Proposal for Department of Interdisciplinary Studies

Combining numerous interdisciplinary programs under a new departmental structure – the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies (DIS), would make it possible to collaborate and build interdisciplinary alliances across campus, foster intellectual innovation among faculty and students, and more strategically allocate resources in support of our mission.

Administrative Structure:

Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Chair

Women’s and Gender Studies/Gay Studies, Program Coordinator
Ethnic Studies, Program Coordinator
Social and Environmental Justice, Program Coordinator
International Studies, Program Coordinator
Latin American Studies, Program Coordinator
Film and Media Studies, Program Coordinator

Within this departmental structure, under the supervision of the Dean of LA&E, each program retains curricular autonomy though they may have an interlocking group of faculty members qualified to teach in either. The Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies will be elected but that person will not necessarily be the head of a particular program, and each program can name its own program coordinator. How or whether units all within the same college shift their governance structure is up to these particular academic units; however, the budget process and course assignment process can be accomplished more transparently if done comprehensively by the DIS administrative assistant and the Dean’s office.

Mission Statement:

The Department of Interdisciplinary Studies seeks to bridge the disciplines of the Humanities, Social Sciences, and STEM fields to address historical and contemporary issues of significance from a broad range of perspectives. DIS brings students and faculty together and into contact to foster interdisciplinary inquiry, promote classroom learning opportunities, and engage in faculty research, undergraduate research initiatives, community service learning projects, and learn more about the numerous interdisciplinary courses, programs, and activities.
Working Budget

Costs of Proposed Department of Interdisciplinary Studies

What are the proposed costs to implement the plan (detailed one-time costs and annual costs) and what is the proposed source(s) of funding (re-allocation, new allocation, external funds, etc)?

Annual Supply Budget - TBD

Release time/additional pay – The Program Directors for Women’s and Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies each currently have .25 release/semester. Under the new structure the Department Chair will have .25 release/semester and the program coordinators will not be allocated release. There will be no additional pay for Department Chair.

Summer Salary – $3,000 for the Chair’s summer stipend.

Can the proposal be implemented if no new funds are available or if there is a reduction in funding?

Yes- because we are using existing program allocations. Any future cuts that would have affected each program will now affect the new department.

What you anticipate may need to be cut or abandoned if this proposal is given priority?

Nothing- this is a reallocation using existing FTE, Chair’s Salary, Chairs Stipends and Release Time.