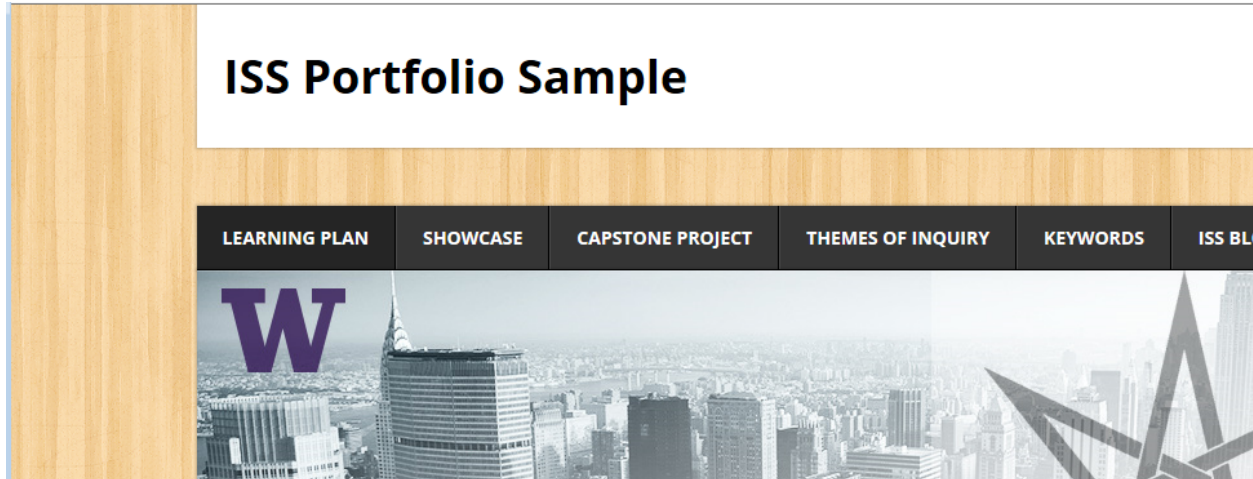
The Capstone Project is an opportunity to show people (including yourself) what you have learned and what you are capable of doing, as well as a way to assess your own abilities at the end of your time in the ISS degree. Beyond that, the Capstone Project should be something of consequence to you. It should be meaningful to you as well as a source of pride.

## *The ISS Learning Portfolio*

The model e-portfolio linked [here](#) and below contains samples and excerpts of various sections which would be further completed over the course of the degree with artifacts, reflections, instructor feedback, course plans, blogs, annotated bibliographies, websites and other learning resources. Our model does not represent a finished portfolio a student would prepare as the final 'show-case' for a potential employer or other external audiences, but rather the internal, interactive learning space where a student has assembled iterations of work over several quarters of ISS 350 and ISS 355.

<http://issonlinedegreecompletion.weebly.com/> (*please click on this link to interact with the model portfolio we have constructed*)

## ISS Portfolio Sample



We want to note that in developing this model portfolio, we borrowed features and practices from the teaching and learning innovation that has already been extensively piloted across UW. Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at UW Bothell has enjoyed very successful results with eportfolios (see <https://www.uwb.edu/ias/undergraduate/iasdegreeportfolio>), and some similar innovations using student reflection to generate substantive instructional outcomes have already been the basis for important innovations on the Seattle campus too, including in Human Centered Design & Engineering (<http://www.hcde.washington.edu/research/turns>), UW Honors (<https://sites.google.com/a/uw.edu/the-honors-portfolio/portfolio-examples>) and Community Environment and Planning (<http://cep.be.washington.edu/current-students/e-portfolios/>).

What all of this experience already underlines is that eportfolio-based student reflection leads to both substantive learning and serious metacognitive awareness about the learning process. Moreover, given the fact that one of the sorts of communication skills we want our ISS student to develop involves communicating with diverse audiences with digital media, the eportfolio infrastructure for the degree will also yield significant skills training benefits in addition to the metacognitive and interdisciplinary insights into how the social sciences intersect around the 7 thematic areas.

### *3) Capacity and staffing*

We have a clear plan and budget to build the capacity we need to offer 301, 350 and 355 in the first year. 301 is a 5 credit course, but it bears noting that 350 and 355 are only 2 credit courses. They all also have distinct development and delivery plans associated with them.

