

Interdisciplinary Studies

The Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major (ISF) is part of the Office of Undergraduate and Interdisciplinary Studies (UGIS) in the College of Letters and Science. It is one of many interdisciplinary programs, but only one of two (with American Studies) that requires a senior thesis of each major. ISF offers students the unique opportunity to develop an individualized cross-disciplinary Research Program that includes a Course of Study and a Senior Thesis. The Course of Study is made up of courses taken in the social sciences, the humanities, and/or the professional schools and colleges. Each student, with the help of a faculty advisor, follows a coherent Course of Study drawing on upper-division courses. Each student also, under the direction of a faculty advisor, produces a 30-40 page Senior Thesis, a sustained inquiry, based on original, cross-disciplinary research.

ISF has identified a number of **Interdisciplinary Research Fields** that have engendered excellent scholarship and attracted students across campus. Although ISF students may pursue other research fields identified in consultation with ISF faculty and academic advisors, the ISF Research Fields provide models and resources about scholarly interests shared by many ISF students and across campus. Research fields are dynamic bodies of knowledge that form and develop through a series of debates articulated around a given set of interdisciplinary topics, research questions, and theories. The Research Fields found on the ISF website are there to help ISF students identify their own research interests and customize their own research program and course of study.

Admission

Students must apply to the ISF Major with a well-conceived Research Program, including a proposed course of study and an intellectual justification of their proposed study. Research programs must be interdisciplinary, integrating methodological or theoretical approaches from at least three academic disciplines (departments or programs). Interdisciplinary work may be comparative, historical, regional, thematic, or problem-focused. The Research Program should not replicate an existing major. The purpose of the ISF major is to allow undergraduates to combine work across disciplines in courses and with faculty where no other structured program exists. Finally, the Research Program must be feasible, and the Senior Thesis must answer a manageable research question in a semester's hard work (ISF 190). Each student's proposed Research Program is discussed with and approved by a faculty advisor to assure feasibility, but the final responsibility lies with the student.

The ISF Major emphasizes the role of the faculty advisor and the student-advisor relationship. The nature of the major requires repeated elaboration of the proposed Research Program, Course of Study, and Senior Thesis that best combines students' individual research interests and the ISF program goals. Students are assigned an advisor upon acceptance into the major, although faculty members outside ISF may serve as advisors when appropriate, as approved by the ISF Director.

Undergraduate Program

Interdisciplinary Studies (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/degree-programs/interdisciplinary-studies/>): BA (Group Major)

Graduate Program

There is no graduate program in Interdisciplinary Studies.

ISF 10 Enduring Questions and Great Books of the Western Tradition 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2020

This course is a broad survey of major canonical works ("Great Books") emphasizing from the premodern traditions of Western Civilization since the Greeks. These texts offer responses to central questions that, across the disciplinary divides, continue to inform contemporary work in the social sciences and the humanities. By considering these enduring questions and the responses of writers in Ancient, Medieval, Early Modern, and Modern Europe, we seek to examine core issues of the liberal arts as they find expression across what would later become disciplinary divisions.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: To offer students an intense engagement with canonical thinkers of the western tradition, demonstrating the enduring nature of their queries and questions across the disciplines of the social sciences and humanities.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students are expected to acquire a familiarity with many core debates in the western intellectual tradition, and to be able to identify the pre-disciplinary and interdisciplinary roots of contemporary inquiries in the social sciences and humanities.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Bhandari

ISF C39A Freshman/Sophomore Seminar 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024

Freshman and sophomore seminars offer lower division students the opportunity to explore an intellectual topic with a faculty member and group of peers in a small-seminar setting. These seminars are offered in all campus departments; topics vary from department to department and from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for GERMAN C39Z after completing ISF 39A. A deficient grade in GERMAN C39Z may be removed by taking ISF 39A.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final Exam To be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Instructor: Tang

Also listed as: GERMAN C39Z

ISF 50 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2019

It's hard not to open a newspaper or magazine today and see claims being made for artificial intelligence. Advocates argue that software programs will now be able to even perform creative jobs (as opposed to just routine ones) and that this is both a matter of celebration and concern. Critics argue that these claims are hyperbolic, while others argue that they are too close to reality and an indication of how much autonomy we have ceded to machines. In this course, we will pick apart all of these claims. We will ask: how have different human societies conceived of "intelligence," natural or artificial, and how has this varied with place and time?

