



Florida Atlantic University
Academic Program Review
Self-Study Report

Table with 2 columns: Field Name and Value. Fields include Program (BA Interdisciplinary Studies), Program Director/Coordinator Name (Barclay Barrios), Program Self-Study Contact (Barclay Barrios), Self-Study Contact Email (bbarios@fau.edu), and Self-Study Contact Phone Number (561-297-4573).

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A. Mission and Purpose

Interdisciplinary Studies allows students to create unique educational experiences that work across and between traditional academic disciplines and provides expanded access to the BA degree. The degree thus has two primary populations: students desiring an interdisciplinary experience who select the degree as their first choice major and students who switch into the major in order to complete a BA degree, having faced challenges in their first choice major.

Alignment with FAU's Strategic Plan

Historically, this degree has largely been driven by the need for degree completion and so has not been envisioned in relation to the University's strategic plan. It does however align with one component of that plan, Boldness ("Develop an academic support structure for timely student graduation").

B. Prior Program Review and Major Changes

Two prior program reviews are relevant to this degree, which has changed significantly in the intervening years. In 2012, Interdisciplinary Studies: Arts and Humanities underwent program review. The critical recommendations included continuing the degree, offering a course release for the administrator of the degree, improving advising and the visibility of the degree, and restoring the applicability of credit from the College of Education for the degree. In 2013, Interdisciplinary Studies: Social Sciences also underwent program review. Recommendations included granting the degree departmental status with a commensurate budget, requiring majors to take a social science methods course, and creating a more integrated experience for majors through more clearly defined concentrations or a capstone course. Many of these recommendations have been addressed through recent changes to the degree.

As the prior program reviews make clear, there were originally two interdisciplinary degrees in the college, Interdisciplinary Studies: Arts and Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies: Social Sciences. And as noted in the prior program reviews, these degrees faced a number of challenges related to curricular design and administrative support. Thus in 2016, the college proposed merging the two degrees into one. There were several reasons for this change:

1. Expand interdisciplinary options
Because the two degrees were separated by broad disciplinary groupings, there were no options for students who wished to pursue interests that bridge the arts, humanities, and social sciences, for example ethnomusicology.
2. Facilitate students from other colleges
Many students transfer into these degrees from other colleges, including the College of Education and the College of Business. The combined degree offered maximum flexibility in considering courses from other colleges within the major, with students able to transfer up to 15 credits from other colleges. This addressed the concern with credits from the College of Education noted in the previous program review.
3. Streamline the curriculum
Keeping two similar degrees felt redundant since they served similar populations and had similar goals and outcomes.

4. Move towards an online degree
Our previous explorations of an online version of the IDS degree were hampered by the fact that neither the arts/humanities nor the social sciences alone offered enough online courses. Merging the two degrees made an online version of the degree possible.
5. Better prepare students for the job market
As part of this merger, students were required to take two courses—an internship and an interdisciplinary seminar that focused in part on professional preparation. Given that “interdisciplinary studies” can be a difficult degree for employers to make sense of, the specific orientation to the job market would help students begin careers.
6. Better assess the degree
The previous degrees had no common course requirements for students. Each student created an individualized plan of study. Because there was no course all students in the degree took, assessment was a significant challenge.

The new degree was phased in, with most students transferred into the combined degree, though a small number were allowed to complete their course of study in the previous degrees. The degrees were combined under CIP code 24.0101, which had been used for Interdisciplinary Studies: Arts and Humanities. Changes were fully implemented starting in the 2017-18 catalog year. Interdisciplinary Studies: Social Sciences (CIP 45.0101) was terminated Fall 2017 and officially closed March 2018.

