While embarking on your undergraduate degree, it is important to understand what your responsibilities are as a student and advisee. Interdisciplinary Studies academic advisors are professionals who can help guide you through the curriculum so that you earn a degree that is of greatest possible value to you in the most reasonable time.

While the advisors provide guidance and recommendations, the final decision on, and responsibility for your academic career rests on your shoulders. Your experience here will be most fruitful if you stay informed and visit with an advisor regularly.

It is also very important to remain courteous and respectful both on the phone and in person and we will extend you the same courtesy. We do suggest that you meet with an advisor at least once a semester to make sure that you are on track for graduation. During your advising session you should 1) arrive on time, 2) call if you are going to be late or miss your appointment, 3) bring with you questions and specific discussion items, 4) have reviewed your degree audit prior to your appointment, and 5) take notes. After your advising appointment, you should 1) follow up immediately on all issues that need to be resolved with other departments and 2) inform your advisor of the results of your follow up. (Continued on Page 5)
In Memory of Dr. Brent Marshall

The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies is mourning the loss of Environmental Studies professor, Dr. Brent Marshall. Dr. Brent K. Marshall, Associate Professor of Sociology, passed away Sunday, April 27, 2008, as a result of complications arising from a motorcycle accident.

Dr. Marshall received his Ph.D. in 2000 from the University of Tennessee and joined the faculty at UCF where he did research and taught in the area of environmental sociology. A November 2005 Faculty Spotlight article focusing on Dr. Marshall’s work is now available on the Faculty Relations website at www.facultyrelations.ucf.edu

Donations may be made to the Brent K. Marshall Memorial Scholarship Fund by going to the UCF Credit Union, 12253 Challenger Parkway, Orlando, FL 32826. This fund will be used to continue Dr. Marshall’s dedication to the educational experience of graduate students focusing their studies on environmental sociology.

Information contained in this article was referenced from a University-wide email from the College of Sciences which was approved for distribution by the Provost and Executive Vice President.

Know it Alls: Feature Student Corner

Nelsi Mora—Founder’s Day Award

Nelsi Mora was nominated by the Interdisciplinary Studies Office and selected by the Office of the Vice Provost to receive the Founder’s Day Award. One student from each college was selected for this award which recognizes a commitment to excellence in academics, leadership and community service. This is an annual award where students are recognized each Spring. Nelsi is currently a rising senior who entered the University of Central Florida with accelerated credit. She is entering her third year, and is pursuing a pre-medical educational track. She chose to join the college of Interdisciplinary Studies because she felt it provided her the greatest opportunity in becoming a more well-rounded individual through her course work, while also allowing her to pursue entrance into medical school. Through the Interdisciplinary Studies program she has greatly benefited from her focus area of Natural Sciences and minors in Psychology and Spanish. She is currently one of three Student Orientation Coordinators with Orientation Services; she plays an integral role in the operations of Orientation and the leadership development of the Orientation Leaders. She is also the Familial Relations and Volunteer Chair for Dance Marathon at UCF, a student organization philanthropy benefiting the Children’s Miracle Network. Her goals upon graduation are to attend medical school in pursuit of becoming a Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeon.

Ashley Conyers—Order of Pegasus Inductee

Interdisciplinary Studies graduate, Ashley Conyers, received the Order of Pegasus, the most prestigious student award given by the university. Only 15 UCF students received this award this year. Students are nominated by a committee, complete an application, provide recommendations, and finally interview with the committee before being selected for this top honor. Ashley graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies this Spring. While at UCF, she was a LEAD Scholar and Burnett Honors College student. She was also on the President’s Leadership Council, which is another prestigious appointment, and was a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority. Ashley was also the 2006 Homecoming Queen. Now that she has graduated, she hopes to earn a Master’s degree at UCF in Educational Leadership and work as a freshman advisor or director of student leadership programs.
The degree audit is not your official UCF transcript, but a map to show what courses you must successfully complete to graduate. It gives you important information including your cumulative and major grade point average (GPA); the courses that are required for your degree; the courses you have passed, failed, or repeated; and the courses you must still take.