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

Instructor: Kelkar

ISF 60 Technology and Values 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2020, Spring 2018

If science and technology are value-laden activities, then where exactly do the values lie? In this class, we will pick apart the black-box of science and technology and look for values not just in terms of bad actors, corruption, or "implications," but in the processes that constitute modern technoscience itself. These processes include: the ways in which researchers construct problems, solutions, facts, and artifacts; the norms, standards, stories, and patronage relations that underlie science and technology; and finally, how the future is imagined and realized. Readings will include academic and journalistic texts as well as science fiction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 61 Moral Reasoning and Human Action: The Quest for Judgment 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2017, Fall 2016, Spring 2015

This is an interdisciplinary survey course that seeks to understand how we define justice, evil, and individual responsibility in modern society. In particular we are going to probe carefully how humans reflect on and practice the process of moral reasoning. We will focus on human behavior in extreme situations: war, life and death conflicts, genocide and mass killing, as well as competing conceptions of human freedom. The course has a distinctive dual purpose. On the one hand we want to encourage the learning of critical thinking skills. This includes the ability to systematically evaluate information and competing moral claims. Also, it is intended as an exposure to the interdisciplinary approach. That is, how can different perspectives illuminate the same issue? With this in mind the course draws on important work from philosophy and ethics, social psychology, jurisprudential analysis, historical-political accounts, and personal memoirs.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 62 Representations of Self-Deception in the Modern World 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2014, Fall 2012, Spring 2012

In this course, we will utilize works in the humanities and the social sciences in order to explore a number of dimensions of self-deception in the modern world. The focus will be upon the willingness to falsify both personal life as well as one's position in the public sphere. The course will begin with an examination of the psychological dimension, emphasizing the importance of the nature of unconscious experience. In this context, we will examine how self-awareness is shaped by personal relationships, especially family arrangements. In addition, we will look at the manner in which people often engage in acts of self-deception with regard to the political realm.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 98 Directed Group Study 1 - 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Seminars for the group study of selected topics not covered by regularly scheduled courses. Topics will vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the Introduction to Courses and Curricula section of this catalog.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

ISF 100A Introduction to Social Theory and Cultural Analysis 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

This course, required of all ISF majors but open to all students, provides an introduction to the works of foundational social theorists of the nineteenth century, including Karl Marx and Max Weber. Writing in what might be called the "pre disciplinary" period of the modern social sciences, their works cross the boundaries of anthropology, economics, history, political science, sociology, and are today claimed by these and other disciplines as essential texts. We will read intensively and critically from their respective works, situating their intellectual contributions in the history of social transformations wrought by industrialization and urbanization, political revolution, and the development of modern consumer society.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 1-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8-10 hours of lecture and 0-2.5 hours of discussion per week
8 weeks - 6-7.5 hours of lecture and 0-1.5 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 100B Interdisciplinary Theories of the Self and Identity 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Summer 2025 Second 6 Week Session, Spring 2024

This course will explore how people come to develop and value the self as well their specific social identities. The course will draw on anthropology, sociology, neurobiology and philosophy to grapple with that which is most intimate yet often most opaque to us: our own selves. Yet we shall also explore the cultural limits of our unstable understanding of our individuated selves as well as the dialectic of self and other in the formation of identity.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 10 hours of lecture per week
8 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Bhandari

ISF 100C Language and Identity 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

This course examines the role of language in the construction of social identities, and how language is tied to various forms of symbolic power at the national and international levels. Drawing on case studies from Southeast Asia, Europe, Canada, and the U.S., we will pay special attention to topics such as the legitimization of a national language, the political use of language in nation-building processes, the endangerment of indigenous languages, and processes of linguistic subordination and domination. This course will be interdisciplinary in its attempt to understand language in terms of history, politics, anthropology and sociology.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week
8 weeks - 5.5 hours of lecture per week
10 weeks - 4.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

Instructor: Xu

ISF 100D Introduction to Technology, Society, and Culture 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Summer 2024 First 6 Week Session, Spring 2024

This course surveys the technological revolutions of the 19th and 20th centuries, it then focuses on the development of the computer and the Internet. The final part examines the impact of the Internet on social movements.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 100E Globalization of Human Rights and Humanitarian Laws 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2025 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2020 First 6 Week Session, Summer 2019 First 6 Week Session

The violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, growing use of AI and drone technology in warfare, ill treatment of detainees and failure to protect people's basic rights by the state, international community and non-state actors have plagued today's globalized world. Gross human rights violations happen on camera. This course aims to critically examine the strengths and weaknesses of the global human rights regime, the limitations of the state-centric human rights protection mechanism, the current controversies about genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, apartheid and occupation, collective punishment, and rights to self-defense, and the prospect for peace, security and social justice in the era of globalization.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8-10 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Quamruzzaman

ISF 100F Theorizing Modern Capitalism: Controversies and Interpretations 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