C. Instruction

Curriculum

In addition to the University and College requirements for admission and graduation, including the University foreign language graduation requirement, the requirements for the major in Interdisciplinary Studies are:

1. 39 credits; 30 must be upper division.
2. 15-18 credits must be in a single discipline, with a minimum of 12 upper-division credits. No more than 18 credits may be taken in any one area.
3. Up to 15 credits from another college may be applied to the major.
4. Students choose a primary area of concentration and develop a plan of study in consultation with an advisor. Courses may be taken from across the college.
5. Earn a "C" or better in all courses applied toward the major. No course taken on a pass/fail basis may be counted for the major.
6. All students must take HUM 3949, an internship course, for 3 credits (or an approved equivalent) and IDS 3890, a seminar on interdisciplinarity. Because HUM 3949 is titled Humanities Co-op, and thus counts towards excess credits, and because it is not offered online, we have been directing students towards IDS 3949, an online internship course offered by the Career Center.

The general degree allows students to select courses from all areas of the college. In addition, three areas of concentration are available: Arts and Humanities; Social Science; and Women, Gender and Sexuality. For Arts and Humanities, students may choose from the following disciplines: Communication and Multimedia Studies; English; History; Languages, Linguistics and Comparative Literature; Music;

Philosophy; Theatre and Dance; Art and Art History; and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. For Social Science, students may choose from the following disciplines: Anthropology, Communication and Multimedia Studies, History, Political Science, Sociology and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. For Women, Gender, and Sexuality, in addition to the general degree requirements, the following also apply to this area of concentration:

1. Courses counted toward this major cannot also be counted toward the undergraduate certificate in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies.
2. Students must take two core courses (WST 2010, WST 2608, WST 3315, WST 3640, WST 3930).
3. Students must take three additional courses in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, which may include other core courses.

Comparison to Peer Programs

FAU's degree is comparable to those offered by its peers. Most of our peer institutions offer some form of interdisciplinary degree. Some define it as a "contract major" (Northern Illinois University, University of Memphis); some offer variant interdisciplinary degrees such as a Bachelor of Liberal Studies (University of Memphis) or a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (Northern Arizona University, Georgia State); and most allow students to propose their own course of study by drawing on courses from across the college and university.

Graduate Programs

IDS does not have a graduate program.

Advising

Advising is handled by Student Academic Services, the academic advising office for the college. All of the advisors have been trained on the specifics of this major and the office maintains a wiki on Interdisciplinary Studies that covers common questions and concerns. Advisors work with students to propose a plan of study (see Appendix A). This plan of study is sent to Associate Dean Barclay Barrios, who reviews and approves. Associate Dean Barrios is also available to meet with students who have general questions about the degree.

Pedagogical Innovations

We launched an online version of the degree in summer 2017, marking the college's first and only online degree. The online degree leverages course offerings from Communication and Multimedia Studies, Spanish, French, Linguistics, Anthropology, and Political Science to offer students concentrations in these areas.

Administrative Structure

Currently, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies in the college serves as the administrator for the degree. He approves all plans of study for the degree, checking for completion and coherence, coordinates assessment, develops curriculum, schedules and staffs IDS 3890, serves as the program's representative on the college's Undergraduate Programs Committee, and works with the Center for eLearning to develop the online version of the degree.

Faculty

There are no faculty in this program.

Student Profile

Student enrollment the major declined for many years but recently has stabilized:

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
AH	370	346	261	167	143	116	113	192
SS	130	136	116	108	100	105	120	20
Total	500	482	377	275	243	221	233	222

The reason for the decline is not immediately clear, though prior program reviews suggested that for some time the major was disfavored by the college. That is no longer the case. In fact, given the university's push for timely graduation and its implementation of the Bachelor of General Studies degree, the college sees Interdisciplinary Studies as more important than ever.

Given the lack of courses and faculty, there is no available data on average class size or faculty/student ratio. However, information is available on student diversity and demographics that suggests the degree accurately represents the diversity of the university itself. In 2010-11, .76% of these students were Native American, 1.53% Asian, 22.22% Black, 16.48% Hispanic, 58.62% White, with the remainder not reported. In 2016-17, .52% of these students were Native American, 3.125% Asian, 22.92% Black, 19.79% Hispanic, and 51.56% White, with the rest not reported or non-resident alien.

Determining retention and graduation rates accurately is a challenge. Retention rates are based on first college/major and graduation is based on last college/major. As many of our students use this degree for completion purposes retention rates are particularly difficult to assess accurately. These problems are compounded by the recent changes to the degree, particularly as some students were allowed to finish under the old degree.

