

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Living well in our complex world involves questioning “outside the lines.” Our future holds increasing, rapid changes.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Preparing for the future requires problem solving that goes beyond prefabricated compartments. While courses within academic departments pursue inquiry within traditional categories of expertise, interdisciplinary studies (IDS) courses offer the exciting challenge of integrating knowledge using multiple disciplinary perspectives.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The goals of the Cultural Heritage requirement and ways of fulfilling it are explained in “[The Degree Program](#).” Interdisciplinary Cultural Heritage courses enable students to explore relationships among the disciplines of history, literature and philosophy, as well as their connections to the history of religion and the fine arts. Students will consider perennial questions of human life as they study the ways of knowing in multiple humanities disciplines and use them to understand themes and developments in various eras of cultural and intellectual history. Titles of particular sections of each course are given in the course schedule, and descriptions are available on the General Education website.

First Year Seminar

First Year Seminar (FYS) is a highlight and touchstone of the Hope College academic experience. FYS aims to provide an intellectual transition into Hope that parallels in several ways the transition out of Hope offered by the senior seminar. Students take FYS in their first semester and are introduced to college-level ways of active learning as well as skills of self-assessment and reflection. The following objectives guide the FYS experience. Students will...

1. Explore an intellectually important topic with an instructor and with peers.
2. Read primary texts critically and discuss them in a seminar format.
3. Investigate specific topics and communicate their understanding through an appropriate form of writing or other medium (e.g. oral presentation, digital media).
4. Present their ideas for discussion and critical reflection.
5. Learn about the purposes of a liberal arts education, including personal and intellectual development as well as vocational discernment and career preparation.

A variety of engaging FYS topics are offered each year by faculty throughout the college. Some recent titles include *Why Do I Always Get My Best Ideas While Shaving?*, *#adulting*, *Harry Potter and the Flying Dutchmen*, *Choices*, *Friendship and Its Enemies*, *Holistic Health*, *You Believe What? Christianity and the*

Big Questions, Fit Bodies Fat Minds, Should I Give A Dollar to the Homeless Person, American Obsession: An Exploration of Violence in Film, and many others.

A further highlight of the *First Year Seminar* experience is the opportunity for students to get to know their professor in a mentoring and advising context. FYS professors serve as the first academic advisor for all students in her or his course. As faculty and students get to know one another in the academic classroom and an advising setting, conversations about academic and life direction, other courses, grades, adjustment issues, and other areas are able to be cultivated. Students remain with their *First Year Seminar* advisor until they declare their major and receive an advisor who teaches in that particular area.

First Year Seminars are two-credit courses and are typically taught in a section of 15-20 students.

THE SENIOR SEMINAR

Senior Seminar is a unique and essential part of a Hope College education. As the milestone of graduation approaches senior students gather in interdisciplinary seminars and forge communities devoted to the exploration of their beliefs and values, worldviews and life goals. Students consider carefully the ideas they hold and the perspectives they trust. They may reflect on the course of their lives and envision their future plans, dreams and sense of calling. In the Senior Seminar, students ponder questions such as: What is a good life and how do I achieve it? What does it mean to be a lifelong learner? What are my abiding beliefs and convictions and how can I live them out? What is my worldview? How can I make a difference in the world? Professors from across campus design and offer a range of fascinating and diverse seminars. Faculty guide students as they bring together the life of the mind, the resources of faith, the lessons of experience and the critical practices of reading and reflection, discussion and writing.

As the historic Christian faith is central to the mission of Hope College, so Senior Seminar explores how Christianity provides vital beliefs, vibrant virtues and a life-giving worldview. Throughout history and around the globe, believers and admirers, scholars and students have turned to the Christian faith for direction and insight. At the same time, Hope College affirms that faculty and students of the Liberal Arts can find valuable understanding and moral reckoning in all places and among all peoples in this world so loved by God. For this reason, the Senior Seminar often draws on many academic fields, varied forms of artistic expression and insights from daily life. Indeed, every student, regardless of religious background, is an indispensable member of Hope College and the Senior Seminar. Every student brings to the course intellectual expertise and hard won life lessons. In fact, the Senior Seminar only succeeds when each student identifies deep yearnings, asks hard questions and renews personal integrity; when everyone both shares and gains wisdom. The examination and discussion of diverse viewpoints helps students to refine their own convictions even as they learn to comprehend, consider and evaluate perspectives different from their own.

The following objectives animate the Senior Seminar course and experience.