The content of 301 will be developed this year in concert with all the social science teaching faculty who are already developing content courses for the degree. All 35 of them will be invited to provide short video lectures on the their intellectual backgrounds and the theories and/or theorists they want students to be familiar with before coming into their courses. They will all also be invited to suggest a key reading and 5 theoretical keywords they view as critical. Then, organized partly around this material, a smaller team of dedicated faculty and staff will create the online instructional infrastructure, assignments and assessment tools over the rest of the year (adding to it recorded welcomes by senior administration, and online introductions to the use of library resources for research). Subsequently the actual teaching of 301 will employ a lecturer and TAs for the single entering class.

In addition to hiring the lecturer for 301, we also plan this year to hire 3 more lecturers who will in turn provide the core instructional capabilities for 350 and 355 (for a total of 4 new lecturer hires). We do not want to hire these new faculty before we have approval (UW has already invested about \$500,000 in all the course development contracts and allied planning efforts and so we have to be as prudent as possible). But, should approval be forthcoming, we remain confident that we will be able to hire these lecturers in good time to prepare them for teaching the core courses in the Fall of 2014. Each lecturer for 350 and 355 would be responsible for about 125 students each quarter, but teaching these courses will be their main job.

Also on the capacity-building side, we should note that we also plan to hire 3 advisors for the program, as well as the Director of Advising for whom we have already searched and are currently finalizing an appointment letter. This advising team will play a key integrative role in the degree, including their work in monitoring the student learning plans that come out of 355 and facilitating the associated forms of peer feedback on learning portfolios. Again we will not move forward on hiring the advisors until after approval, but we anticipate easily being able to find and hire well-qualified people thereafter.





# Sample Full-time Pathway




Year 1:

AUTUMN	WINTER	SPRING
ISS 301 (5) Intro	ISS 355 (2)	ISS 355 (2)
ISS 350 (2)	GEOG 478 (5)	GEOG 323 (5)
COM 468 (5)	ASTR 101 (5)	COM/AES/GWS 389 (5)
		MUSIC 120 (5)

Year 2:

AUTUMN	WINTER	SPRING
ISS 355 (2)	ISS 355 (2)	ISS 401 (5) Capstone
PHIL 102 (5)	JSIS 331 (5)	JSISA 425 (5)
GEOG 381 (5)	PSYCH 101 (5)	PSYCH 202 (5)
SOC 362 (5)	HIST 485 (5)	

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ISS Integrative Core		20 credits	<b>Total credits = 90</b>
ISS Program Courses		50 credits	
General Electives		20 credits	

(See "Distribution Map" for Course Descriptions and Mapping onto Themes of Inquiry)

### Sample Part-time Pathway

In the graphic directly below, the same courses included in the full-time pathway are distributed over 4 years instead of 2. Note that the only difference is the inclusion of a COM 220 (Intro to Public Speaking) course. It is included in this example because students require 6 or more credits to be eligible for financial aid.

AUTUMN	WINTER	SPRING
ISS 301 (5) Intro	COM 468 (5)	GEOG 478 (5)
ISS 350 (2)	ASTR 101 (5)	ISS 355 (2)

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AUTUMN	WINTER	SPRING
COM/AES/GWS 389 (5)	GEOG 323 (5)	PHIL 102 (5)
MUSIC 120 (5)	ISS 355 (2)	PSYCH 101 (5)

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AUTUMN	WINTER	SPRING
JSIS 331 (5)	HIST 485 (5)	ISS 355 (2)
ISS 355 (2)	PSYCH 202 (5)	SOC 362 (5)

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AUTUMN	WINTER
JSISA 425 (5)	GEOG 381 (5)
COM 220 (5)	ISS 401 (5) Capstone

## Distribution Map

Below is a diagram of how each class included in the sample full-time and part-time pathways maps onto the themes of inquiry. The dark purple areas indicate the theme of record associated with a particular class, while the lighter purple areas indicate overlap with other themes of inquiry.

