



NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

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Sponsoring Institution(s): Missouri State University

Program Title: Interdisciplinary studies CMSIS

Degree/Certificate: Masters Degree

Options: Click here to enter text.

Delivery Site(s): MSU - Springfield Campus

CIP Classification: 30.00

\*CIP code can be cross-referenced with programs offered in your region on MDHE's program inventory [highered.mo.gov/Programinventory/search.jsp](http://highered.mo.gov/Programinventory/search.jsp)

Implementation Date: Spring 2014

Cooperative Partners: Not Applicable

\*If this is a collaborative program, form CL must be included with this proposal

**AUTHORIZATION:**

Frank Einhellig, Provost      *Frank Einhellig*      6-27-1  
Name/Title of Institutional Officer      Signature      Date

Dr. Tom Tomasi or Dr. Deanne Camp      417-836-5189 or 417-836-6983  
Person to Contact for More Information      Tele

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I. New Program Proposal (form' NP)

Sponsoring Institution(s): Missouri State University

(add any collaborating institutions) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies - MSIS

Degree/Certificate: Masters Degree

Options: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Delivery Site(s): MSU - Springfield campus

CIP Classification: -----30.0000

Implementation Date: Spring 2015

Cooperative Partners: Not Applicable

Expected Date of First Graduation: May 2017

AUTHORIZATION

Dr. Frank Einhellj Frank Einhellj 6-11-15  
Name/Title of Institutional Officer      Signature      Date

Dr. Tom Tomasi 417-836-417-836-5189 or Dr. Deanne Camp 417-836-6983  
Person to Contact for More Information      Telephone

Dr. Tom Tomasi  
Individual(s) Responsible for Success of Program < e.g., chair, dean, director >:

## Executive Summary

### Rationale:

As society becomes more complex, many employees need training in multiple disciplines. Rapid changes in the marketplace caused by cut-backs, mergers, and out-sourcing make it hard for some people to remain competitive. In academia, new disciplines, such as informatics, computer animation, and sustainability studies, are arising at the intersection of traditional fields. While many universities have responded by creating degrees designed to produce cross-trained graduates, there are still (and will always be) combinations of skill sets that are not organized into existing degrees. A customized interdisciplinary master's program will allow students to obtain a combination of knowledge, skills and experiences designed to fit their individual needs.

This 36 credit hour program provides a master's degree for those who cannot find an acceptable fit for their professional and creative needs within existing programs. The Masters of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies (MSIS) will allow students to expand their knowledge and skills in multiple areas in a manner which is consistent with their professional goals and objectives, while maintaining the rigor of Masters degrees in traditional disciplines.

The MSIS will offer a program of study leading students to advanced knowledge and skills in a subject which is not formally offered as a degree, but for which we already have the expertise and classes on campus. In addition to their coursework, MSIS students will be required to complete a research project (thesis or nonthesis seminar paper/project/performance), and pass a customized comprehensive exam.

### Objectives:

The main objective of the Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies Program is to provide students with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills of overlapping disciplines. This will allow the graduates to maintain a current position in the changing work place, move to a higher-paying position, or meet personal goals of increased knowledge in multiple complimentary fields.

#### I. Introduction

Missouri State University proposes to offer an interdisciplinary Masters program for students seeking growth and advancement within their vocations, who cannot find an appropriate degree among the University's existing, more traditional programs. The MSIS degree will allow students, in ~~—EGORSU~~lt-ation-witll-graduate faeulty-in-the-seleected-areas,-to-combine-the-curricula-of-at-teastt · wcr----- programs to produce a rigorous specialized yet interdisciplinary program of study using existing courses. MSIS students will be expected to demonstrate research and writing proficiency appropriate to their career path and program emphasis.

#### II. Alignment With Mission and Goals

##### 1. Need:

###### A Student Demand:

Because most students should be able to meet their needs by completing one of our 80+ existing graduate programs (degrees + certificates), the MSIS program is not anticipated to have a

large enrollment. The MSIS degree should only be attractive to students interested in a specific skill-set that is at the intersection between traditional graduate programs and is not available through our other Masters degrees. We anticipate 10-15 students in the MSIS program at any time. If we experience a consistently high demand for any particular interdisciplinary field, we may respond by creating a new stand-alone graduate program, thus reducing the number of MSIS candidates.

- i. Estimated enrollment each year for the first five years for full-time and part-time students (Please complete table below)

Form SE	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
Full Time	1	2	3	5	5
Part Time	2	4	6	7	8
Total	3	6	9	12	13

- ii. Will enrollment be capped in the future?  
Most likely no; but if the demand becomes too great, we may decide to implement a cap.
- iii. Please provide a rationale regarding how student enrollment projections were calculated  
Several inquiries have been made to the Graduate College about this type of degree in recent years.

