The very first Interdisciplinary Studies Cornerstone course, IDS 3933, kicked off this spring with about 100 students registered. This course is required for Interdisciplinary Studies students in the 2007 catalog and is the first of its kind. The Cornerstone course serves as a national model and represents a unique aspect of the degree by giving meaning to the Interdisciplinary description of the major. Students are given the background, tools, methods, and understanding of interdisciplinarity to use as foundations from which to develop coherent conceptual and applied skills.

The Cornerstone Experience provides several skills important to interdisciplinary study:

1. It sets the basis for understanding interdisciplinarity and applying it in one’s field of study. The use of historical and methodological material is preparatory to constructing a meaningful and useful program of study.
2. It is intended as a point from which students’ academic career development continually matures through graduation.
3. This course provides important links that can be developed with faculty, fellow students, and Interdisciplinary Studies resources.
4. The tools and methods given are critical to utilizing the opportunities one has in the major.
5. It also begins the portfolio, which is a central component of the major and a powerful tool to use in career planning and development.

If you are in the 2007 catalog and are not enrolled in Cornerstone this semester, you are encouraged to take the course as soon as possible. This course is designed to be taken your first semester in the major and will be offered online every semester.

Letter from the Director

Welcome to the spring 2008 semester in Interdisciplinary Studies. I hope your holidays were wonderful and that 2008 is the best year ever for you. This semester we launch the Cornerstone course and approximately 100 students are participating in the alpha class. Susan Spraker from the Department of English is the instructor of the Cornerstone course, and she is doing a terrific job. This summer we will launch the Capstone course. Ali Korosy from the Modern Languages and Literatures Department will be the instructor. The course promises to be challenging, rewarding, and very useful for all Interdisciplinary Studies majors.

Have a great semester. If you are a student in the program, work hard, play hard, and do well. Don’t hesitate to call on us if we can help you in any way. If you are an alum, please visit, phone, write, or email us every chance you can so we can help you revel in your successes as well as employ them to inspire current students. We also want to have your input whenever possible in redesigning and growing our program.

Sincerely,
Dr. Michael D. Hampton
Welcome back for spring semester. The Interdisciplinary Studies major is now the third largest major at UCF. (I hope all of you former Liberal Studies majors like the new name.) We are all excited about the program change and are sure that those of you in the 2007 catalog year will enjoy the Cornerstone and Capstone experience. Those two courses will add a lot to your end product (your degree).

The purpose of this note is to ask all of you to PLAN AHEAD. So many have tried to schedule an appointment during add/drop week and have been frustrated by failure to schedule an appointment or even to talk to an advisor. Trust us! We are frustrated too. We would love to help you all, but we have 1600 students in the program and 3 advisors. Ironically, in the few weeks before the holiday we had plenty of time to talk but few takers. If you could get your schedule ﬁrm up sooner and ask the routine questions before add/drop, then we would be available to handle the real crisis problems that week. So get your schedule ﬁrm up ASAP and remember to plan ahead!

Message from a Seasoned Advisor

Dustin Robinson—Student Government Association Senator

Dustin Robinson is a sophomore in the Interdisciplinary Studies program, with areas of focus in Behavioral and Social Sciences and Public Affairs. He chose this program because he wanted to find a balance between Social Sciences (psychology and political science) and Public Affairs (criminal justice and legal studies), while incorporating skills from his communication minor. Dustin currently plans on attending law school after he receives his bachelor’s degree and believes that the Interdisciplinary Studies program gives him the type of education he needs to be successful as a lawyer. Dustin’s dream is to attend the New York University School of Law.

Dustin is involved in many extracurricular activities, one of them being a senator in Student Government. As a Senator, Dustin does a number of jobs including voicing student concerns, allocating funds to RSOs (Registered Student Organizations), as well as meeting with and discussing current issues with the Dean of his college. Dustin chose to run for Student Government because he felt it was a great opportunity to be a part of something important at UCF and really make a difference for the better of the student body. He has enjoyed the friends he has made and the experiences he has lived. Dustin encourages all students to attend at least one Student Senate meeting (Thursday’s at 7pm in the SU) and really see what they do and what is discussed.

Know it Alls: Feature Student Corner

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Scott Dyl—Student Government Association Senator

Scott Dyl is a UCF-loving second-year Interdisciplinary Studies major; Mathematics, Business, and Computer Science are his minors. He chose Interdisciplinary Studies because it allowed him to get solid foundations in all three areas and bring it all together in the “real world.” For him, the “real world” will probably be in business, but he is considering graduate school after finishing his undergraduate program. Scott was on the 2007 O-Team, and is currently a Senator representing the College of Undergraduate Studies in the 40th SGA (Student Government Association) Senate. As a senator, he hopes to be able to assist everyone in getting funding for their organizations, improving existing programs, raising general awareness, and being a link to SGA. He encourages any student interested in SGA of our college to contact him if they are interested in getting involved in SGA or being a Senator. (He might even hand over his seat!)
After receiving some wonderful submissions for the “Name our Newsletter” contest, the Interdisciplinary Studies Team voted and agreed on a winner. The creative title, “What I.S. Up”, was submitted by senior Interdisciplinary Studies student, Lillian O’Connell.

