

Accessible Sample Syllabus for IDS 495A

IDS 495A Interdisciplinary Studies Capstone

Course Description:

IDS 495A entails the completion and presentation of a portfolio demonstrating a synthesis of the student's areas of study. The portfolio may include a comprehensive report, specialized field experience, internship, or creative production reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the plan of study. It also reflects the personal and intellectual growth of IDS students over time. The course must be taken in the student's last semester before graduation.

Course Objectives:

It is the objective of IDS 495A to provide students with a forum to demonstrate their academic competency, particularly in their areas of study, and to present to their peers, and the Capstone Committee, their Interdisciplinary Studies portfolio. The other component is a project that demands the framing of a significant question or set of questions, the research or creative exploration to find answers, and the communication skills to convey the results to audiences both expert and uninitiated in the subject matter. Accompanied by a researcher's/artist's statement, the project will reflect the student's incorporation of these skills on both a professional and personal level.

Capstone Project:

Your project illustrates the extent to which you can manage a significant independent study in a thoughtful and professional manner. It is the culmination of your undergraduate degree/program. Whatever form it takes, it should grow out of your two areas of study. Your project may be writing an interdisciplinary research paper, creating curriculum materials, designing a computer program, developing a specialized model, producing a documentary video, building a prosthetic device, etc.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

In line with the University's Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULO's), upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- contribute to critical conversations about interdisciplinary theory and practice
- demonstrate the complexity of problems and identify different perspectives from which problems and questions can be viewed
- transfer knowledge and skills gained from general and specialized studies to new settings and problems, especially by critically and systematically apply interdisciplinary research methods and contrasting theories in examining their research topic
- create a substantial, interdisciplinary, original work using sound evidence

- make their capstone projects and research interests legible to broader audience outside of their respective fields.
- demonstrate awareness of one's own place in and effect on the world

IDS Core Requirement:

A grade of C or better is required in all IDS courses for a successful completion of the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree.

Attendance and Individual Meetings:

Learning is a social endeavor and participation is a key component of learning. I expect each and every one of you to be active agents in your own education. Though much of this course involves independent work, we will meet together several times throughout the semester. Take this as an opportunity to engage fellow classmates and to foster a collaborative approach to learning and problem solving. In addition to in-class meetings, students must also attend individual meetings you schedule with me. You are responsible for signing up for and keeping these individual appointments. Simply put, I will lower the grade of students who do not attend and participate in class regularly or miss their individual meetings.

Grading:

Participation/Meetings 15%
Outline 10%
Rough Draft 10%
Capstone Project 25%
Researcher's Statement 10%
Capstone Presentation 15%
Portfolio 15%

Course Procedures:

- 1. Class Interaction.** Class will meet on Weeks 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 13. This will give you the opportunity to encounter and understand a variety of interdisciplinary approaches and foster a collaborative approach to learning and problem-solving. Individual and class meetings are a significant component of this course. Consequently participation in both will be reflected in the final grade.
- 2. Statement of Purpose.** Each portfolio must include a reflective essay on your Interdisciplinary Studies experience. The statement should be two pages in length, describing the purpose and significance of the interdisciplinary approach you have adopted.
- 3. Researcher's/Artist's Statement.** Every special project is a process of thought and action through which learning occurs. The learning process is seldom evident in the final product of the project. Because of the importance of the learning process, every project must include as part of its final product a reflective paper describing the process by which the special project was carried out.

4. **Presentation.** After your project is complete, you will schedule a presentation open to the public. You will receive feedback from those in attendance. The presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length and should emphasize the findings or result of your project rather than the process. The method for doing this may differ depending upon the location of the student and professor. It may be done in person, by videoconferencing, audio conference, or some other acceptable mode.
5. **Meetings.** Due to the independent nature of this course it is imperative that you attend all scheduled classes as well as the individual meetings you set up with the instructor. **It is your responsibility to set up and keep the individual appointments.**

N.B.: You are expected to attend **at least three (3) hours** of the capstone presentations at the end of the semester.

Individual Meetings:

Students are required to schedule individual meetings. This will be coordinated with the instructor.

*** It is your responsibility to schedule these appointments, preferably through email. Please make note of the dates for both class and individual meetings and schedule these accordingly.

COURSE MEETING SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES

Week	Day	Date	Class Meets?	Topic	What's Due?
1	FRI	August 28	Yes	Introduction & Planning	
2	FRI	September 4	No	Independent Work	Preliminary Research Paper
3	FRI	September 11	Yes		
4	FRI	September 18	No	Independent Work	
5	FRI	September 25	Yes		Updated Bibliography 6 New Annotated Sources
6	FRI	October 2	No	Independent Work	
7	FRI	October 9	No	Independent Work	Paper Outline Due
8	FRI	October 16	Yes	Portfolio	Title and Abstract Due

Week	Day	Date	Class Meets?	Topic	What's Due?
9	FRI	October 23	No	Independent Work	
10	FRI	October 30	No	Nevada Day	
11	FRI	November 6	Yes	Presentations	Rough Draft Submission
12	FRI	November 13	Yes	Mock Presentation Week	
13	FRI	November 20	Yes	Mock Presentation Week	
14	FRI	November 27	No	Thanksgiving	
15	FRI	December 4	Yes	Capstone Presentations	
16	TUE	December 9	No		Portfolio and Final Draft Due

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Auditing a Course

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of devices such as cellular phones and pagers, or other potentially disruptive activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. Students are specifically prohibited to record classes without instructor authorization, including online/remote classes (either audio only, or video and audio). The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic forced some instruction to be delivered remotely starting in Spring 2020, numerous students have asked instructors to record their synchronous classes, so that they can access them at their convenience. Instructors who agree to record their classes (audio only, or video and audio) should inform students in advance. Recorded lectures may not be broadly released to anyone, but made available exclusively to those students enrolled in the class during the particular academic term. Recorded lectures must be stored securely, and are subject to the Nevada System of Higher Education's Records Retention Policy, meaning that the recordings can only be deleted 120 days after the end of class (i.e., after grades are posted). Once this requirement is met, the recordings should be deleted. Class recordings are protected from disclosure, as they are deemed part of an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for student or employee violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](#) is available.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](#) (Student Services Complex, SSC-A, Room 143, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to a permanent disability, temporary or permanent medical need, or academic support due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. Students who are already registered with the DRC should request their accommodations online each semester, and make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with their instructors.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the

start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the [Final Exam Schedule](#).

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#), which states that “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the [Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy](#), which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the [Libraries’ Research Consultation](#) website. You can also [ask the library staff](#) questions via chat and text message.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Classwork policy, under Registration Policies, on the [Academic Policies](#) webpage.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student submits official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “Drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate’s policy, and an infringement on the student’s right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV’s official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students’ Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Sending emails within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC), at the Claude I. Howard Building, provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the [ASC website](#), or call 702-895-3177. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the [Writing Center](#), located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3–301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

Diversity Statement

As an institution of higher learning, UNLV represents a rich diversity of human beings among its faculty, staff, and students, and is committed to aspiring to maintain a Campus environment that values that diversity. Accordingly, the University supports understanding and appreciation of all members of its community, regardless of race, sex, age, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or political affiliation. Please see [University Statements and Compliance](#).

A successful learning experience requires mutual respect and trust between the students and the instructor. Accordingly, the instructor asks that students be willing to listen to one another's points of view, acknowledging that there may be disagreements, keep discussion and comments on topic, and use first person, positive language when expressing their perspectives.