B. Market Demand:

- i. National, state, regional, or local assessment of labor need for citizens with these skills.

According to The Council on Graduate Schools (CGS) (Klein, 2010): *"Interdisciplinary has become a mantra for change in the twenty-first century"* (p. 1}. Consequently, the Council encourages a multi-disciplinary approach to both research and education. Advances in research (and in society) will increasingly be made in the zones-of-intersection between traditional disciplines. This will require people trained in more than one discipline. The MSIS is for students who seek to acquire knowledge and skills in the overlap of more than one discipline by blending existing coursework across departments in an interdisciplinary format.

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- ii. Support letter(s) from potential employers (optional; append to proposal)

C. Societal Need:

- i. General needs which are not directly related to employment

Because some of society's toughest problems are those for which no traditional discipline has the solution, an interdisciplinary approach is often needed. Experts from different disciplines combine their expertise in search of appropriate solutions. Consistent with Missouri State University's public affairs mission, the interdisciplinary MSIS degree will prepare students to participate in these cutting edge endeavors.



- I. How will tuition rates be determined if they differ among the institutions?
- II. Has a formal agreement been developed regarding cost-sharing policies? If yes, please include it as part of the proposal. If no, please summarize the current understanding between all parties and the plans for developing a formal agreement.
- III. What arrangements, if any, have been made for exchange of money between participating institutions?

- G. What commitments have been made by all participants to evaluate the program systematically?
- H. If one institution wishes to discontinue the program, what agreements exist for terminating the offering?

3. Program Structure (form PS):

- A. What are the total credits required for graduation? This should match C+D+E below.

36 (minimum) credit hours

Are there any residency requirements?

Consistent with University policy for graduate programs, up to 30% of the credits could be transferred from another university. At least 70% of the credits must be taken through Missouri State University.

Total Credits by Category

- B. General Education courses: Total credits required:   0

List of classes that contribute to this total (an example has been entered).

Course ID	Course Title	Credits
na		

Total above should be the same as item 3.C.

- C. Major requirements: total credits required:   4-12

List of classes that contribute to this total (an example has been entered).

~~There are no classes that every student will take, but there are basic core requirements for~~

certain types of classes. These classes are found in many different departments, and since the number of credits for them vary, the total number of credits will also vary from one department to another. The selection of core classes will be done with each student's advisor and graduate committee, from those offered by the appropriate departments.

Course ID	Course Title	Credits
	Introduction to Graduate School [type of course] -	1-3 credits
	Research requirement:	
	• Research methods [type of course] -	1-3 credits
	• Thesis -	3-6 credits
	(or non-thesis paper, project, or performance -2-6 credits)	

Total above should be the same as item 3.D.

- D. Free elective credits: 24-32 \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary Area coursework 12 credits
  - Secondary Area/s (classes outside primary area) - 12 credits
  - Additional Electives - 0-8 credits

E. Describe any requirements for thesis, internship or other capstone experience.

Each student will have a "graduate committee" composed of 3 graduate faculty members, at least one from the primary area and another from a secondary area. This committee will approve and supervise a thesis or a non-thesis product/performance/paper, including the study design, implementation, and writing. A presentation of the research findings and an oral defense of this project is also required. All thesis must conform to the University standards as described in our Thesis Guide. The graduate committee will also approve the student's coursework (Program of Study), and will write, administer and evaluate the student's comprehensive exam, which will include questions from each discipline covered by the coursework, in accordance with University policy for comprehensive exams.

F. Describe any unique features such as interdepartmental cooperation.

The entire MSIS degree is interdisciplinary in nature. There must be at least 2 areas of study (primary area and secondary area), but classes can be incorporated from more than two disciplines. Because every student's program of study will be unique, the departments that will be involved will vary widely.

4. Financial Projections (for public institutions only; Form FP): Please complete table at the end of this document. Additional narrative may be added as needed. If more than one institution is providing support, please complete a separate table for each institution.

Since this degree uses classes already taught for other graduate programs, there should be no initial costs for teachers, additional courses, or supplies. The only costs will be for marketing, and the time necessary for someone to administer the degree (promotion, recruiting, admissions, paperwork, advising students, etc.). This responsibility will initially be assumed by the Graduate College office. If enrollment eventually increases significantly, a full faculty member may be selected to serve as the Program Director. This Director would receive a teaching load reduction each semester; funds would then be needed for his/her department to hire someone to cover this load. This cost will be assumed by the Graduate College.

