

Interdisciplinary Integrative (II) Course Proposal Instructions

II Subcommittee of the ISP Committee

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This packet contains suggestions for putting together your II course and submitting it to the II subcommittee this semester for approval for teaching it in AY 2018-19.

Interdisciplinary studies are a dynamic intellectual and academic presence at Keene State College (KSC): in courses offered by the Integrative Studies Program as well as offerings made by departments and programs in conjunction with minors, majors and certificate options. Interdisciplinary studies are defined most succinctly as those academic, creative, or intellectual activities that combine or draw upon perspectives or methods of two or more disciplinary fields. Such courses cross disciplinary boundaries, promote student awareness of disciplinary conventions and encourage critical thinking about how knowledge is constructed.

Here are some examples of the II courses that have been offered over the past few years:

- II 330 A Just World?
- II AMST 210 Citizenship, Culture, Difference
- II AMST 210 Race, Sexuality, and Representation
- II Econ 310 Games Theory
- II ECON 380 Modern Middle East
- II EDUC 310 Student Empowerment and Activism
- II ENST 150 Global Environmental Change
- II ENST 152 Principles of Sustainability
- II FILM 362 The Politics of Film Adaptation
- II Film 380 Filming War, Writing War
- II HGS 254 Women in the Holocaust
- II HGS 255 Genocide
- II HLSC 445 Human Sexuality
- II MATH 310 The Evolution of Mathematics
- II MATH 315 Voting Power & Apportionment
- II MGT 345 Organizational Diversity
- II MU 241 Listening to Brazil
- II MU 243 Film Music History and Technology
- II PE 310 Psycho-Social Aspects of Sport
- II PHYS 210 History of Science
- II PHYS 305 Physics of Music
- II PSYCH 350 When Harm is Done
- II TDS 160 Peak Oil and Sustainable Solutions
- II WGS 101 Intro to Women's and Gender Studies
- II WGS 240 Gender and the Media

**Writing your interdisciplinary ISP course proposal**

When the Interdisciplinary subcommittee of the ISP evaluates course proposals, it considers whether or not a student looking at your course would understand how and why it's listed as an interdisciplinary course. *This usually involves an explicit statement in your course description that this is an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and/or trans-disciplinary course, and a brief description of what makes it so.*

There are three modes of Interdisciplinarity at KSC

Interdisciplinary courses in fields of study: These courses are offered in minors and degree programs in American Studies, Criminal Justice Studies, Environmental Studies, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and Women's Studies. Each of these interdisciplinary fields has its own distinct relationships with the academic disciplines that inform the approaches taken to the various subjects, materials, and topics within the field. All have interdisciplinary methods designed to produce knowledge and enhance understanding about or pertaining to a specific area of study.

Multidisciplinary inquiry courses: Multi-disciplinary inquiry courses include departmentally-based courses that incorporate marginalized areas of study in a dominant field of discourse. Multidisciplinary inquiry courses investigate specific questions or problems by drawing on two or more disciplinary perspectives. These courses may demonstrate a fusion or blending of disciplinary methods, examinations of disciplinary bound evidence or collected data through an analytic lens or integrated application of material and literature from two or more disciplinary fields. Team-taught courses or co-teaching arrangements often assume a "multidisciplinary" form when instructors apply their academic training to a specific question or problem.

Trans-disciplinary courses: This category of interdisciplinary course is distinguished by its experiential approach to teaching and learning practices as well as the application of student centered course models. These courses may be listed as a "non-departmental II" or using a departmental/disciplinary prefix.

**You can be clear about the interdisciplinary nature of your course by explicitly including:**

- **the disciplines from which you will be drawing**
- **the perspectives that will be represented**
- **the theories and/or methods that will be taught.**

We recommend that you ask the following questions as you write your proposal:

- Are there other disciplines that will provide different perspectives on the question or problem that drives the course?
- How do the assigned texts reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the course?
- How do your assignments encourage students to engage in interdisciplinary inquiry?
- How will students know that this is an interdisciplinary course and, thus, a different experience from a disciplinary course they might take?