Use the following navigation to view your Degree Audit > Student Self Service > Student Records > Academic History > View Degree Audit

Note: If you have more than one major or a minor, to view your audit for those programs, you need to click on the looking glass to select a different major or minor program.

The What, Why, and How of an Internship

**What:** Internships are academic courses that allow students to apply classroom theory in a practical work setting and gain personal, academic and work competencies. Internships are major related, usually for-credit and can be paid or unpaid.

**When:** One semester, usually toward the end of the student’s academic program. However, even freshmen and sophomores can benefit from an internship.

**Why:** Gain hands-on experience in a field or job related to your areas and/or minors. This experience will give you an advantage when applying for jobs after graduation. Many job applicants are on equal footing when it comes to educational background, but you can really gain a competitive edge with work experience and extracurricular activities. 50% of interns as opposed to only 30% of students without major-related experience get jobs related to their major upon graduation.

**How:** For information on internships, visit UCF’s Experiential Learning Office at www.explearning.ucf.edu. If you choose an internship that is coordinated through experiential learning, they will register you for the credit hours. You will also need to have an Interdisciplinary Studies advisor sign an approval form. For internship information directly related to your minor, you may want to check with your minor department as some departments coordinate internships through their own office.

Will the credit count? The credit earned through an internship will not count in your areas of concentration, but will count as electives. You will also want to check with your minor department because some minors will allow internship credit to count.

Students frequently ask about study abroad opportunities and how to apply those study abroad courses to their major. Interdisciplinary Studies students may use study abroad credit toward their major as long as the courses are approved ahead of time and are appropriate in the areas of concentration. To use study abroad credit in a minor, you must contact the department of your minor for approval. Study abroad can be done through UCF, through another state university in Florida, or even through another regionally accredited university in the United States. It is highly suggested that you do a study abroad program that is organized through a U.S. college or university. We do not recommend doing study abroad through a non-regionally accredited university because we cannot guarantee that those courses will transfer to UCF. If you do study abroad through a school other than UCF, you must have a transient form approved by an advisor and must abide by all UCF residency requirements. UCF study abroad opportunities are organized through the International Studies Office at http://studyabroad.ucf.edu/. Students interested in study abroad should meet with an advisor in the International Studies Office, meet with an advisor in Interdisciplinary Studies, and plan ahead! These trips require a lot of planning and will require additional funding, so make plans early!
“I am a graduate student in the Master of Science in Forest Resources and Conservation program at the University of Florida. I have an assistantship working with Dr. Taylor Stein, a recreation and ecotourism specialist in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation. This semester, I designed a site plan, to be used as a guide for developing a recreation park along the St. Mary’s River in Baker County (west of Jacksonville). This project utilized my GIS skills, which I obtained as a requirement of the Environmental Studies program when I was a student at UCF. I chose Environmental Studies because I wanted to learn about all the facets of work in natural resources: ecology, policy, and even the philosophical lenses through which our society views the natural landscape. I was not satisfied with focusing on just one of these interdependent subgroups. What I left the program with was a holistic understanding of the current state of our natural world and how humans exist within it. I felt a need to go back to school to reinforce the ecology portion of my undergraduate education. I used my ecology background and GIS proficiency to gain access into the MSFRC program at UF. Here, I plan to move more towards building my ecology and forestry skill set. I have frequently relied on my interdisciplinary knowledge while working on the St. Mary’s Shoals Project, as well as the courses in my graduate degree program. I plan to pursue a career in forestry with a land management agency that has ecological restoration and amenity uses as its primary management objectives.”