	Themes of Inquiry →	Info & Tech Society	Pop Dynamics & Movements	Conflict & Coop	Diversity & Global Justice	Societal inequal & Power Rel	Social Contexts Health/Risk	Soc & Environ	General Electives
COM 468	Journalism Ethics	Dark Purple			Light Purple				
GEOG 478	Social Justice and the City		Dark Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple				
GEOG 323	Globalization & You			Light Purple	Dark Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple		
COM/AES/G WS 389	Race, Gender, & Sexuality in Media	Dark Purple		Light Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple			
PHIL 102	Contemporary Moral Problems		Light Purple	Dark Purple	Light Purple		Light Purple	Light Purple	
SOC 362	Race & Ethn in US				Light Purple	Dark Purple			
Geog 381	Mapping Health	Light Purple	Light Purple			Light Purple	Dark Purple	Light Purple	
JSIS 331	Political Economy of Development			Light Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple		Light Purple	
JSIS A 435	Japanese Politics			Dark Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple			
HIST 485	Compar Colonialism		Light Purple	Light Purple	Dark Purple	Light Purple			
ASTR 101	Astronomy 101								NW
Music 120	Survey of Music								VLPA
Psych 101	Intro to Psychology								I&S
Psych 202	Biopsychology								NW

*Continuation Policy:* UW has general regulations governing scholastic eligibility for continuance. Integrated Social Sciences will apply these with both rigor and care, drawing on all the resources of our advising and continuous assessment capabilities to maximise the possibility of retaining students in the program and supporting them all the way through to completion. This means that the following criteria will be applied to all ISS students as a basis for continuance in the program.

a) Each ISS major must create an academic plan with their advisor as part of their portfolio development process. These plans will lay out both the courses the students have taken and those they still hope to take in their personal pathway towards completion. All such plans will be maintained as part of each student's overall library of e-portfolio artifacts.

- b) When withdrawing from a course required for the degree, a student must clearly communicate with an ISS advisor to obtain approval of the revised academic plan.
- c) Students must review their learning plans with an ISS advisor at least once per year.
- d) Students' e-portfolios will be reviewed quarterly by their ISS advisors. If their course work is found to be significantly out of line with their academic plans and there is no sign of effort to address the problem, they will be issued a one-time warning letter. Such letters will address the ways in which students are falling short of their plans and make suggestions for rectification. If students fail to respond adequately, they will then be put on probation in writing. If students on probation fail to address the concerns being raised by the advisors, they should be notified that they are to be dismissed from the degree. Nevertheless, to prevent premature dismissal to maximize BA completion possibilities, all students will be allowed to contest such as dismissal by writing a formal and detailed letter to the Director of ISS. The Director will review all available information and then decide where or not academic probation should be continued for another quarter or whether the contested dismissal remains valid. Any such student contestation must be made within 30 days of notice of dismissal, and the Director's response should also follow within 30 days thereafter. This role of the Director relates in turn to the overall leadership and governance structure proposed for the degree.

## **Leadership and Governance**

### *Director*

The ISS degree will be directed by a faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. Ideal qualities for a director include an outstanding scholarly record, excellent pedagogical skills, experience in working with an online environment, and a deeply interdisciplinary orientation. The inaugural director is Professor Matt Sparke (JSIS/GEOG), who began a three-year term on July 1, 2013.

### *Steering Committee*

The primary governance mechanism will be a Steering Committee composed of faculty and advising staff nominated by Chairs of the Social Science units. Members will be appointed for specific, renewable, terms. We intend to include at least one representative from each Social Science academic unit. When participation by other UW academic units increases to a significant level, they will also have representation on the Steering Committee. (Invitations to participate have been issued to UWS Psychology, UWB, UWT, College of the Environment, School of Social Work, College of Education,

the Information School, and the Evans School of Public Affairs. These units have expressed interest in being kept up to date. One faculty member from UWB will be participating in the initial course offerings; we anticipate many others will participate in the degree over time.) This committee will begin its work in Autumn Quarter 2013.

### *Faculty*

Courses in the degree program will be taught by a mix of current UW faculty and new hires. We are encouraged by the fact that the pedagogical expertise of those who are already designing and/or teaching courses for this degree is exceedingly high. This group includes recipients of the UW Distinguished Teaching Award, the Undergraduate Research Symposium Mentor Award, and dozens of those who receive the highest student evaluations in the Social Sciences Division quarter after quarter, year after year.