The focus of this course will be on the various ways the nature and trajectory of modern capitalism has been interpreted. Our stress will be on post-Marxist works of analysis. The initial focal point will be on the work of Max Weber and Joseph Schumpeter, as well as important current debates in economic history and social theory generated by their work. Both Weber and Schumpeter display a strong fascination and elaboration with the work of Marx. The way they analyze Marx is very revealing about the way contemporary analysts seek to understand the capitalist system. We will also consider a number of current efforts that look at the systemic nature of capitalism. In particular, we are interested in how economic historians now see the development of capitalism. We also want to examine the Weberian tradition in terms of the role of culture in shaping economic behavior. Debates about the nature of globalization will also be considered as well as analysis of the changing nature of work.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 10 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Klee

ISF 100G Introduction to Science, Society, and Ethics 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2022, Fall 2019, Spring 2017

This interdisciplinary course will explore whether it has proven possible and desirable to understand society through value-free and positivistic scientific methods as predominantly developed in the transatlantic worlds of the 19th centuries. We shall explore questions that may be applied to the realms of public health and human biology, or to the social sciences generally, including anthropology, sociology, economics, and political science.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7-9.5 hours of lecture and 0-2.5 hours of discussion per week

8 weeks - 5.5-7 hours of lecture and 0-2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

ISF 100H Introduction to Media and International Relations 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2022 First 6 Week Session, Fall 2017, Spring 2015

How have international actors used media to construct public opinion about salient issues, such as war, terrorism and intervention, international trade and finance, and global warming and resource depletion? The purpose of this course is to introduce students to key concepts, methods, and theories in the analysis of media effects, particularly in the areas of public opinion formation and international relations.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4-4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 10 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6-8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 100I Consumer Society and Culture 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2025 First 6 Week Session, Spring 2025, Summer 2024 Second 6 Week Session

In many ways, consumption defines our lives – our identities as consumers are even more important, some would argue, our identities as workers or producers. But what are the implications of a society in which “you are what you consume?” In this class, we will address questions such as: Under what conditions does a “consumer society” develop? What does global commodity chain tell us about colonialization, global inequality, and environmental injustice? How can we shape the life cycle of basic commodities—from raw materials to iPhones—in a socially sustainable way? This course will be interdisciplinary in its attempt to understand consumer society and culture in terms of political economy, geography, history, anthropology and sociology.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: The goal of this course is to provide students with a broad overview of debates and theories about consumption, and to provide them with an opportunity to explore a consumption-related topic themselves.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

Instructor: Xu

ISF 100J The Social Life of Computing 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

In this class, we will look at computing as a social phenomenon: to see it not just as a technology that transforms but to see it as a technology that has evolved, and is being put to use, in very particular ways, by particular groups of people. We will be doing this by employing a variety of methods, primarily historical and ethnographic, oriented around a study of practices. We will pay attention to technical details but ground these technical details in social organization (a term whose meaning should become clearer and clearer as the class progresses). We will study the social organization of computing around different kinds of hardware, software, ideologies, and ideas.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

Instructor: Kelkar

ISF 100K Health, Wealth, Love, and Happiness 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Health, wealth, love, and happiness are the most desirable yet tenuous elements of a satisfying life. To achieve them, there has been an overemphasis on wealth accumulation or economic growth. But does economic growth automatically translate into health, love, and happiness? When our environment is degraded with an increasing depletion of natural resources, can we live healthily and happily? Is economic growth sustainable without a healthy planet and healthy people? How do we achieve health, wealth, love, and happiness without harming nature and society? This course will critically examine these and other questions from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Objectives & Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will learn about:

- the main concepts, theories and controversies linking health to broader social and economic development;
 - the social, political, demographic and epidemiologic determinants of health in relation to levels of economic development;
 - the effect of economic policy, globalization, climate change, and urbanization on health;
 - the main components of an effective healthcare policy;
 - how to compare health policies of different countries;
 - how policy shapes health and development in the developed and the developing world
- how health inequities within and between countries affect human development.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 10 weeks - 4.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

Instructor: Quamruzzaman

ISF C100C Word and Image 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2011, Spring 2007, Spring 2004

This course is designed to sharpen our skills in understanding what happens when the world of images and words meet. Starting with the work from the Western "classical" tradition we will proceed to investigate how word/image constellations operate in a variety of media, including sculpture and poetry, painting and prose, death masks, tableaux vivants, photography, and advertising.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Sanders

Also listed as: SCANDIN C114

ISF C100G Introduction to Science, Technology, and Society 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2016, Spring 2015

This course provides an overview of the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) as a way to study how our knowledge and technology shape and are shaped by social, political, historical, economic, and other factors. We will learn key concepts of the field (e.g., how technologies are understood and used differently in different communities) and apply them to a wide range of topics, including geography, history, environmental and information science, and others. Questions this course will address include: how are scientific facts constructed? How are values embedded in technical systems?

