Director’s Notes

In the 1990s sci-fi series *Babylon 5*, two great rival species each posed a question for humanity. The Vorlons asked: “who are you?” while the Shadows asked “what do you want?” Each hoped to rule us through answers to these questions. *Babylon 5*’s leader Captain John Sheridan, facing these two questions – one encouraging him to look within and the other to declare his ambitions – refused to answer, knowing that to do so would align humanity with either the Vorlons or Shadows in a terrible interstellar war. My hope is that you will follow Sheridan’s example in a way, but answer both questions, on your own terms. The question “who are you?” makes the most sense if you relate it as closely as possible to your answers to “what do you want?” What Interdisciplinary Studies can help you identify is how these two questions intertwine in leading you through a course of study and a plan for your career and life after college. When students come to IDS, our faculty and professional advisers serve as facilitators, encouraging you to ask these and other questions, finding ways to enhance and enrich your answers as you complete Cornerstone, Capstone, and courses in your areas and minor. At the risk of disappointing two mighty intergalactic civilizations, perhaps a better question than what the Vorlons and Shadows ask would be: “who do you want to be after UCF, and how can IDS help you build a path to get there?” Engage in some personal science fiction, and describe yourself in ten and twenty years. What jobs will you have held by 2028 or 2038, what major life choices will you have made, and what skills will have helped you most along that path? Start with these ends in mind, and think again about the competencies and knowledge that will best prepare you. The goal of the IDS program faculty and staff is to help you prepare for this exciting path, which, like good science fiction, could at times be uncertain or even scary. So, even if you are not a fan of *Babylon 5*, I hope that, regardless of whether you identify more with human, Narn, Minbari, Centauri, Vorlon, Shadows, or Drazi, you find your success though the IDS program. I look forward to hearing your story that might one day be even more worth telling than that of Captain Sheridan, hero of the Earth-Minbari War and commander of *Babylon 5*.

Sincerely, Dr. Wayne H. Bowen
For most students, learning to do homework in the car wasn’t an essential skill, but for Interdisciplinary Studies major Marissa Codispodi, it was the balancing act necessary for her to make it to hockey games and track meets. Having been involved in competitive sports from a young age, she's had a lot of practice finding that balance, but admits that sometimes it can still be difficult. “You have to know when to make sacrifices, because you’re committed to this. It can be challenging but we have great resources at Academic Services for Student-Athletes, our advisors and mentors help us work it all out,” said the UCF track and field athlete.

As a transfer student from the University of Oklahoma, Marissa was grateful to find a degree program that gives her the room to study multiple interests. Her areas of study are Education and Physical Sciences, with a minor in Health Sciences. “I’m interested in all of these areas and I always knew I wanted to go into the health field. If I were to major in a specific discipline, there wouldn’t be a lot of room for taking other classes that I like. That’s why I like the idea of IDS, because I could mix all three focuses into one,” she shared.

With graduation just around the corner for both students, they say they are ready to take the next step in their lives. After Marissa graduates this summer, she plans to move back to Canada and, upon acceptance to McMaster University, begin taking courses to become a midwife. “As a midwife, I want to have a direct impact on people and make a difference, so when they look back they can think that it was a really great experience.” She will also continue to run track and hopes that one day she can compete for the Canadian national team.

Crystal came to UCF after transferring from a community college, unsure of what to do. She knew she had a passion for sports but also held other interests. “I thought I either wanted to be a personal trainer, a nutritionist, a teacher or a coach, but I was also interested in criminal justice.” When an advisor directed her to IDS, she found herself drawn to the uniqueness of the major and the idea of getting to choose her own path. For her areas of study, she chose Health and Education, and a minor in Criminal Justice.

When asked about their best experiences as an IDS major, both students mentioned how eye-opening the Cornerstone class was for them personally, and that it helped them develop the life skills necessary for the real world. “I learned so much about how to break apart a problem and see it from multiple viewpoints. It diversifies your standing and broadens your perspective, it’s been very beneficial,” said Marissa.