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*If I want to teach an II course that is part of a program proposal for the 2017-18 academic year, what is my deadline for writing up the course proposal?*

If your course is part of a larger program proposal (for instance, your department is revising its major and your new II course is being proposed as part of that), the II subcommittee must receive the II course proposal by October 5, 2016. However, there are several steps that you need to take before October 1st: 1) you need to get your electronic signature through the process outlined below under "electronic signatures." 2) you need to obtain the signature of your department chair and Dean; and 3) you need to solicit an advisory opinion from any "affected departments."

*What is the deadline for submitting II course proposals that are not part of program proposals?*

Per the SCC Curriculum Guidelines, page 4, if you are proposing an II course that counts toward students' ISP program requirements, there is no deadline to send your proposal to the Interdisciplinary Subcommittee. However, if the course is to be included in the 2017-18 KSC catalog, you need to get it to the II Subcommittee by December, or at latest, early January, for it to be discussed in the March senate meeting, which allows the proposal to be included in the electronic catalog.

*I haven't completed a course proposal but I want to offer an interdisciplinary course next semester (Spring 2017). Can I still do that?*

Experimental II courses may be approved by departments and deans, and offered as experimental courses with the 199 or 399 prefixes (e.g. II Film 199 or 399). The SCC Curriculum Guidelines, stipulate that experimental courses may be offered no more than twice.

*What is the process through which one obtains approval for an II course proposal?*

II course proposals move the process as follows: Faculty member → Department or program → Dean's Office → ISP Interdisciplinary Subcommittee → SCC → Senate → Provost → Catalog.

The process is outlined in the current SCC Curriculum Guidelines at <http://www.keene.edu/senate/senate-curriculum-committee/>.

*What do you mean by the terms interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and trans-disciplinary?*

ISP courses that are defined as interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and/or trans-disciplinary in nature may be offered using the II prefix. The terms interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and trans-disciplinary have been extensively discussed and debated within academic literature, and the II subcommittee provides local definitions to shape your proposal.

*Who serves on the II Subcommittee?*

2016-17 II Subcommittee members

Representatives from the School of Professional and Graduate Studies:

Erin Greeter, Assistant Professor, Education (Erin.Greeter@keene.edu)

Kathy Forrister, Assistant Professor, Nursing (kforrister@keene.edu)

Representatives from the School of Sciences and Social Sciences:

Sasha Davis, Assistant Professor, Geography (sasha.davis@keene.edu)

Steven Harfenist, Associate Professor, Physics (sharfenist@keene.edu)

Philip Barker, Assistant Professor, Political Science (Philip.Barker@keene.edu)

Representatives from the School of Arts and Humanities:

Randall Hoyt, Associate Professor, Art. (rhoyt@keene.edu)

Jeannie-Marie Brown, Assistant Professor, Theater & Dance (Jeannie-Marie.Brown@keene.edu)

Representative from the Mason Library:

Elizabeth Dolinger, Associate Professor, Information Literacy (edolinger@keene.edu)

*What can I do to ensure that my proposal gets approved?*

The following checklist outlines the criteria that the II Subcommittee and the SCC will be looking for in your proposal:

1. Does the course description clearly explain the interdisciplinary nature of the class?
2. Are the disciplines that the course will include listed, and are the perspective(s) it will take discussed?
3. Does the proposal provide a brief overview of research or scholarship done on the course topic or other expertise the proposal sponsor might have in the subject?
4. Does the proposal include ISP integrative and academic perspectives outcomes?
5. Does the proposal include an attached syllabus that clearly outlines its inter-, multi- and/or trans-disciplinary perspective?
6. Does the proposal identify the rubrics that will be used to assess student work at the end of the semester?

### **How to fill out the II Course Proposal Form**

Carefully read the SCC instructions for filling out course proposals (pp. 21-22 in the SCC Curriculum Guidelines at

<http://www.keene.edu/senate/senate-curriculum-committee/>.

Course Description: On page one of the Course Proposal form, you will see the category “Proposed Course Description.” Your course description communicates to students the nature of your “II” course. In an effort to make it as clear as possible to our students that your course is inter-, multi-, trans-disciplinary, we are encouraging faculty to do a few different things in their course description:

- 1) use the word “interdisciplinary,” “multidisciplinary” or “trans-disciplinary”
- 2) list the disciplines or perspectives that are central to your course
- 3) pose a question or issue that frames the course.