With a projected enrollment of approximately 300 FTE in the first year (approximately 450 individuals), we anticipate needing approximately 40 courses at the inauguration of the degree. With growth up to 800 FTE, we will need 60-70 more courses by the fifth year of the degree program. The majority of courses will be capped at 45 students; there will be a few larger lecture courses, supported by TAs. In addition, the integration seminars will have an enrollment cap, likely no higher than 25 students per section.

For the first three years of the degree, instructors can either teach a given course for the online degree as a part of their regular instructional load, in which case the department receives instructional replacement funds in proportion to the percentage of the faculty's teaching load directed toward teaching in the online degree, or the faculty member receives excess compensation in the same percentage. For tenure line faculty, the percentage is typically 25%, since Social Sciences faculty have a four course teaching load. For lecturers, the percentage is typically 17%, since Social Sciences lecturers have a six course teaching load. After the degree has been offered for three years, excess compensation is no longer allowed, and the courses must be treated as part of the instructor's regular teaching load.

Importantly, the instruction of the online courses will be distributed across the faculty in any given academic unit; we do not intend to have a separate faculty that teaches only in the online program, and will attempt to design incentive systems that encourage participation by a broad range of faculty.

Current resources: With the establishment of a growing set of online pilot courses in Autumn of 2009, as well as some courses currently being developed for this new degree, there are already about twenty social science courses available in an online format. We anticipate needing to hire approximately 15 new faculty over the next five years in order to staff the curriculum for this degree. This will be a mix of tenure line faculty and instructional line faculty. We are offering Social Science units the opportunity to

conduct searches for new hires in conjunction with staffing this degree, based on an incentive structure such that with each new authorized hire, a unit must commit to teaching four courses in the ISS degree. If they are authorized to hire a tenure line faculty member, no additional courses are generated for the department's day program. If they are authorized to hire a lecturer, two additional courses are generated for the day program, given the six course instructional load associated with lecturer positions.

We hope to have participation from each Social Science unit; currently all but three units have courses included in the program.

### *Advising staff*

Academic student support will be coordinated by the Faculty Director and the Director of Academic Advising and Services through teams consisting of course instructors, academic advisors, and learning analytics specialists (also known as retention specialists or e-coaches). Through the integrative portfolio curriculum, students will create content that will be incorporated into a new inquiry-based, learning-centered advising model based on social practice, ongoing reflection, and collaboration. Continued participation in this integrative core will enhance student community and contribute to sustained relationships throughout their time in the program. Advisors will also provide traditional support to students such as degree planning, assistance with administrative challenges, and appropriate referrals to resources such as the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of the Registrar, the Libraries, etc. Advising staff will assist prospective students in determining the appropriateness of this program to their educational and professional goals.

We have also budgeted for a variety of staff positions, in addition to academic advisors and coaches. We will hire analytics experts, instructional developers, videographers, and provide a variety of support functions such as financial and marketing expertise through UWEO, which offers basic services for most fee-based degrees at the UW.

### **Program Assessment**

A signature feature of ISS will be the ongoing iterative articulation of program assessment with student assessment. Our online integration of student learning will provide a suite of student tracking, feedback and assessment tools which we will use to enhance overall program teaching, retention, and planning, as well as to provide immediate feedback and reassurance to students themselves about how well they are progressing towards course and degree completion. We will rely on these five particular kinds of online learning analytics:

- i) Passive metrics produced by the ways in which individual students interact with online course infrastructure, including the core courses, integrative seminars, and e-portfolios. For example, the number and dates of student interactions with our system, when they log on and off, the time they spend reading and watching course material, their involvement in webinars and online chat rooms, and so on, will all provide a basic way of tracking student engagement with the program.
- ii) In-course and end-of-course quizzes, exams and surveys conducted by instructors will actively assess student learning and solicit student feedback on course content.
- iii) End of course evaluations will be conducted to assess the quality of instruction based on student feedback.
- iv) Program-wide surveys of students will actively assess student learning and and solicit student feedback on their progress towards the overall degree learning goals.
- v) E-portfolios will provide not only students but also the advising staff and Director with qualitative as well as quantitative assessments of overall student learning.