According to Institutional Effectiveness and Analysis, the retention rates are

ISAH (old degree): 75% retention for Fall 2014 (n=4), 50% for Fall 2015 (n=2)

ISSS (old degree): 100% retention for Fall 2014 (n=2), 100% for Fall 2015 (n=1), 100% for Fall 2016 (n=1)

IDS—AH (new degree): 100% retention for Fall 2016 (n=1)

IDS—SS (new degree): no students reported

And 4-year graduation rates are

ISAH: 0% for Fall 2013, 0% for Fall 2014, 0% for Fall 2015 (n=1 for all)

ISSS: 66.67 for Fall 2013 (n=3), 33.33% for Fall 2014 (n=3), no data Fall 2015

IDS (general): 0% for Fall 2013 (n=1), 100% for Fall 2014 (n=1), 0% for Fall 2015 (n=1)

IDS—AH: 33.33% for Fall 2013 (n=6), 40% for Fall 2014 (n=5), 0% for Fall 2015 (n=1)

IDS—SS: 33.33% for Fall 2013 (n=12), 62.5% for Fall 2014 (n=8), 0% for Fall 2015 (n=2)

These graduation rates are not altogether surprising as many students use this major when they have already extended beyond four or six year graduation timelines.

Students are not currently actively recruited into this major. In part that's because the major continues to be seen as a last choice option rather than a first choice one. The lack of faculty or any sort of budget also mitigates recruitment effort.

Outcomes and Assessment

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessments have not been updated since the two degrees merged. For reference, they are included in Appendix B. Goals for student learning, however, have been updated, as has the process for assessment. 2016-17 represented the first year of assessment for the combined degree. The selected learning outcomes were:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of interdisciplinary work, both in general and in the context of their specific concentration area.
2. Students will demonstrate competence in written communication.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically.

These outcomes were driven by state-mandated requirements to demonstrate that students earning the BA have competency in content, communication, and critical thinking. Reflection papers from the required course IDS 3890 Interdisciplinary Studies Seminar served as the point of assessment for these outcomes. The assignment was

In a paper of 2-3 pages, write a reflection in which you articulate the ways in which your work in the major is interdisciplinary. To do so, you should include two elements. First, you should use definitions of / ideas about interdisciplinary work from the readings (quotation might be a good idea--just be sure to cite properly) and second you need to apply these ideas to your own experience as specifically as possible. Your paper should have a brief introduction which should end with a clear statement of the argument you want to make in the rest of the essay. Each paragraph should make a point that relates to that argument, supported by connecting your experience to the readings. And then you should have a brief conclusion.

A small committee including the director of the program evaluated a random sample of student work and rated it using a simplified 4-point rubric. The results of this assessment were:

1. 33% of the reflection papers assessed were rated Strong in terms of interdisciplinary knowledge; 67% were competent. We are pleased with this result as it suggests the new consolidated major and the new common course focused on interdisciplinary work is better preparing students for succeeding in the major. We do acknowledge that the sample size was small, as we had only the first trial semester of IDS 3890 to draw from. Before making significant changes we would like to see a deeper baseline of data, in particular one full year's worth of student work.
2. 67% of student papers assessed were rated Competent; 33% were rated Unacceptable. While we acknowledge a small sample size due to the fact that Spring 2017 was the first year the course was offered, we do not feel that we have met this outcome, despite achieving a score close to our baseline benchmark. We are pleased that the new common course allows us to identify students who are weak; before there was no major-specific site for that to happen. But we will want to revisit this metric after one more year of assessment, which will benefit from a full year's worth of data and student work.
3. 100% of the students assessed were rated competent in critical thinking. While this meets our

projected outcomes we would like to see at least some students rated Strong. While we feel its best to wait for one more cycle, after which we will have a complete set of student work and data, we do feel this is a critical outcome that deserves sustained attention.

We will soon have results from the second cycle of assessment and will be in a better position to use these results to improve the program.

D. Research

Because there are no faculty in the program, there is no research.

E. Service and Community Engagement

Because there are no faculty in the program, there is no service or community engagement.