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1.5 hours of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 3.5 hours of discussion per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture and 3 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructors: Mazzotti, Winickoff

Also listed as: HISTORY C182C/STS C100

ISF N100A Introduction to Social Theory and Cultural Analysis 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

Introduction to central theoretical investigations concerning the construction and organization of social life. Using some works from the "classical" traditions of social theory as well as some examples of contemporary analysis, this course will explore such topics as the nature of power and social/historical change, the nature of economic production and consumption, the meaning of difference--racial, sexual, class--the development of institutions, etc.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

ISF N100D Introduction to Technology, Society, and Culture 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This course surveys the technological revolutions of the 19th and 20th centuries, then focuses on the development of the computer and the Internet. The final part examines the impact of the Internet on social movements.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

ISF 110 Fundamental Texts 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2022, Spring 2019

This course examines how thinkers have grappled with questions from ancient debates on justice and political order to contemporary critiques of liberal democracy. As a "great books" course, this class involves the extensive but rewarding reading of foundational texts. These includes works by thinkers such as Plato, Rousseau, Kant, Mill, Foucault, and Shklar. We will trace key shifts in political thought, from classical ideals of governance to modern debates on sovereignty, democracy, and capitalism. By engaging with foundational texts, students will gain a deeper understanding of the political structures that shape our world as well as the intellectual traditions in which they are embedded.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit up to a total of 8 units.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 10 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 130 Humanistic Inquiry: Theories and Methods 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 1995

What is theory and why should we engage with it? In what way does it inform our methods of interpreting literary and cultural production? How can theory enable us to formulate forms of critique? In this course, we will survey some of the most important theoretical traditions and methods from the 19th-21st century. The course is organized around three conceptual clusters that will allow us to trace lines of influence across centuries and theoretical traditions: 1. Commodity, Consciousness, Affect; 2. Colonialism, Race, Other; 3. Climate, Species, Entanglement. Each cluster will be paired with a literary study text to highlight the ways in which theory can inform methods of reading and analysis. All material in English; no German needed.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 189 Interdisciplinary Research Methods 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

This class is an introduction to research methods, leading students through different units built around specific learning goals and practical exercises. The course is designed to teach a range of research skills, including the ability to formulate research questions and to engage in scholarly conversations and arguments; the identification, evaluation, mobilization, and interpretation of sources; methods and instruments of field research (interviews, questionnaires, and sampling) and statistical thinking; and the construction of viable arguments and explanation in the human sciences. At the same time, the course is designed to help students identify their own thesis topic, bibliography, and methodological orientation.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Majors and intended ISF majors

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 8 hours of seminar per week

8 weeks - 6 hours of seminar per week

10 weeks - 4.5 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

ISF 190 Senior Thesis 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

The ISF Senior Thesis requirement is the capstone experience and final product of the ISF major. The thesis is a sustained, original, and critical examination of a central interdisciplinary research question, developed under the guidance of the ISF 190 instructor. The thesis represents a mature synthesis of research skills, critical thinking, and competent writing. As the final product of a student's work in the major, the thesis is not the place to explore a new set of disciplines or research problems for the first time, but should develop methods of inquiry and bridge the several disciplines that students have developed in their course of study.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Must have passed ISF 189 or an approved equivalent course. Senior standing; completion of ISF core courses; declared in the major. Equivalent courses must be approved by an ISF faculty advisor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 6 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

ISF 197 Field Studies 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

Supervised experience relevant to the student's specific area of concentration in the Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major in off-campus organizations. Regular individual meetings with faculty sponsor and written reports required.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Upper division standing, declared in the Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major, and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of fieldwork per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of fieldwork per week

8 weeks - 1.5-7.5 hours of fieldwork per week

10 weeks - 1.5-6 hours of fieldwork per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

Instructors: Ehrlich, Holub, Klee, Wren

ISF 198 Directed Group Study for Advanced Undergraduates 1 - 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2022

Seminars for the group study of selected topics not covered by regularly scheduled courses. Topics will vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Regulations set by the College of Letters and Science

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-3 hours of directed group study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

Formerly known as: Social Sciences 198 and Humanities 198

ISF 199 Supervised Independent Study and Research for Upper Division Majors 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2023, Summer 2011 10 Week Session
Directed individual independent study and research of special topics by arrangement with faculty.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Regulations set by the College of Letters and Science

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 2-8 hours of independent study per week

10 weeks - 1.5-6 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Interdisciplinary Studies Field Maj/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.