Remember that these course descriptions are limited to 50 words, not including prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes: Also on page one of the course proposal form, you are asked to fill in, “Course Objectives and/or Learning Outcomes.” For II courses you draw on three different sets of outcomes as follows.

All courses in the Interdisciplinary area will include the following two outcomes:

Integrative Learning: You come up with these yourself, by thinking about the materials and approach taken in your course and considering the following:

- How are you taking an inter-, multi-, or trans-disciplinary approach to your course content?
- How is what you are hoping to accomplish inter/multi/trans-disciplinary?
- How are you exploring the question or issue that frames the course?
- Is there some mention of the disciplines from which you are drawing?

Academic Perspectives: Identify one of the Interdisciplinary outcomes (see the list below) that you feel is most central to your course:

- Cross disciplinary boundaries to reveal new patterns and connections that reframe knowledge
- Analyze the assumptions and actions of society from multiple perspectives

- Examine national and international issues through artistic, philosophical, cultural, scientific, technological, economic, social and political lenses.
- Assess their own roles and responsibilities as members of diverse communities.

And at least two of the following

- Critical Thinking
- Creative Thinking
- Writing
- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy

Advisory Opinions: On page 9, the SCC Curricular guidelines stipulate that “Advisory opinions are required whenever a proposal affects the curricula of other programs.” There has been a continuing conversation among the faculty about what it means to say that the curricula of a department can be “affected” by another course offered at the college. In terms of your II course proposal, many specific circumstances may complicate filling out this section, for instance, when the class being proposed is not currently part of the curriculum of another academic department; when the class content falls between existing departments; when the approach taken would emphasize a different aspect of the course material. We urge you to do your best in articulating your perspective on the disciplinary connections at hand here and to communicate with the II subcommittee about this aspect of the course proposal. List any departments from which you sought an advisory opinion, and generally summarize their response. Note that you are asked to include documentation that you have sought advisory opinions from other departments. Include such materials in your documentation.

Courtesy Notifications: On page 9, the SCC Curricular guidelines stipulate that “when an academic program proposes to add a new course or topic that crosses disciplinary boundaries into the content of another KSC academic program” the proposal sponsor is to send a “courtesy notification” to these academic programs. Again, it can be challenging to understand how a given course proposal relates to the departments currently established on campus. This is especially the case, for instance, when the class being proposed is not currently being offered in an academic department; when the class content seems to fall between existing disciplines; when the approach taken would emphasize a different aspect of the course material. We urge you to do your best in articulating your perspective on the disciplinary connections at hand and to communicate with the II subcommittee about this aspect of the application.

Sample Syllabus: Please attach a sample syllabus to your course proposal. This sample syllabus needs to be clearly interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and/or trans-disciplinary in nature.

The SCC Curriculum Guidelines specify that the syllabus must include the following:

- Course title, prefix, and number
- Catalog description
- Course objectives and learning outcomes
- Course methodology. Briefly describe your approach to the course (e.g., lecture, discussion, demonstrations, etc.)
- Sample readings, instructional materials, and a list of reserve readings where appropriate
- Course topic outline
- Descriptions of other noteworthy aspects of the course (e.g., service learning, interdisciplinary, honors course) (from pp. 9 of SCC Curriculum Guidelines)

Electronic Signature Page: The SCC has implemented electronic signatures and provided the following instructions on how to create an electronic signature:

At Keene State College, all proposals for changing any academic program or course must be reviewed and approved in a prescribed series of steps. The last page of all curriculum proposals must be signed electronically at each level in the review process, in order to verify that the review process has been completed.

To create an electronic signature:

1. Sign your name on a blank sheet of white paper using blue ink.
2. Use a photocopier to scan the signature into a pdf file.
3. Forward the pdf file to Antje Hornbeck (ahornbeck@keene.edu) in Marketing and Communications; she will convert the signature into a usable format and send it back to you.  
(from p. 3 of SCC guidelines)

Alternatively, I have an electronic notepad, and can quickly generate your electronic signature for you. All you need do is come by my office (Science Center room 379) to create the signature.

We hope that this information will help you to complete your II course proposal. Please feel free to contact the II Coordinator, Steve Harfenist at sharfenist@keene.edu with any questions.