

## INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES FIELD MAJOR - APPLICATION TO DECLARE

Applications for the spring 2017 semester are **due by Monday, March 6, at 5PM**, and can be submitted at any time before that. Before submission, the completed application packet with all materials listed below **must be reviewed by an ISF faculty adviser in person**. *Students are strongly advised to consult with an ISF faculty adviser well in the advance of the application deadline date.* Applications will be evaluated by an ISF Admissions Committee; applicants *will be notified of their admission or rejection by email by the end of the first week in April.*

**Students who have senior standing (More than 90 units, excluding AP and IB credit) will not be allowed to apply to the major** unless they are changing their major or pursuing a double major. The 90-unit maximum does not take into account in-progress units. Final acceptance into the major will be contingent on being able to finish the ISF major within L&S change of major and double major guidelines.

Note: You may submit this application as soon as you have completed at least one of the two prerequisite courses and are enrolled in the second course. **Both courses MUST be taken for a letter grade. The minimum grade accepted is a B-**. If only one of the two courses has been finished at the time of application, then acceptance into the major will be contingent on receiving at least a B- in the second prerequisite course. For a list of approved courses for the two-course prerequisite requirement, please see section 3.2 of the ISF Major Student Handbook and online at: <http://live-isf.pantheon.berkeley.edu/prerequisites>

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

*Please compile your application in this order:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application Information Sheet (attached) - Please type or print clearly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Application Essay and Course of Study Worksheet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Transcript of all college work - Unofficial copies are acceptable. Your name should appear on Cal Central copies. If you are using courses from other schools then you MUST include a transcript.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Current Class Schedule (if enrolled) – A printout is available from Cal Central.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Petition to Declare a Major (attached)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Program Planning Form /4 year plan (attached)

Students not admitted to the major may apply in the following academic year semester, as long as they have not exceeded 90 units completed (deducting AP or IB units).

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_@berkeley.edu (we communicate with students using their official @berkeley address so you must check this account often for announcements from the department)

Research Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Disciplines and World Regions Prerequisites: MINIMUM B- REQUIRED IN BOTH COURSES**

**Prerequisite #1:**

---

(Course Name)	(Dept. and No.)	(Grade)	(Units)	(Sem/Year)	(Where?)
---------------	-----------------	---------	---------	------------	----------

**Prerequisite #2:**

---

(Course Name)	(Dept. and No.)	(Grade)	(Units)	(Sem/Year)	(Where?)
---------------	-----------------	---------	---------	------------	----------

Number of Semesters at UC Berkeley \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL UNITS COMPLETED (Not including in-progress units) \_\_\_\_\_

TRANSFER GPA (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

UCB GPA \_\_\_\_\_

APPLYING FOR A DOUBLE MAJOR? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

## Introduction to the Program

The ISF field major is designed to provide students with a research-driven liberal arts education. It is a **problem-based program**, not a discipline. It is home to student research in the social sciences and humanities that is inherently interdisciplinary and comparative; grounded in time and place; with historical depth and perspective. Each major is built around a Research Program, which includes a Course of Study (see separate sheet) and a Senior Thesis.

Students accepted into the ISF program pursue Research Programs that formulate and begin to address **significant research problems in the social sciences and humanities from an interdisciplinary perspective**. ISF encourages students to identify their Research Program in international, transnational, global, or comparative dimensions, and at the same time encourages students to think concretely about their Senior Thesis as work that will be grounded in time and place. The research problems chosen must be part of an academic and scholarly conversation or controversy, but can include practical steps to address the problem in question.

**To apply to the program, students should already have identified their own Research Program.** (To understand the qualities of breadth, interdisciplinarity and social significance that a Research Program should have, students are advised to consult the ISF-defined Research Fields on the ISF website, <http://isf.ugis.berkeley.edu/isf-research-fields>, and to meet with an adviser before submitting their application). A viable **Research Program** is more than a topic or theme: it consists of an interdisciplinary inquiry that requires engagement with both theoretical scholarship and empirical studies. A student's **Research Program** consists of a proposed **Course of Study** (at least six courses in three departments or disciplines totaling 20 units) and a tentative topic of a **Senior Thesis**. The Senior Thesis is not a summary of the Research Field but an attempt to contribute new knowledge on a focused question, using primary sources when possible, within a Research Field.