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When Crystal graduates in the fall, she wants to go back home to California and become a coach at her old high school, where she already has an offer. “I feel honored to be part of a team that’s filled with great athletes who are trying to reach their full potential. When I was in high school, I didn’t really have help to direct me with going into college and running track. I want to help other athletes further their career and reach their goals. I want to make an impact,” she said. Marissa’s advice for current IDS majors is to dive in and live out what the major is trying to teach. “Take advantage of being in this program. Understand the meaning behind Interdisciplinary Studies because it helps beyond the classroom, it helps in life.”

Article and photos by Deshani Semaan, IDS ‘17
Interdisciplinary Studies proudly announces the UCF chapter of Alpha Iota Sigma Honor Society. This society is an international society for exemplary graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in an Interdisciplinary Studies program. Alpha Iota Sigma’s mission is to further interdisciplinarity by acknowledging and promoting interdisciplinary academic achievement and scholarship, and by providing a forum for community and collaboration. Student members of Alpha Iota Sigma contribute to these goals by fostering community, producing and disseminating interdisciplinary research, and engaging in projects that connect research to real-world issues and topics.

On Friday, March 2, the UCF Interdisciplinary Studies Program inducted six new members into the Alpha Iota Sigma Honor Society. As an honor society, Alpha Iota Sigma:
1. Promotes the benefits of interdisciplinary work;
2. Provides a forum to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among students, faculty, and community members;
3. Investigates and encourages methods of interdisciplinary learning;
4. Enhances understanding and application of interdisciplinary knowledge among the general public;
5. Creates a sense of community among interdisciplinary students & graduates of interdisciplinary programs.

Student members of Alpha Iota Sigma advance this mission by:
1. Motivating their peers to excel in interdisciplinary scholarship;
2. Fostering connections between their academic coursework and the larger community through civic engagement projects;
3. Encouraging honors graduates to be leaders in addressing the complex problems of contemporary society with the highest intellectual, ethical, and moral standards.

Pictured with Alpha Iota Sigma inductees are IDS faculty member, Dr. Sharon Woodill (second from left), and College of Undergraduate Studies Dean, Dr. Elizabeth Dooley (third from left). AIS inductees from left to right: Christey Oberbeck, Hope Noe, Nicholas Whitmore, Karin Dutton, and Rhyan Grant. For further information about AIS, visit Alpha Iota Sigma online, or contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sharon Woodill at Sharon.Woodill@ucf.edu.
IDS Instructors Recognized for Online Teaching and Learning

IDS instructors Devon Bazata and Amanda Pacheco are among an elite group of educators in the State of Florida. Both earned a High Quality Online Course designation for their excellence in developing and teaching online courses. Devon Bazata and Amanda Pacheco’s online IDS 4934 Capstone and IDS 3933 Cornerstone courses earned this prestigious badge of distinction.

For an online course section to be designated as High Quality, the course must possess superior design elements of an effective online course in the areas of

- Course Overview and Introduction
- Assessment and Interaction
- Course Content
- Accessibility and Universal Design

Interdisciplinary Studies is one of a select few degrees UCF offers both on campus as well as completely online. Access, innovation, and impact are the core values at UCF and in Interdisciplinary Studies. Our community of thinkers, helpers, and makers push boundaries and shift paradigms to solve the world’s most pressing problems.

As stated at the Online UCF website, “A great university can unleash the potential to change the world. Listed as one of the most innovative universities in the nation by U.S. News and World Report’s Best Colleges 2018, UCF specializes in providing high-quality distance learning options for those talented students and working professionals who are unable to physically attend our Orlando campus or our 12 Central Florida locations.”

Visit [UCF Online Interdisciplinary Studies](#) for more information about the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science online degree options available. Call the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at 407-823-0144 to schedule an appointment with an advisor to learn more about the IDS degrees available.

Visit the [Center for Distributed Learning High Quality Course Designation](#) for more information about High Quality Course designations.
Interdisciplinary Studies

Did you know that there’s a Pegasus Parent Post e-Newsletter distributed to parents of UCF Knights? The March edition includes a focus on IDS: Developing Students Who Are Diverse, Creative and Future-Focused.