Joshua Cucinella
B.S. Environmental Studies Class of 2007
Graduate Student at UF

After graduating from UCF with a Liberal Studies degree, “I fast tracked an MSIS degree at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. (Graduated 9/3/2005). Engineering (one of my two tracks as an LS student) instilled strong software fundamentals that I was able to build upon in the workplace, especially in software development. When I began work as a junior engineer, I stumbled across an opportunity that has shaped my future ever since. A software developer for the project I was working on realized I knew how to code while we were discussing requirements and it wasn't long before I was assisting in the development. This talent turned into the opportunity to start a small firm, Footprint Technologies, in 2006 which has turned into a three person company. The company evolved from a small hosting/web development side company with a focus mostly in Information System design and development. The company's two biggest clients are the FAA and World Resources Institute. We provide various solutions for everyday work flow problems involving data collection and management. The Liberal Studies program provided the flexibility I needed to complete my degree. I had been working through the Engineering School when I came upon an unfortunate personal situation and had to move. I was able to complete my degree using the Liberal Studies track by taking a few classes online and on campus during summer. By altering my degree path I was able to also pursue a minor in sociology which has really helped me to relate to others both personally and in the workplace. Using Liberal Studies as a method to diversify my education has been one of the building blocks to the way I approach problem solving today.

Frank Trianotos
Class of 2003
CEO/Engineer
Footprint Tech. LLC

After realizing that pre-med and pre-law were not for me, “I learned about the Liberal Studies program. After reading what it was about I thought, "this is the perfect degree!". All of my friends at UCF were jealous that I was able to take almost any class I wanted that met my interests. It is really the perfect degree to have. During job interviews I was able to tell future employers that “I am not good at one thing, I am good at everything”. I chose minors in Spanish, Communication/Fine Arts, Psychology, Business and Health Sciences. Since graduation, I have worked several exciting jobs including working as a Sales Manager at several major resorts including Le Parker Meridien in NYC. While at Le Parker Meridien I was the contact for the Rosie O'Donnell Show and met several celebrities. Currently, I am doing my dream job of Pharmaceutical Sales in NYC and my degree helps me in this field by utilizing all of the areas I studied. One of the Communication classes I took even helped a side-track career and helped me follow a dream. In 1992 there was a class in Communication offered called "Humor in Communication". I had such a great time (in that course) and felt so good that had aspirations of doing stand up comedy. While living in NYC, I decided to fulfill this dream and have been doing Stand Up comedy all over NYC for the last seven years including a stint on a reality show called "Last Comic Standing". Therefore, I think a Liberal Studies degree is the greatest degree to have and the most fun degree to work towards. How many people do you know that love all of their classes in their major??? It’s because we can pick what classes suit our needs and personality. If I had to do it all over again, I would still choose a Liberal Studies/Liberal Arts degree.... Have a great year and good luck!”

Amy Wasserman
Class of 1993
Pharmaceutical Sales/Comic

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
Student Responsibilities

As a continuing student in Interdisciplinary Studies, you are responsible for maintaining contact with your academic advisor. As outlined in the 2007-2008 Undergraduate Catalog, as continuing students, you will:

1. Meet with a member of the Interdisciplinary Studies Advising Team prior to registration and/or before the beginning of each term to review progress and selection of courses and address any questions pertaining to the program;
2. Access the class schedule and SASS Degree Audit and register online during your scheduled appointment time at https://my.ucf.edu;
3. Meet with an advisor in the department of your minor to review progress and prior to graduation, confirm that the minor requirements have been met;
4. File an “Intent to Graduate Form” on your my.ucf account by the end of the term prior to the term in which graduation will occur; and,
5. Check your “Fee Invoices” to ensure accuracy of your class schedule.

As indicated on the Knight Source website, your advisor also expects you to:

1. Schedule and arrive to your advising appointment on time;
2. Come to your advising appointment prepared to openly and honestly discuss major requirements, academic policies and procedures, course selection, and any issues that may impact your academic success;
3. Be an active participant in the academic advising experience and your own educational experience at UCF;
4. Ask for clarification if advisors use language or terms with which you are not familiar, or if you have specific concerns;
5. Provide your advisor with current email address, mailing address, and phone number; and,
6. Accept responsibility for your academic personal growth and success.

Advisor Responsibilities

The Interdisciplinary Studies advisors provide guidance on overall academic requirements, program and university policies and procedures. The Interdisciplinary Studies Office attempts to assist you in every way possible, from the informational stage to the application process to the course work and culminating experience and matriculation. Planning your program with an academic advisor is an essential component of completing a pertinent and meaningful degree, and we make every effort to encourage and insure such involvement.