F. Program Goals

The program currently has no articulated goals, due in part to the lack of a broader governance structure that would identify and include more stakeholders inside and outside the college to participate in strategic planning and oversight of the degree. However, the college does have a singular goal of continuing the degree.

G. Strengths and Opportunities

The flexibility of this degree continues to be its greatest strength. Students are able to enter the degree at any stage of their college career and finish the degree fairly quickly. Degree completion is facilitated by the fact that the core courses for the degree are offered online, and those online courses represent an additional strength in the degree.

Two opportunities are emerging. Most recently, the university has explored marketing the Bachelor of General Studies degree at the university's Davie campus as a direct admit option for transfer students and as a degree option working adults looking for career advancement. As a BA degree, Interdisciplinary Studies, we feel, will be far more appealing. We believe we can leverage the university's interest in marketing to direct more students into this degree.

The online version of the degree is another opportunity with room for growth. English is the latest department working on bringing enough of their courses online so that it can serve as a concentration area in the online version of the degree. We believe that given the state's mandate for online classes, the available resources for online teaching across the college, and the desire of students to complete online degrees that this represents a second area of opportunity for growth.

H. Weaknesses and Threats

The lack of any budget or faculty is a serious weakness. Staffing both of the core courses is a concern. IDS 3890 has been taught by the director of the program, by faculty whose regular courses were canceled, and most recently by GTAs in the college's interdisciplinary Comparative Studies program. Although that also represents an exciting developing, since having advanced graduate students doing

interdisciplinary work teach the core course benefits both them and the students, the fact remains that such staffing requires close coordination with the PhD program, which itself has limited resources. We are facing similar issues with the internship course IDS 3949. The cost for teaching this course has been absorbed by the Career Center, which receives no funding to offset the cost of instruction. Although this course serves all students at the university and not just our majors, the lack of funding for the course remains a concern. Finally, we are starting to encounter students who cannot take the internship course because they are currently working full time. We would like to develop an alternative course on career development and the Career Center has expressed an interest in working with us to develop and deliver such a course but the absence of funding makes this impossible at this time.

The lack of departmental status is also a weakness which complicates administration of the degree since information about or workflows for the degree are often missing or hard to find in various administrative systems. For example, Institutional Effectiveness and Analysis had not produced the Departmental Dashboard Indicators for the degree for seven years and had to be prompted to do so in the completion of this self study. Similarly, graduation rates are currently reported under a variety of degree names and CIP codes making it difficult to filter accurate data about the degree.

The Bachelor of General Studies may represent a threat to the degree. Since it does not require completion of the foreign language requirement, it may be favored for students needing immediate degree completion. However, data from the college suggests that so far we have been able to direct students into Interdisciplinary Studies instead.

I. Resource Analysis

The degree has no resources.

J. Future Directions

The college is developing a new initiative, the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, that will bring together all of the college's interdisciplinary programs under one administrative structure. Such a structure could solve many of the challenges facing the degree, including the lack of departmental status, the challenge of staffing required courses, and the lack of broader administrative participation and oversight.

Questions

1. How do we (and do we) recruit students into the major as a first choice option?
2. How do we negotiate resources to sustain and develop the delivery of the major?
3. What courses should we develop for the major? What's missing?
4. What sort of governance structure would be most effective for the major?

K. Student Feedback

No student feedback is available.

Appendix A: Plan of Study

The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters

Interdisciplinary Studies - General Track

Credits to graduate: 120, FAU residence credits: 30, "C" minimum in all major course work, Upper division credits: 45

Student: _____ Z#: _____
 Date: _____ Advisor: _____

- * 39 credits, 30 must be upper division.
- * Students are required to choose, in consultation with an advisor, and area of concentration in which they earn 15-18 credits, with a minimum of 12 upper division credits. Students must develop an approved plan of study with an advisor with their area of concentration. Students must seek advising and approval of a plan of study prior to or as they begin their program of study.
- * No more than 18 credits may be taken in one discipline.
- * Meet with Student Academic Services advisor to make sure all **other** university requirements are being met.
- * Up to 15 credits from another college may be applied with approval from program director.