Here’s what they’ll find in the most recent edition about our program:
Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS), part of the College of Undergraduate Studies, is a unique degree program that provides students with the flexibility to create a course of study that aligns with their interests and goals. With more than 1,400 majors in fall 2016, IDS is one of UCF’s largest degree programs. It also offers a Bachelor of Arts IDS track in Transnational Gender, Race and Sexuality Studies, as well as a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies.
IDS students choose two areas of study and a minor from options across UCF. They take an IDS Cornerstone course as incoming juniors and an IDS Capstone course as outgoing seniors. In these IDS courses, students learn to use the interdisciplinary process to address complex real-world issues across a range of contexts, issues that cannot be solved through a single disciplinary approach.
While a disciplinary specialization can focus on one facet of an issue, an interdisciplinary approach provides multiple perspectives from multiple disciplines to produce innovative new solutions to issues such as biomedical ethics, sustainable resources, or child development and learning.
Recent graduate Andrea Krebs is an example of a student who created a course of study to pursue her goal of being a landscape architect. She earned a B.S. in Environmental Science and a minor in Studio Art.
Krebs said, “I chose IDS because I could study environmental science in a broader context and across multiple disciplines, an option that was a critical factor in my decision. To also pursue my interest in art has not only enriched my experience here at UCF but helps to set me apart in my career.” Read about Krebs’ journey to graduation on page eight of the Spring 2017 issue of Catalyst.

UPCOMING EVENT: Meet the Dean Luncheon

Each semester, IDS students, faculty, and advisors gather with the IDS program director and College of Undergraduate Studies Dean to share a pizza lunch, stories about IDS experiences, and helpful information. It’s an event you’ll want to put on your calendar and be sure to attend. This semester we’ll be meeting in the Student Union on March 26 from 11:30-1:30 pm. Whether you attend classes online or on-campus, it’s an event you won’t want to miss. If you are in attendance, you’ll be able to participate in our i-Pad giveaway and Echo Dots giveaway at the end of the luncheon. If you can’t make it to campus to join us for the fun, please log in to Facebook and participate in the livestream event at our IDS@UCF Facebook page.

Interdisciplinary Studies Student Society

Getting involved with your Interdisciplinary Studies program community is a great way maximize your university experience, build networks, and increase awareness about your program on campus and the community! The Interdisciplinary Studies Student Society is a group of energetic individuals seeking to develop and foster the interdisciplinary community through social, fundraising, charitable, and educational programming. There are lots of opportunities to participate. Sign up at the Facebook group page at: https://www.facebook.com/IDS_Society.UCF/ or contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sharon Woodill at Sharon.Woodill@ucf.edu. There are opportunities for online students to participate virtually, so we look forward to “seeing” everyone who’s interested get involved!
Interdisciplinary Studies

There’s lots of progress with building updates in our soon-to-be new home in Trevor Colburn Hall. It is located between the Visual Arts Building and the old Colburn Hall. Take a look to see the continued progress if and when you’re on campus. Our expected move-in date is in August, 2018.

Congratulations to our very own Iris Rios for being recognized by UCF as Employee of the Month. Ms. Rios is an Administrative Assistant in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program under the College of Undergraduate Studies. Her work with the program is invaluable, and she supports IDS administrators, faculty, and students in every way possible. Congratulations, Iris!

Great job to the students who stepped out of their comfort zone at the UCF High Ropes Challenge Course and practiced creative collaboration with two IDS faculty members, Sharon Woodill and Devon Bazata.
## Interdisciplinary Studies Dates to Remember

### Spring 2018

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<td>Grade Forgiveness Deadline at 11:59 pm Withdrawal Deadline at 11:59 pm</td>
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### Contact Us:
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www.is.ucf.edu

Join the Interdisciplinary Studies Student Society! Visit them online on Facebook at Interdisciplinary Studies Student Society [@IDS.Society.UCF](https://www.facebook.com/InterdisciplinaryStudies.UCF)
Contact Dr. Sharon Woodill for more information at Sharon.Woodill@ucf.edu

Like” and “Follow” IDS on Facebook at [Interdisciplinary Studies@UCF](https://www.facebook.com/InterdisciplinaryStudies.UCF)
Keep up with upcoming events and interesting IDS-related job opportunities, articles, and more!