Your Interdisciplinary Studies Advisor will:

1. Answer specific questions about the Interdisciplinary Studies program requirements, academic policies, procedures and academic standards;
2. Discuss options concerning selection of courses for your areas and help you define and develop realistic educational goals;
3. Respect your opinions and concerns and give honest feedback to assist you in making decisions and solving academic related issues;
4. Provide information and tools for you to complete academic processes (i.e. course selection, change of major/minor, add/drop, withdrawal, intent to graduate, forms, etc.);
5. Respond promptly to your questions and concerns by phone, email, or individual appointments;
6. Be available to answer your questions through scheduled office or phone appointments;
7. Document recommendations and suggestions discussed during advising appointments; and,
8. Honor University confidentiality policies regarding your academic records.

“**The final decision on, and responsibility for, your academic career rests on your shoulders**”

Visit your advisor regularly in Classroom Building 1, Suite 302.
Interdisciplinary Studies Graduates walked across the stage marking their last symbolic act as Undergraduate students at UCF during the Spring Commencement ceremony on May 3, 2008. Congratulations to all graduates, especially to those who graduated with honors.

Students who earn top honors graduate Summa Cum Laude, which means that they are in the top 2.5 percent of their graduating class. The Spring 2008 Interdisciplinary Studies Summa Cum Laude graduates include:

- Ashley Elizabeth Conyers
- Shelane Camille Etchison
- Chad Brandon Moore
- Marlene H. Palmer
- Amanda Elaine Rodriguez
- Renee L. Valletutti

Magna Cum Laude honors designees are students in the top 5 percent but not in the top 2.5 percent. Spring 2008 Interdisciplinary Studies Magna Cum Laude graduates include:

- Daniele Michelle Gabay
- Kathleen E. Hamlett
- Darcy Alyce Huff
- Jillianne Ashleigh Pierce
- Jose M. Vasquez
- Nancy Ann Camp
- Stacey Gisella George
- Jonathan Andrew Walker

Finally, Cum Laude honors graduates are students in the top 10 percent but not in the top 5 percent. Those students include:

- Melissa Hadley Maszy
- Gwendolynne E. Noack
- Courtney Anne Sheehan
- Brandon Lee Tenney
- Alanna Marina Walker
- Lori Anne Withrow
- Gail Marie Glader
- Minda Rose Hatfield
- Natalie Amsden-Smith

Congratulations to all graduates, especially to those who graduated with honors.

Throughout the year many students ask about obtaining scholarships and internships, studying abroad, and other opportunities that enhance an undergraduate degree. In order to effectively serve our students, we have compiled a notebook that contains the most up to date information that we receive on these types of opportunities. This notebook is available in our office lobby in Classroom Building I, Suite 302. Feel free to stop by and peruse this notebook any time.

Of course, for even more information about various University Scholarships, please visit the Office of Student Financial Assistance's website at http://finaid.ucf.edu/scholarships/list.html. Other scholarships are frequently emailed to students from various University offices so be sure to check your email. For complete up to date information about UCF Study Abroad opportunities, visit the Office of International Studies online at www.international.ucf.edu. Finally, for information about internship and co-op positions, you should speak with Experiential Learning at UCF. Their website is www.explearning.ucf.edu, and you can login to their database to view current internship and co-op positions. It is these types of experiences that can give students an advantage when applying for jobs upon graduation.

Congratulations to all graduates, especially to those who graduated with honors.

Congratulations Spring 2008 Graduates!

Gerardo Aponte Martinez
Larissa Bravo
Katie Marie Fenzl
Elizabeth Ann Fieser
Ana Teresa Hernandez
Melissa Ann Raymond
Joy Zurek

The College Top Honor Graduate for Interdisciplinary Studies was Amanda Elaine Rodriguez.

Congratulations again to all Interdisciplinary Studies Spring 2008 graduates and good luck in your future endeavors!