

Report to Senate: Interdepartmental (INTD) Courses

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November 9, 2009

The INTD Designation

“The Interdepartmental designation is used for courses that are truly interdisciplinary or interdepartmental; courses under the sponsorship or scope of a single department are given the departmental designation (e.g., History 195).”

Senate “Guidelines for Submitting Course Proposals (Nov. 1995, updated 2002)”
(<http://www.senate.uconn.edu/GUIDE1.html> as retrieved on Jul 15, 2007)

Some interdisciplinary teaching initiatives of faculty falls entirely within the scope of their department’s courses; others are appropriate for cross-listing (e.g. when two departments agree that the particular course fits equally comfortably within both departments’ disciplinary course offerings). The interdepartmental (INTD) designation is another option for interdisciplinary teaching initiatives and may be adopted when at least two departments share “ownership” of a course. Seven of the current INTD courses with catalog listings can be classed as collaborations of this type.

The INTD course designation is currently home for courses associated with a wide range of programs designed for University of Connecticut undergraduates, whatever their major and school or college affiliation. Such significant undergraduate programs include the University of Connecticut Honors Program, First Year Experience, and Senior Year Experience. Some other programs have important constituent courses among INTD offerings: Study Abroad, Urban Semester, the Individualized Major Program, the Diversity minor, and Linkage through Language.

Oversight of INTD Courses

Responsibility for INTD courses rests with the Provost, who has delegated course oversight arrangements to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. Dr. Makowsky has three goals for INTD courses:

- that INTD should represent a course category available for the promotion of interdisciplinary collaboration across schools and colleges;
- that faculty review of INTD course proposals should ensure that INTD courses achieve the quality expected of other courses across the University; and
- that a process of INTD course approval should be agreed across the University as the acceptable means to provide oversight for INTD courses.

Administration of INTD Courses

Since 2004 the Individualized & Interdisciplinary Studies Program (IISP) has administered INTD courses. IISP is part of Undergraduate Education & Instruction, overseen by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. Administration of INTD courses by IISP involves working with a faculty committee to approve new courses, as well as the Office of the Registrar and INTD-teaching programs to ensure that course descriptions and relevant information are up-to-date. In 2005 a process of consultation and reform was initiated to enhance faculty review arrangements for INTD course proposals so that they would be more consistent with the Vice Provost’s goals for INTD courses.

Faculty Review of INTD Courses

An INTD C&CC was created in Fall 2006 as part of arrangements, initiated by the Vice Provost and developed in consultation with Senate, to provide better, appropriate oversight of interdepartmental courses and other university-wide courses taught under the designation “interdepartmental.” Faculty appointments to the Committee from each undergraduate school and college were made. In academic years 2006/07 and 2007/08, INTD C&CC functioned as the inaugural or transitional cross-college oversight committee for INTD course approvals. In January 2007, Senate Scholastic Standards Committee was asked by the Vice Provost to recommend a revised INTD course approval process. Such review took into account the work done by INTD C&CC and considered reservations expressed about the 2006/07 INTD course approval arrangements. In Fall 2007 Senate Scholastic Standards Committee proposed recommendations to the Provost.

In January 2008 Senate approved the recommendations for a revised undergraduate interdepartmental (INTD) course approval process, creation of a new University Interdisciplinary Courses Committee (UICC), and eventual recategorization of some existing INTD courses into a new catalog subject heading. The proposed new designation, provisionally labeled “University” or “UNIV,” would encompass some existing courses that serve important functions in university-wide academic and academic-related programs. A new UICC would serve to clarify and advise faculty members and staff who propose interdisciplinary and/or program-based, non-departmental courses on the approvals required. The committee would carry out advisory vetting for schools, colleges, and Senate and provide oversight of INTD and UNIV courses. While the UICC would act as a “gatekeeper” for the INTD and UNIV designations, UICC would not accredit new courses; schools and colleges, as well as Senate for particular types of courses, are the course accrediting bodies.

INTD Activities (2008/09)

INTD courses operated in the transitional manner approved by the Vice Provost for the previous year. No new INTD course proposals that would involve changes to the catalog were considered. Experimental courses previously reviewed and approved by the INTD C&CC were permitted to continue to be offered after administrative review.