### **The Research Program should have the additional following qualities:**

1. It cannot replicate any existing major at UC Berkeley, nor should it be a field of study that could be better pursued in an existing major, including American Studies, the Haas Undergraduate Business major, or Psychology. ISF does not allow students to escape prerequisites in existing majors or to pursue by other means a major into which the student could not gain entry, including Economics and PE. ISF can be part of a double major, but it is not a minor.
2. The Research Program (and the application essay) must show how different disciplines and methodologies will have to be mobilized to contextualize and answer the problems posed in a specific Research Field. It must, in short, be interdisciplinary, drawing on methodologies, concepts, and research designs from at least three disciplines of the social sciences and/or humanities.
3. The Research Program should yield questions that are possible to answer (in the context of the Senior Thesis) using accessible and appropriate research materials and data. Students are not required to identify definitively a Senior Thesis when they apply to the program, but they should have a good sense of their likely topic, method, and kinds of sources to be used in the research.

The ISF major accepts students who have already put considerable effort, within their undergraduate education, into learning about the variability of cultures and societies across time and space; and who have been exposed to several kinds of disciplinary inquiries and have a knowledge of what it means to pursue research within distinct disciplines (that is, who understand the kinds of research questions deemed appropriate in given disciplines, the kind of evidence and arguments that have been considered convincing, the social uses to which knowledge has been put, and the role of values in determining what broad social goals research should serve).

## ISF Major Application Essay

The application essay must be no more than 750 words, and address the following four dimensions of an interdisciplinary Research Program.

- The salient **interdisciplinary problems** for which solutions are thought. An elaboration of these problems should include a possible set of **research questions** that can only be answered in a multidisciplinary approach.
- The three disciplines (or more) that you will combine in an effort to address your research questions. You should be explicit about the contributions you seek from each discipline.
- The **research methods** that you wish to learn and apply in your own research.
- A discussion of three or four **secondary sources** that have been useful in helping you frame your Research Program, and some possible **primary sources** that you might eventually use in your Senior Thesis.

You are not expected to have identified the topic of your Senior Thesis, but you should have a solid sense of the problems, methods, courses, and sources that make up your Research Program. **Be advised that you should not use your essay to list your Course of Study**, although you can highlight what you have learned (or hope to learn) from certain courses in developing your argument for the disciplines you seek to combine.

**NOTE:** All applications are reviewed by the ISF Faculty Advisory Board using the following criteria:

- 1) Is the student committed to empirically grounded research? Can s/he identify a coherent research program and articulate some research questions that engage in a scholarly conversation? Can the student already identify significant scholarly works relevant to the research program? Is the student able to identify possible research site(s) in space and time?
- 2) Can the proposed research questions be productively pursued outside a single discipline and only through some form of interdisciplinary inquiry? Does the student have a basic if not solid understanding of the nature of interdisciplinary research and does s/he have a firm grasp of how the selected three disciplines can be combined in a research program?
- 3) Is the student committed to gaining competence in a range of research methods, independent of the specific methods to be used in a Senior Thesis (close reading, ethnography, statistical causal analysis, content analysis of historical documents, interviewing, surveys, historical-comparative analysis, experimentation, analytical philosophical reading, etc.)?
- 4) Does the student understand the nature of primary source research? Is the student ready to identify, locate (or create) primary sources that can serve as strategic resource materials?
- 5) Does the student's research program meet ISF standards of an interdisciplinary, research-driven, liberal arts major, or is the student trying to complete a degree in another major through ISF? Has the student already been rejected by an "impacted" major? Is the student using the ISF major to avoid difficult courses, prerequisites, conflicts with athletic schedules, or other requirements of another major? Can the student's research program only be completed in ISF and nowhere else on campus (American Studies, Economics, Haas Undergraduate Program, Psychology)?