1. Students will articulate and explore Christian ways of knowing and acting, living and learning; their commitments and convictions in conversation with the Christian Faith; and their understanding of the diverse and life-giving purposes and perspectives by which people live.
2. Students will deepen their ability to discuss their differences openly and sensitively, reasonably and honestly.
3. Students will consider, discuss and develop their own philosophy of life and write about it in a compelling, coherent and disciplined manner.

Senior Seminars are four-credit courses. Students may elect from the following courses shown in the courses tab, several of which are offered each semester to fulfill the requirement. Courses should be taken no earlier than May, June or July Terms between the junior and senior year, unless by special permission from the Director of Senior Seminar Program.

MAJORS

MINORS

INTERDISCIPLINARY MINORS

Hope offers a number of interdisciplinary minors. Three examples of such programs follow.

American Ethnic Studies Minor

A minor in [American Ethnic Studies](#) introduces students to critical methodologies and scholarly approaches to understanding the diverse historical and cultural issues relating to race and ethnicity in the United States. At a time when America is becoming increasingly multicultural and when Americans are increasingly aware of the values of multiculturalism, participants in a minor in American Ethnic Studies gain and develop skills to research, analyze and reflect on the heritage of racialized ethnic cultures in America. Such study will develop citizens, participants and activists who have views of their larger mission in life and who strive daily, both locally and globally, in the pursuit of justice and equality.

Peace and Justice Studies Minor

The Peace and Justice Studies Minor prepares students to assume their roles as global citizens and leaders through the development of knowledge and strategies for engaging a global society and promoting a peaceful and just world. The minor takes an interdisciplinary approach to understanding peace theory, application and strategy. The minor introduces students to the academic study of the religious, historical, political, environmental, sociological, cultural and economic causes of conflict, as well as the psychological, philosophical, religious and communication processes of building peace and justice. Students pursuing the Peace and Justice Studies Minor will gain an understanding of conflict from interpersonal to international contexts, by becoming more aware of their own and others' identities, cultures and communities. Students

will be encouraged to supplement their minor with study abroad, internships, conferences and other experiential activities.

Studies in Ministry Minor

The [Studies in Ministry](#) minor is dedicated to preparing students, theologically and practically, for lay ministry positions in churches and para-church organizations. It aims to provide students who have a vocational interest in Christian service with the theological framework, practical experience, spiritual disciplines and mentoring guidance necessary to embark upon a lifetime of involvement in Christian ministries.

Through coursework, year-long internship, and relationships with each other and mentors, students in this program will be prepared for possible future theological education and various entry-level ministry positions in churches and organizations – locally and worldwide. The minor has three different tracks: Youth Ministry, Worship Leadership and Social Witness. Depending on the courses and track chosen, the minor will comprise 25 to 30 hours, to be distributed across required courses, electives and an [internship](#).

COURSES

INTERDISCIPLINARY

IDS 100 - First Year Seminar

These seminars, taught on a variety of subjects and open to first-year students only, focus on ways of knowing, seeing, and evaluating as applied to differing specific topics. Students become actively engaged in these seminars as they read primary texts closely, discuss and write about the issues these texts address, and enhance their skills of self-assessment and reflection.

Teachers of these seminars serve as advisors to the students in their classes.

Credits Awarded: 2

Terms Offered: Fall

Attribute: First Year Seminar (FYS)

IDS 160 - Arts for the Elementary and Middle School Teacher

This course provides an integrated approach to a number of topics in visual art, dance, drama, and music with an emphasis on the interrelatedness of these arts. Prospective elementary teachers will expand their knowledge of and appreciation for the creative/expressive arts and will develop instructional approaches which will enhance understanding and appreciation of the arts for children in the elementary and middle schools (K-8).

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

Attribute: The Arts I (FA1)

IDS 195 - Special Topics

Study of an area of interdisciplinary studies not covered in the regular course listings. Offered as student and teacher interest requires and scheduling permits.

Credits Awarded: 2-4

Terms Offered: As Needed

IDS 200 - Encounter with Cultures

An introduction to cultural diversity, focusing on concepts of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and other forms of cultural identity and difference in contemporary American society. Working with cross-disciplinary theoretical models for understanding cultural identity and interactions between cultures, students will explore their own cultural heritages; and through imaginative literature, autobiography, film, cultural events, and direct intercultural encounters on and off the campus, they will focus on the backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of several specific American cultural groups, such as African, Asian, Hispanic, Jewish, and Native Americans.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

IDS 280 - Contemporary Issues in Japan

Held on the campuses of Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo and Yokohama, this seminar serves as an introduction to the rich cultural traditions of Japan. A series of lectures and field trips as well as personal contact with Japanese students will give a unique perspective on various aspects of contemporary Japanese society.