Lillian will be completing a track in Environmental Studies and a minor in Political Science in Spring 2008. She plans to attend graduate school next fall to research social oceanography and pursue a Ph.D. in Environmental Policy, with hopes of later joining the academic world as a college professor. Her hobbies include scuba diving, playing the saxophone, and spending time with her pet hairless rats.

For entering the winning submission, Lillian will receive an Ipod Nano courtesy of the Interdisciplinary Studies Office. Thanks to everyone who participated, and keep reading our newsletter for more contest and possible scholarship information.

We are looking for Interdisciplinary Studies students who are nearing graduation who would like to take IDS 4934—Capstone in Interdisciplinary Studies in Summer 2008. This will be the first offering of this course.

Typically, we would require that students take IDS 3933 prior to taking IDS 4934, and that IDS 4934 be taken in your graduating semester. However, due to the timing of this course offering, we realize that the ideal prerequisites for this course may have to be waived.

We are looking for Interdisciplinary Studies students who are nearing graduation who would like to take IDS 4934 as an upper division elective if you are in a catalog prior to 2007 or as a graduation requirement if you are in the 2007 catalog.

Capstone is the culminating experience in Interdisciplinary Studies that demonstrates one’s accumulated skills and knowledge in the field. Here is the chance to express how your planning and interests have converged to produce a degree catered to your interests, skills, and career plans. It is the springboard for a career, whether as a professional or in graduate school, and it finalizes the portfolio that documents your accomplishments within the major.

For more information about registering for IDS 4934 in Summer 2008, please contact an Interdisciplinary Studies advisor at (407) 823-0144.

UCF recently implemented an online Intent to Graduate application system. This new system allows students to submit their graduation applications starting Spring 2008 through myUCF Self-Service. All graduation surveys are also submitted online. After students submit their graduation applications, they will receive a confirmation email, and they can continue to check the status of their intents throughout the semester. This streamlined process will allow academic advisors to automatically email students if an appointment is necessary, accept or deny intents, and record certifications electronically.

If you are planning on graduating in Spring 2008, but have not submitted your intent, please meet with an academic advisor as soon as possible. The deadline to file your intent is always the last day of classes the semester PRIOR to your graduating term so the Spring 2008 deadline was December 3, and the deadline to submit your intent for Summer 2008 is April 21. The summer intent, however, will not be available until March 3 to begin applying for graduation.

Even if you are not required to meet with an advisor prior to submitting your intent, we do ask that you meet with an advisor in Interdisciplinary Studies as well as an advisor in your minor department. This will allow you to make a final check of your degree audit and make sure you will meet the graduation requirements. You should also register for classes for your final semester before meeting with an advisor or filing your intent so that your class schedule can be double checked. Remember! You must be enrolled at UCF during your graduating semester.
In May of 2003 I found myself accomplishing the unbelievable goal of conferring two master’s degrees, one in Liberal Studies. Two weeks after graduation I was hired at Brevard Community College as an adjunct faculty member teaching sociology and later psychology. I also started teaching at Valencia Community College in May 2004. Last year I was awarded “Outstanding Adjunct of the Year” for 2005. Other jobs since earning my Master’s in Liberal Studies include teaching sociology classes at Barry University and industrial psychology and human development at the University of Phoenix.

A Master’s in Liberal Studies has made me a marketable consultant and teacher. Graduate students from the Interdisciplinary Program can benefit teaching in their area of choice. Education, women’s studies, psychology, sociology, and many other areas of concentration are offered in the Interdisciplinary Program. I am now working on my doctorate in Health Psychology at Walden University.

As I look back at why getting a second master’s was fruitful, it has been a personal journey as well as wise career move that is leading me to different full-time possibilities with county and state organizations.

Since retaining my Liberal Studies degree, I started my own firm, American-Investigative Specialists, Inc. http:///www.fraudandsecurityexperts.com, providing financial fraud and security consulting services in the Central Florida region. I’m a security expert and fraud examiner. My responsibilities are to provide fraud prevention and safety & security assessment programs to reduce financial fraud and security protection to persons and property. At this point in my career, I’m thinking about going back and earning my masters in Criminology so that I can teach my methods and philosophies to students who are interested in my field. My Liberal Studies degree was of utmost importance to me because it gave me the opportunity to learn multiple disciplines that enhance my consulting services; which enables me to offer a quality service to Central Florida. Thinking back on when I was walking on the UCF campus as a student, I’m thankful that I decided to attend UCF. Being a part of a University that is still growing and reading about future projects the University wants to accomplish is very exciting to me. As a UCF alumnus, I am very anxious to see how far UCF can grow and how our University can be an asset to the Central Florida community.