All these learning analytics will also allow for constant student self-assessment. In this respect they will be vital supports for enabling our students' responsibility for their own learning, including the meta-cognitive 'learning about learning' and global citizenship skills we want the ISS degree to impart. The same assessment tools will also allow the advisors and director to assemble a constantly updated and comprehensive picture of the overall health of the degree.

To further augment the online assessment process, the director will also bring together the ISS teaching faculty on a regular basis for workshops designed to assess how well the online infrastructure for the program is working, to share best teaching practices and build an expert community that is committed to ongoing program improvement. As part of this process faculty will be provided a compilation of assessment data created by the ISS student services and advising director. In turn the faculty will be invited to share feedback on the course design process, and assess the ways in which the various learning analytics described above can be incorporated back into course and program improvements.

The steering committee for the ISS degree will review the assessment data compiled by the ISS advising and student service director. Together with the whole advising staff and director, they will review the data and make recommendations for improvements based on the overall picture of program health.

During the fifth year of the program, the College of Arts and Sciences will conduct an external review of the ISS degree, modeled on decadal departmental program reviews. The deans will appoint a review committee and decide on the details of the review process in consultation with the program director. The review committee will include UW faculty and staff who are not in ISS but who have expertise



and/or academic interest in the online access issues with which ISS is engaged. The committee would also include at least two external academic experts in online social science education.

Prior to the review committee's visit, the ISS director will prepare a report with the help of the advising staff on the program's accomplishments and challenges, including 5 year data on student performance, assessments, completion rates and experiences after graduation. The external review committee will address the effectiveness of the degree in meeting student needs, as well as the overall quality of instruction, course content, and integrative mechanisms. The committee will also be invited to assess the degree to which the program provides adequate support for faculty development, training and compensation for their online teaching, as well as whether the relationships with all the oncampus social science programs are working in mutually beneficial ways. The relationship between UWEO and ISS will also be the subject of the review process which should therefore provide opportunities for gathering assessments from the vice provost of educational outreach and key staff associated with online course development and delivery. In addition the committee will assess the administration of the program, and whether or not modifications needs to be made in terms of staffing and support.

On conclusion of the review, the deans will decide whether ISS should continue as is, should be revised or terminated. After this initial review, the deans will also decide whether/when to schedule the next review.

Note: Words in red are Patricia Kramer's questions/ comments to ISS/Matt Sparke. Words in black are ISS responses.

1. There is substantial unease about "capacity." If 300 students actually enroll next fall, that's 12 sections of ISS 301 and another 12 sections of ISS 350. And then there would have to be at least 10 sections of 355 every quarter. Who teaches those courses? Do we have that many faculty who have the expertise, desire and availability to do that? One section, maybe 2, seems doable, but 12!?

- 1) We do have a clear plan and budget to build the capacity we need to offer 301, 350 and 355 in the first year. 301 is a 5 credit course, but it bears noting that 350 and 355 are only 2 credit courses. They all also have distinct development and delivery plans associated with them.

The content of 301 will be developed this year in concert with all the social science teaching faculty who are already developing content courses for the degree. All 35 of

them will be invited to provide short video lectures on the their intellectual backgrounds and the theories and/or theorists they want students to be familiar with before coming into their courses. They will all also be invited to suggest a key theory reading and 5 theoretical keywords they view as critical. Then, organized partly around this material, a smaller team of dedicated faculty and staff will create the online instructional infrastructure, assignments and assessment tools over the rest of the year (adding to it recorded welcomes by senior administration, and online introductions to the use of library resources for research). Subsequently all these materials will be used by the lecturer and TAs who teach 301 to our entering students.

In addition to hiring the lecturer for 301, we also plan this year to hire 3 more lecturers who will in turn provide the core instructional capabilities for 350 and 355 (for a total of 4 new lecturer hires). We do not want to hire these new faculty before we have senate approval (UW has already invested about \$500,000 in all the course development contracts and allied planning efforts and so we have to be as prudent as possible). But, should approval be forthcoming, we remain confident that we will be able to hire these lecturers in time to prepare them for teaching the core courses in the Fall of 2014. Each lecturer for 350 and 355 would be responsible for about 125

students each quarter; teaching these courses will be their main job.