Credits Awarded: 2-4

Terms Offered: Summer

IDS 295 - Special Topics

Study of an area of interdisciplinary studies not covered in the regular course listings. Offered as student and teacher interest requires and scheduling permits.

Credits Awarded: 2-4

Terms Offered: As Needed

IDS 329 - Transitioning into the Health Professions

This course will help students explore the qualifications and expertise needed for a successful transition to their chosen health profession. Topics covered include values clarification, exploration of ethical issues in healthcare, financial considerations, and an in-depth exploration of the aspects of a successful application and interview for each health profession. Restricted to students with Junior or Senior status.

Credits Awarded: 0-1

Terms Offered: Spring

IDS 395 - Interdisciplinary Studies

A course offered in response to student and instructor interest. Topics are not generally covered in the regular course listings. Course may be taken multiple times if topics are different.

Credits Awarded: 1-4

Terms Offered: As Needed

CULTURAL HERITAGE**IDS 171 - Cultural Heritage I**

Includes all three Cultural Heritage disciplines – history, literature, and philosophy – in the pre-modern period (up to 1500 C.E.). Topics regularly offered include "The Invention of Mercy," "Fate, Freedom, and Destiny," and "Self, Society, and the Sacred."

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Attribute: Cultural Heritage I (CH1)

IDS 490 - Individual Study

An individual research project, investigating some topic in depth and culminating in a paper that demonstrates interdisciplinary scholarship and independent thought. Students who meet the Honors Project eligibility and present a paper that meets the standards established will have the course recorded as an Honors Project. May be repeated for additional credit, with a different project.

Credits Awarded: 3-4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

Prerequisites: Departmental acceptance of application

Attribute: Senior Seminar (SRS)

IDS 172 - Cultural Heritage II

Includes all three Cultural Heritage disciplines – history, literature, and philosophy – in the modern period (after 1500 C.E.). Topics regularly offered include "Disability in Modern Society," "Authority and the Individual," "Perspectives on Science," and "Revolutions and Revolutionaries."

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Attribute: Cultural Heritage II (CH2)

IDS 173 - Cultural Heritage I (Lit/Hist)

Literature and history in the pre-modern period (up to 1500 C.E.).

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring
Attribute: Cultural Heritage I (CH1)

IDS 174 - Cultural Heritage II (Lit/Hist)

Literature and history in the modern period (after 1500 C.E.). Topics regularly offered include "Native American Literature and History."

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer
Attribute: Cultural Heritage II (CH2)

IDS 175 - Cultural Heritage I (Lit/Phil)

Philosophy and literature in the pre-modern period (up to 1500 C.E.). Topics regularly offered include "Classical Mythology and Plato's Republic."

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring
Attribute: Cultural Heritage I (CH1)

THE SENIOR SEMINAR

IDS 452 - Education and Christian Ways of Living

An examination of how Christians think they ought to live, how and why they think they ought to live that way, and how Christian ways of living can and should affect teachers, teaching and learning. Special attention is given to the influence teachers have on the values of their students.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring
Attribute: Senior Seminar (SRS)

IDS 176 - Cultural Heritage II (Lit/Phil)

Philosophy and literature in the modern period (after 1500 C.E.).

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: As Needed
Attribute: Cultural Heritage II (CH2)

IDS 177 - Cultural Heritage I (Hist/Phil)

History and philosophy in the pre-modern period (up to 1500 C.E.).

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: As Needed
Attribute: Cultural Heritage I (CH1)

IDS 178 - Cultural Heritage II (Hist/Phil)

History and philosophy in the modern period (after 1500 C.E.).

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: As Needed
Attribute: Cultural Heritage II (CH2)

IDS 492 - Senior Seminar

This course is taught topically by faculty from across the campus. Each section raises fundamental questions about human values and engages students in considering, discussing, and writing about their philosophy of life in a compelling, coherent and disciplined manner. Students will also consider how the Christian faith can inform a philosophy of life. This course should be taken no earlier than May, June or July Terms between the junior and senior year, unless by special permission from the Director of the Senior Seminar Program.

Credits Awarded: 4
 Terms Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer
 Attribute: Senior Seminar (SRS)

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