My Liberal Studies degree from UCF got my foot in the door at Health Net, Inc. because at the time they had begun to require that claims processors have, at minimum, a bachelor’s degree. I had no previous work experience beyond restaurant/retail, but due to successfully completing my Liberal Studies degree, the hiring manager was willing to give me a chance, and I was quickly hired. I am sure that the many different courses I took during that time helped me to fully explore my opportunities and inspired me to pursue a career in the insurance industry, which has been a good fit for me. I have held several positions within the insurance company, Health Net, Inc. and have been with the company for nearly 18 years. I first started as a medical claims processor, then a systems testing assistant, and subsequently held various claims and employer reporting/analyst positions. Six years ago I became a new business underwriter, which is my current position. Along the way I have married and had three children, and in 1998 I earned a Master in Health Administration from Western Connecticut State University. If I were still living in the central Florida area, I would love to have been able to earn my Master’s from UCF in Liberal Studies as well. I truly enjoyed my time at UCF.

If you are an alumnus and would like to submit your story, please email jbroerma@mail.ucf.edu - Other alumni stories will soon be available at www.is.ucf.edu
In our Fall 2007 newsletter we introduced to you the excellent staff in the Interdisciplinary Studies Office that provides the individualized experience that makes our program unique.

**Dr. Michael D. Hampton** remains the Interim Director until the position is permanently filled.

Lee Logan, Sandra Tabert, and Jessica Broerman continue to advise all Interdisciplinary Studies students.

Our student assistants returning in Spring 2008 are **Kerry** and **Leah**, and our Peer Advisors returning are **Meghan** and **Erin**.

New members of our team include **Iris Rios** and **Allison Ennis**. Iris has taken over the role of Office Manager and is doing a wonderful job organizing our Office and assisting Dr. Hampton. Iris recently moved from Ohio where she lived with her husband for 29 years. Prior to her move to Florida, Iris worked at Cuyahoga Community College for 17 years where she earned dual Associate Degrees in Business Administration and Real Estate/Mortgage Financing. While at Cuyahoga Community College she worked closely with administrators, faculty, staff, and community leaders to ensure retention and success of students until graduate. Iris has two lovely daughters and two adorable grandchildren. She feels very fortunate to be a part of the Interdisciplinary Studies family at UCF.

**Allison Ennis** is also a wonderful addition to our team and as our Receptionist, is the first point of contact for most students. She is extremely professional and helpful to everyone. Allison came to us from New York where she earned an Associates Degree in Business Administration from Broome Community College and held various administrative positions. When not at work, Allison keeps herself busy with her six children.

We would like to welcome you to visit the Interdisciplinary Studies advising team in Classroom 1, Room 302 and take advantage of our wealth of knowledge.

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**Great Opportunities Coming Up!**

Are you considering law school??

Florida State Law School is accepting applications from undergraduate students for its 2008 Summer for Undergraduates Program, which provides select students with an inside look at law school and the legal profession. The 2008 program will be held from May 19 - June 13 and applications must be postmarked by March 28. Students from all backgrounds and majors are invited to apply. Sixty undergraduate college students will be chosen from the applicant pool to participate in the intensive, month-long program. Florida State Law provides room and board, course materials and a $500 stipend to all participants. For more information about the program, visit www.law.fsu.edu/summer_undergraduates/index.html.

It is time to select members of the President’s Leadership Council for 2008-2009. In addition to recognizing exemplary students who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in leadership, scholarship, and service, the President’s Leadership Council was established to serve the University of Central Florida while educating and developing each PLC member. The council members serve as official student ambassadors at special events both on and off campus. PLC members receive a stipend for each semester of service.

Applications are now available in the Office of Constituent Relations, Millican Hall, Suite 396. Applications are due no later than WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, AT 5:00 P.M. To find out more about the President’s Leadership Council, please visit its website at www.ucfplc.com or contact Dr. Nancy Marshall at (407) 823-5259 or Ana Petkov at (407) 823-6648.

The Student Government Association of UCF is hosting UCF’s Annual UCF Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee, Florida on March 12, 2008. UCF Day at the Capitol is an extremely important day for UCF, as it is a chance for UCF students to lobby for various student interests, as discussed and approved by the Student Government Association and UCF faculty. This day is a chance for UCF students and faculty representatives to essentially “paint the capitol black and gold” and demonstrate the innovative ideas of the various UCF colleges to our congressmen. For more information, contact Eric Kami, Student Lobbying Coordinator for the Student Government Association at 407-823-3291.