Also on the capacity-building side, I should note that we also plan to hire 3 advisors for the program, as well as the Director of Advising for whom we have already conducted a search and are interviewing this week. As you know, these advisors will play a key integrative role in the degree, including their work in monitoring the student learning plans that come out of 355 and facilitating the associated forms of peer feedback on learning portfolios. Again we will not move forward on hiring the advisors until after approval, but we anticipate easily being able to find and hire well-qualified people thereafter. Space for these advisors will be secured in the UW tower.

2. There seems like so much work left to be done. For instance, what do the syllabi for ISS 301, 350, 355 look like? Has anyone taught these courses before, because courses that look good on paper, sometimes don't pan out. Will there be a manageable pilot where the ideas can be tested? Do we (A&S/FCAS/UW) approve a huge experiment before the details are worked out?

2) As mentioned above the syllabi for the core ISS courses are already near completion. We want to allow room for feedback and refinement by the ISS teaching faculty, the ISS steering committee, and the A&S curriculum committee, but we will still be able to share draft syllabi by next week, as well as a model eportfolio. On the latter it is important for us to underline that this is a teaching and learning innovation that has already been extensively piloted across UW. Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at UW Bothell has enjoyed very successful results with eportfolios (see <https://www.uwb.edu/ias/undergraduate/iasdegreeportfolio>), and some similar innovations using student reflection to generate substantive instructional outcomes have already been the basis for important developments on the Seattle campus too, including in Human Centered Design & Engineering (<http://www.hcde.washington.edu/research/turns>), UW Honors (<https://sites.google.com/a/uw.edu/the-honors-portfolio/portfolio-examples>) and Community Environment and Planning (<http://cep.be.washington.edu/current-students/e-portfolios/>). What all of this experience already underlines is that eportfolio-based student reflection leads to both substantive learning and serious metacognitive awareness about the learning process. Moreover, given the fact that one of the communication skills we want our ISS student

to develop involves communicating with diverse audiences through digital media, the eportfolio infrastructure for the degree will also yield significant skills training. These benefits are in addition to the metacognitive and interdisciplinary insights into how the social sciences intersect around the 7 thematic areas.

3. More work needs to be done in articulating the tracks. For instance, is there any combination of courses that does not work? Should there be a distribution across departments, for instance? Is 30 upper division credits really enough for a degree from UW--consider that ALL the transfer courses might be lower division.

- 3) On the 7 thematic areas we must stress that these are the antithesis of traditional 'vertical' tracks through a major. They are better conceptualized as 'horizontal' networks across the major. We are demanding that ISS students take courses in 5 out of the 7 thematic areas because we want them to build integrative breadth, and we want them to do so, moreover, in an interdisciplinary way (for example, coming at a question about social inequality through the lens of Economics in one course, and then coming back to it through the lens of

Anthropology, International Studies or Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies in other courses). This means that the answer to the question about insisting on distributing across disciplines is clearly 'yes'. Students cannot count one course for more than one thematic area, and so they will have to keep sampling courses across disciplines and will generally find it very hard to stay in any single disciplinary groove. Mainly, though, what will "not work" will be an unplanned and unreflective approach by students to taking courses. We will create a rubric for judging precisely this. We will also provide students with model learning plans, along with model learning portfolios. The purpose of these tools will be to help ensure that their trajectory across the interdisciplinary areas of the degree will be reflective and purposeful. It will also be assessed as such in the 355 courses, and in the same way, made open for revision and improvement along the way. Although 30 upper division credits appears quite common in many undergraduate degrees offered at UW, we are actually asking for almost double this by the end. If you include - which we do - all 20 credits in the ISS core courses, this adds up to a minimum of 50 upper division credits. Moreover, I should note that given the course options we are providing our students it would be very hard indeed for them to take just 10 courses (6 content courses and 4 core courses) in ISS and graduate. In reality, they will end up taking more than this because there are so few lower level courses available online in the program.

4. If a student comes in with 75 credits, they need 105 more to graduate. The rules only allow 90 credits of DL to count toward a degree. Will you be requesting a waiver, or a change to the student regs? FYI, UWT's criminal justice is asking for a waiver.

4) We will be requesting a waiver following the lead of ECFS & UWT.