Primary Area of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.	
			Students must choose an area of concentration and take approved courses from appropriate disciplines. The program director may approve courses from other academic areas and/or colleges.

Secondary Areas of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.

	Cr.	Gr.	Required Courses	Cr.	Gr.	
			HUM 3949 (3)			
			IDS 3890 (3)			
						Primary Credits: 0
						Secondary Credits: 0
						Required Credits: 0
						Total Credits: 0
						Credits Remain: 39

Anticipated semester of completion: _____

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Interdisciplinary Studies - Arts and Humanities Track

Credits to graduate: 120, FAU residence credits: 30, "C" minimum in all major course work, Upper division credits: 45

Student: _____

Z#: _____

Date: _____

Advisor: _____

- * 39 credits, 30 must be upper division.
- * Students are required to choose, in consultation with an advisor, and area of concentration in which they earn 15-18 credits, with a minimum of 12 upper division credits. Students must develop an approved plan of study with an advisor with their area of concentration. Students must seek advising and approval of a plan of study prior to or as they begin their program of study.
- * No more than 18 credits may be taken in one discipline.
- * Meet with Student Academic Services advisor to make sure all **other** university requirements are being met.
- * Up to 15 credits from another college may be applied with approval from program director.

Primary Area of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.	Students must choose an area of concentration and take courses from the following disciplines or interdisciplinary programs:
			Asian Studies; Caribbean and Latin American Studies; Classical Studies; Communication and Multimedia Studies; English; Ethnic Studies; Film and Video Studies; History; Jewish Studies; Languages, Linguistics, and Comparative Literature (French, German, Italian, Linguistics, or Spanish); Music; Peace Studies; Philosophy; Theatre and Dance; Visual Arts and Art History; and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. The program director may approve appropriate courses from other disciplines and/or colleges.

Secondary Areas of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.

	Cr.	Gr.	Required Courses	Cr.	Gr.	
			HUM 3949 (3)			Primary Credits: 0
			IDS 3890 (3)			
						Secondary Credits: 0
						Required Credits: 0
						Total Credits: 0
						Credits Remain: 39

Anticipated semester of completion: _____

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Interdisciplinary Studies - Social Science Track

Credits to graduate: 120, FAU residence credits: 30, "C" minimum in all major course work, Upper division credits: 45

Student: _____

Z#: _____

Date: _____

Advisor: _____

- * 39 credits, 30 must be upper division.
- * Students are required to choose, in consultation with an advisor, and area of concentration in which they earn 15-18 credits, with a minimum of 12 upper division credits. Students must develop an approved plan of study with an advisor with their area of concentration. Students must seek advising and approval of a plan of study prior to or as they begin their program of study.
- * No more than 18 credits may be taken in one discipline.
- * Meet with Student Academic Services advisor to make sure all **other** university requirements are being met.
- * Up to 15 credits from another college may be applied with approval from program director.

Primary Area of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.	
			Students must choose an area of concentration and take courses from the following disciplines or interdisciplinary programs: Anthropology, Communication Studies, Ethnic Studies, History, Peace Studies, Political Science, Sociology and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. The program director may approve appropriate courses from other disciplines and/or colleges.

Secondary Areas of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.	

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.	

	Cr.	Gr.	Required Courses	Cr.	Gr.	
			HUM 3949 (3)			
			IDS 3890 (3)			
						<i>Primary Credits : 0</i>
						<i>Secondary Credits : 0</i>
						<i>Required Credits: 0</i>
						<i>Total Credits : 0</i>
						<i>Credits Remain: 39</i>

Anticipated semester of completion: _____

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The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters

Interdisciplinary Studies - Women, Gender, and Sexuality Track

Credits to graduate: 120, FAU residence credits: 30, "C" minimum in all major course work, Upper division credits: 45

Student: _____	Z#: _____
Date: _____	Advisor: _____

- * 39 credits, 30 must be upper division.
- * Students are required to choose, in consultation with an advisor, and area of concentration in which they earn 15-18 credits, with a minimum of 12 upper division credits. Students must develop an approved plan of study with an advisor with their area of concentration. Students must seek advising and approval of a plan of study prior to or as they begin their program of study.
- * No more than 18 credits may be taken in one discipline.
- * Meet with Student Academic Services advisor to make sure all **other** university requirements are being met.
- * Up to 15 credits from another college may be applied with approval from program director.
- * Courses counted towards the major **cannot** also be counted towards the undergraduate WGSS certificate.

