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 field 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).

The next application submission window is from Wednesday, February 5th, 2020, to Monday, March 2nd, 2020, at 5PM.

All applications must be submitted in person to an ISF faculty advisor or they will not be evaluated.

Applicants also need to attend ONE of four application workshops in February and need to meet in-person with an ISF faculty advisor to discuss their research program proposal before submitting their application.

The application workshops will all take place in 262 Evans Hall on the following dates and times:
Submitted applications will be evaluated by the ISF Faculty Advisory Board to determine admission to the major. Applicants will be notified of their admission or non-admission by email no later than Friday, March 20, 2020.

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 consider 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 and secure application with a paperclip not a staple:

• _____ Application Information Sheet (attached) - Please type or print clearly.

• _____ Application Form (including 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: ___________________________________________ 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 and Geographical Site (Country, Region, Continent) (Required or application will not be reviewed):

______________________________________________
Disciplines and World Regions Prerequisites: \textbf{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 ______________

\textbf{TOTAL UNITS COMPLETED} (required or application will not be reviewed).
Do not include in-progress units, please deduct AP or IB units. Total units must be less than 90 units unless changing a major or declaring a double major ______________

TRANSFER GPA (if applicable) ______________

UCB GPA (required or application will not be reviewed) __________

ISF Faculty Advisor Approver (required or application not processed) ____________________________

\textbf{APPLYING FOR A DOUBLE MAJOR?} (Y/N) ______________

\textbf{APPLYING FOR A CHANGE OF MAJOR?} (Y/N) ______________

Updated 11/15/18

\textbf{ISF Major Application Responses:}

1) \textbf{What are the major research problems addressed in your chosen research field?} (250 words; your answer should include a possible set of \textit{research questions} that can only be answered by an interdisciplinary approach).

2) \textbf{What three (or more) disciplines will be combined in your effort to address your research questions?} (250 words). Your answer should include a discussion of research methods drawn from these disciplines, but should not include a list of courses (to be filled out on the Course of Study).

3) \textbf{What primary sources or databases do you expect to explore in the course of your research?} (150 words)
4) Please provide a brief annotated bibliography of the four or five books or studies that have most influenced your ISF research program (200 words).

Be as specific as possible. You are not expected to have identified the topic of your Senior Thesis, but you should have a solid if developing sense of the problems, methods, courses, and sources in your Research Program.

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: _____________________________

Preferred 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?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>(Semester/Year)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISF 100A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISF 100B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I/J/K</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>ISF 189</td>
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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!