The INTD administrator worked with the Provost's Office to obtain nominations of faculty members from each undergraduate school and college, a representative from a regional campus, and a chair for the University Interdisciplinary Courses Committee. Senate Executive, Senate Nominating Committee, and the Chairs of Senate Scholastic Standards Committee and Curricula & Courses Committee were consulted about various aspects of the formation of the UICC, including nomination of UICC chair and UICC membership. Ex-officio members of the UICC (non-voting) were chosen to represent academic and student affairs units with existing INTD courses, as well as other stakeholders.

UICC met once in Spring 2009 and will meet monthly during each of the 2009/10 semesters. In April 2009, UICC passed a resolution to "ask that Senate Executive Committee delay voting [by Senate Scholastic Standards Committee] on the proposed revision to Article XI to the Senate bylaws which would grant authority to non academic units to offer courses for academic credit until such time as the UICC has had an opportunity to make informed decisions about the topic to make specific recommendations."

Current UICC members are:

Faculty (voting members and alternates)		
Chair	SOP/PHAR SCI	Gerry Gianutsos
Member	CANR/NUSC	Nancy Rodriguez
Member	CLAS/ SOCI	Richard Rockwell
Member	NEAG/EDCI	Wendy Glenn*
Member	NEAG/EDCI	David Moss
Member	SFA/ ARTH	Margo Machida
Member	SOB/MKTG	Robert Bird
Member	SOE	Marty Fox*
Member	SOE	TBD
Member	SON	Cynthia Collins*
Member	SON	Jennifer Telford
Member	SOP/ PHAR Pract.	Michael Gerald
Member	REGIONAL CAMPUS	Ingrid Semaan
Alternate	CANR/NRE	Tom Meyer
Alternate	CLAS/ PSYC	Robert Henning
Alternate	NEAG/EPY	Melissa Bray
Alternate	SFA/MUSI	Glenn Stanley*
Alternate	SFA/DRAM	Adrienne Macki
Alternate	SOB/ACCT	Larry Gramling

Alternate	SOE/CSE	Ion Mandoiu
Alternate	SON	Anne Bavier
Alternate	SOP	TBD

Ex-Officio (non-voting members and alternates)		
Member	Enrichment Programs	Lynne Goodstein
Member	Inst. for Student Success	David Ouimette
Member	ITL	Keith Barker
Member	Registrar's Office	Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith
Member	Senate C&CC	Mike Darre
Member	Student Affairs	Daniel Doerr
Alternate	Enrichment Programs	Margaret Lamb
Alternate	Inst. for Student Success	Steve Jarvi
Alternate	ITL	Catherine Ross
Alternate	Registrar's Office	Marianne Buck
Alternate	Senate C&CC	Eric Schultz
Alternate	Student Affairs	TBD

* These members and alternates served on the committee AY0809 but will not serve AY0910.

INTD Course Statistics (2008-09, with comparatives for 2007-08)

Of the 31 INTD courses approved for regular listing in the course catalog, 24 were taught in 2008-09 (07-08: 31 and 25 respectively). Eight INTD courses were designated general education courses (as either Ws and/or content area courses).

PeopleSoft listings of INTD course sections (based on data supplied by OIR)

	2008-09		2007-08	
	Sections	Seats	Sections	Seats
First Year Experience Program (INTD 1800, 1820 – each 1 cr.)	268	4297	249	4113
Honors Program courses (INTD 1784, 3784 –1 cr., and 3 cr. respectively)	26	440	22	366
Linkage through Language course (INTD 3222 – 1 cr.)	30	206	39	255
Senior Year Experience course [lecture sections] (INTD 4800 – 1 cr.)	2	356	2	331
Departmental- and Program-based courses with individual catalog listings (incl. 1700 [170])	22	221	34	234
Other INTD courses (including experimental, special topics, independent study, study abroad courses)	80	652	81	579
Total	428	6172	427	5878

Every one of UConn's six campuses used at least two INTD courses to offer sections to its students.

2008-2009 instructors of INTD course sections were 30% faculty (tenured, untenured, adjunct), 15% graduate students, and 54% other professionals (07/08: 40%, 13%, 47% respectively).