Primary Area of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.	
			Students must take two core courses (WST 2010, WST 2608, WST 3315, WST 3930, WST 3640).

Secondary Areas of Concentration

	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.

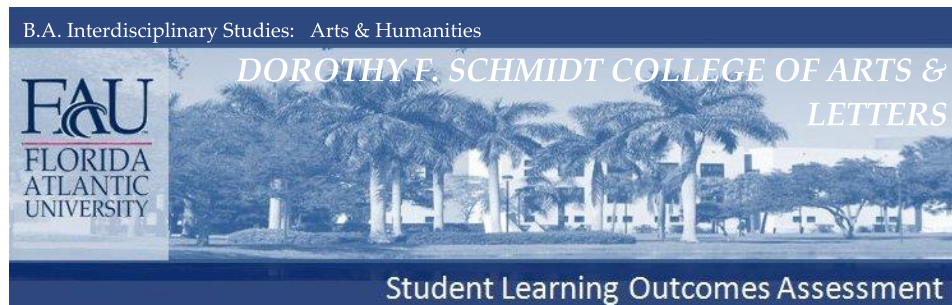
	Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.		Cr.	Gr.

	Cr.	Gr.	Required Courses	Cr.	Gr.			
			HUM 3949 (3)					
			IDS 3890 (3)					
						Primary Credits :		0
						Secondary Credits :		0
						Required Credits :		0
						Total Credits :		0
						Credits Remain:		39

Anticipated semester of completion: _____

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Appendix B: Student Learning Outcomes Assessments



The B.A. in Arts & Humanities is an interdisciplinary major designed to allow students to gain a breadth of knowledge in several Arts & Humanities fields. The major requires students to select a concentration area in consultation with an advisor. Each concentration area has particular requirements, as determined by the respective program or discipline.

Content Knowledge: Students will demonstrate mastery of content knowledge within the area of concentration. The student learning objectives for content knowledge in the concentration area are established by the department of the concentration, and students will be assessed through their work in courses designated by the department of the concentration.

Communication Skills: Students will demonstrate mastery of at least one communication skill within the area of concentration. The student learning objectives for communication skills in the concentration area are established by the department of the concentration, and students will be assessed through their work in courses designated by the department of the concentration.

Critical Thinking Skills: Students will demonstrate mastery of critical thinking skills within the area of concentration. The student learning objectives for critical thinking skills in the concentration area are established by the department of the concentration, and students will be assessed through their work in courses designated by the department of the concentration.

For additional information about the student learning objectives in the concentrations, consult the statements by the arts and humanities departments of the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters.

B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies: Social Science



DOROTHY F. SCHMIDT COLLEGE OF ARTS & LETTERS



Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

The B.A. in Social Science is an interdisciplinary major designed to allow students to gain a breadth of knowledge in several social science fields. The major requires students to select a concentration area in consultation with an advisor. Each concentration area has particular course requirements, as determined by the respective program or discipline.

Content Knowledge: Students will demonstrate mastery of content knowledge within the area of concentration. The student learning objectives for content knowledge in the concentration area are determined by the department of the concentration, and students will be assessed on their work in the courses in that department.

Communication Skills: Students will demonstrate mastery of at least one communication skill within the area of concentration. The student learning objectives for communication skills in the concentration area are determined by the department of the concentration, and students will be assessed on their work in the courses in that department.

Critical Thinking Skills: Students will demonstrate mastery of critical thinking skills within the area of concentration. The student learning objectives for critical thinking skills in the concentration area are determined by the department of the concentration, and students will be assessed on their work in the courses in that department.

For more detailed information on the student learning outcomes in the social science disciplines within the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, consult the statements by the individual departments.