5. How does a student, after 1 only content course in social science (ISS 301), know enough to be able to create any sort of integrated experience for themselves? How do peers do review of course plans/integration when they aren't themselves knowledgeable about integration? Do social science upper division courses not have pre-requisites? (No social science admission requirements.) Is one foundational/content course (ISS 301) really all that will unite the knowledge base of ISS graduates? What will the degree mean to outsiders (potential employers, for instance)? Is there another university that offers this degree?



5) 301 is an introduction and while it will serve as a foundational launch pad for the students into the degree, it is not meant to do all the course mapping and integration work itself. Instead, this will be the guided process facilitated by the combination with 350 and then the iterative reflection and revision dynamics students undertake in 355. Students doing peer evaluation of one another's eportfolio entries and learning plans will be obliged to use our [rubric](#) for this work. It will not be an anarchic free-for-all, but rather a guided process of [refinement](#) (following the recommendations of a now extensive literature on eportfolios as well as the lessons learned from model pilots such as the one at Stanford University <http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/using-e-portfolios-support-undergraduate-learning-career-experiment-academic-advising>).

A few upper level social science courses do occasionally require pre-reqs (*eg* in JSIS), but most do not. All ISS courses do NOT, and it's important again to emphasize that the way our students will build knowledge through the degree will involve building bridges horizontally rather than moving through some sort of vertical step program that is more common in the natural sciences and engineering. In any event 301 is not doing all the integrative work on its own, it simply lays a foundation for

this. It will be very strongly supported by the 350 and 355 eportfolio development process, and this in turn will culminate in the 401 capstone. A key aspect of the capstone experience will then involve showcasing and communicating out of the eportfolios what students have learned. Our plan in this respect is to work with WA state employers (and related state agencies in Olympia) to design capstone communication challenges and allied social media projects such that the experience will prepare students well for explaining their degree and their learning to potential employers. In this respect, one very well respected model of an Integrated Social Science BA we will be following is that of the Open University in the UK (see <http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/qualification/social-sciences/index.htm>). The Combined Social Sciences version of this degree lists the following values of this education vis-à-vis a global labor market, and the list also emphasizes the capacity of students graduating from such a degree to “integrate rather than compartmentalise knowledge.”

## **Career relevance and employability**

Employers rate social science graduates particularly highly for the diversity of their transferable skills and breadth of mind. This interdisciplinary BA (Hons) Combined Social Sciences incorporates breadth – enabling you to understand the contexts of your studies – as well as depth. The range of subjects and perspectives covered will demonstrate your adaptability and versatility to employers, who’ll also value your ability to evaluate data and evidence in a variety of ways, and to integrate rather than compartmentalise knowledge. You’ll also be able to draw together ideas about a range of issues affecting individuals and society, including the economy; work; gender; race; social inequalities; social norms; crime; policy;

environment; international studies; and relationships.

This degree course develops valuable transferable and work-related skills including:

- using ICT to research, select and present information
- analysing and evaluating data
- clear, concise written communication
- assembling reasoned arguments for particular audiences
- using a range of formats: essays, presentations, reports, collaborative working, online forums
- valuing critical feedback to reflect on progress and improve your work
- working under your own steam and without constant direction

Graduates may find employment in such areas as:

- national and local government and public administration
- health and social care
- education
- charitable organisations
- public relations, media and market research
- planning and environmental management
- police, law and criminal justice
- business and commerce.

6. How will a student fail? What is the criteria by which a plan of courses is deemed not acceptable? Will advisors have the authority to "fail" a student for lack of a good plan or is that done by the instructor of ISS 355, or not until ISS 401? We all know that students won't do what they are advised to do, so the criteria for failure has to be

explicit and enforceable.

6) Students will be found to 'fail' in three distinct ways.

First, in the tried and true fashion of just failing individual social science courses one by one, and doing so badly they just cannot meet the GPA reqs to graduate.

Second, by being found by the lecturers for 355 to have not done the required work needed to develop a learning plan and portfolio.

Third, by being unable to communicate any integrated learning outcomes in the capstone experience – by which point such failure will also reflect a significant program failure too.

In all these cases, though, we believe that the integrative infrastructure and allied learning analytics available us as

the faculty and staff running the program will allow us to intervene and improve the educational experience before it's too late. We obviously want to do all we can to help our students achieve the completion that a 'degree completion' BA automatically implies.