# **COURSE OF STUDY IN THE ISF MAJOR**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* ALL COURSES FOR THE MAJOR MUST BE TAKEN FOR A LETTER GRADE \*\***

*Title of Research Program:* \_\_\_\_\_

As a part of the application process for the ISF major, you are expected to prepare a proposed Course of Study. **This plan is not necessarily final**, but it will be an aid in helping you organize your courses each semester. Select courses from relevant disciplines that you think will help you understand the problems or issues you wish to emphasize in your Research Program.

Your list must include courses from at least **three** fields or disciplines. You will be required to take at least **six** upper division courses for your Area totaling at least 20 units. No more than **three** courses from any **one** discipline may be used for your Course of Study. You should include 8-10 courses to accommodate course availability, schedule flexibility, and change of heart.

## **COMPLETED Upper Division Courses for your Course of Study:**

List upper division courses you have completed that you wish to include in your Course of Study.

EXAMPLE: Classics 100A, Greek Lit. (4), UCLA

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## **PROPOSED Upper Division Courses for your Course of Study:**

PLEASE INCLUDE DEPT., COURSE #, TITLE, UNITS, & WHERE. EXAMPLE: Classics 100A, Greek Lit., (4), UCB

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

**When do you plan to enroll in the following ISF classes?**

ISF 100A \_\_\_\_\_ (Semester/Year)

ISF 100B/C/D/E/F/G/H/ Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Semester/Year)

ISF 189 \_\_\_\_\_ ISF 190 \_\_\_\_\_ (Semester/Year)



# PROGRAM PLANNING

Student name

Student ID number

Email address

Phone number

Major(s) / Intended

Graduation date

Total units

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- Double Major                       Change of College into Letters and Science                       Change of Major over 90 units
- Simultaneous Degree                       Readmission to: Fall \_\_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_\_                       Excess Units

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF CLASSES: Beginning with the CURRENT term, indicate all courses you plan to take, including those needed to complete major(s), college/school, and university requirements. A minimum of 13 units must be listed for each semester unless you are/will be approved for a reduced course list by Letters and Science.

Fall _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Spring _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Summer _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Fall _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Spring _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Summer _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Fall _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Spring _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Summer _____	Units
<b>Total</b>	

Major adviser

Date

Major adviser

Date

Approved by

[Signature line]

Date

[Date line: / / 20 ]



## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Enter your student identification number and full name as they appear on your student identification card. Check the current term and complete the year. Enter the address and phone number at which you can be contacted with any questions. Check your student status (new, continuing or readmit). Enter the number of units you have completed.
2. Circle the major(s) you wish to declare.
3. Obtain the signature(s) of the major adviser(s). In most cases, major advisers require that you bring a copy of your most recent UC Berkeley grade report and copies of transcripts from any previous institutions to verify completion of prerequisites.
4. You may leave the completed, signed petition in the major department office (the department will forward it to the Office of Undergraduate Advising), or you may bring it to the College office in room 206 Evans Hall.
5. **DOUBLE MAJOR:** Students who wish to declare two majors in the College of Letters & Science must circle two majors on the petition, obtain the signatures of both major advisers, and file a Double Major Application form. Consult a College adviser for information on minimum requirements and required forms.
6. **CHANGE OF COLLEGE INTO L&S:** Students enrolled in another college or school at Berkeley who wish to change college and declare a major in the College of Letters & Science must check the appropriate box on the petition and file the Petition for Change of College. Consult a College adviser about minimum requirements and required forms.
7. **NEW MAJORS:** Students who wish to declare new majors that have been officially approved to admit students but that are not yet on this petition should circle “OTHER” and write in the name of the new major on the blank lines provided.

College of Letters & Science  
Office of Undergraduate Advising  
206 Evans Hall  
(510) 642-1483  
ls-advise@berkeley.edu