Revenues will be generated from students enrolling in classes from their chosen areas of study. It is anticipated that these revenues will exceed the expected costs, as indicated in the table below. It should be noted that all of these students may not be "new" to the University since some may have otherwise enrolled in other graduate degrees that did not fit their needs as well as the MSIS.

#### 4a. Business and Marketing Plan: Recruiting and Retaining Students

- Describe the initial marketing plan for the new degree program. Describe how you will attract new students to campus and to the proposed program. Include the names and positions of the individuals responsible for marketing the program.

Marketing efforts will focus on the use of MSIS Program brochures, the MSU website, career fairs (approx. 40 per year), and internal education of program coordinators and department heads. Some of the radio ads already run by the Graduate College on the campus station (KSMU) will highlight this degree, as is done with any new degree. The Graduate College has a full-time recruitment coordinator who will promote this degree via all her recruitment activities.

- Project how the program will grow over time and how marketing will change as the program grows.

The MSIS Program will begin with a slow growth that should expand over a 10 year period. We do not anticipate any changes in our marketing efforts.

- Estimate the costs for marketing and include them in the budget.

Marketing costs should not exceed \$400 approximately every two years.

- Describe plans to retain students through graduation.

Students will be expected to meet regularly with their program advisor.

- Describe plans to ensure program enrollment outcomes are achieved.

We will maintain our marketing procedures as described above. It is anticipated that word-of-mouth will also contribute to the program growth.

#### 4b. Institutional Capacity.

- Project the burden of the program on existing resources. Provide evidence that there are sufficient students and funds available to implement and sustain a high quality program without compromising the quality of existing programs.

The MSIS degree should not create any significant burdens. It is designed only for students who cannot identify an appropriate existing degree that meets their needs. These students will take existing classes (for which they have the necessary prerequisites) that are already being offered in conjunction with another degree program.



\*Please provide a brief description of the nature of the state aid. Is "new" money requested or is "old" money going to be used? What is the nature of the "old" money?

**No new money is requested from the state. Because expenses will be low, the university will cover the initial costs. Before long, the degree should be able to pay for itself.**

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5. Program Characteristics and Performance Goals (form PG). For collaborative programs, responsibility for program evaluation and assessment rests with the institution(s) granting the degree(s).

Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.

A. Student Preparation

- Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required.

Admission requirements for the MSIS will include a 3.00 GPA which is higher than the university minimum of 2.75. In addition, unlike many other graduate degrees, two letters of recommendation will be required. Finally, students must submit a "Statement of Interest" describing their educational goals and why no existing degree would meet their needs. Motivation and focus will also be assessed in making an admissions decision.

- Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.

The MSIS will serve students who have well-defined educational goals that combine multiple disciplines and for which no existing degree at Missouri State University will satisfy their objectives. These interdisciplinary foci often represent the leading edge of research and solutions to societal problems. MSIS students will not be admitted into the program unless they have concrete ideas as to what types of disciplines they would like to combine.

#### B. Faculty Characteristics

- Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.

Most will have graduate faculty status. This is required to teach classes at the 700-level, and to serve on a student's graduate committee.

- Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here.

It is anticipated that at least 80% of the credit hours will be taught by full time faculty. No new classes or faculty are requested for this degree. Currently-taught classes will be used to fulfill the degree requirements.

- Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning
- 

Three faculty members will form a graduate committee for each student to advise/assist him/her, and to approve his/her unique program of study, including the research project.

#### Enrollment Projections (repeat section 1.A.)

- Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years.

- Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of *five* years.

Approximately 60% fulltime; 40% part time

#### C. Student and Program Outcomes

- Number of graduates per annum at three and *five* years after implementation.

3 yrs: 3    5 yrs: 5

- Special skills specific to the program. Not Applicable
- Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration. Not Applicable
- Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring *above* the SOth percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.

Because students will be customizing their degrees, no standardized national exam will be taken to assess their performance. Instead, each student will be evaluated on his/her classwork, research via the thesis or seminar paper/project/performance, and answers on a comprehensive exam. No student will graduate until these elements are completed to the satisfaction of the student's graduate committee.

- Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.

Since these students are customizing their degrees, and obtaining interdisciplinary training, it is anticipated that placement rates will be high, with about 80% gaining employment in a related field (note that the "related field" will differ among students). There is no way to be more specific because each student represents a different field, some more competitive than others. We hope that the remaining students will obtain employment in other fields (15%), with only a small number (5%) unemployed.

- Transfer rates, continuous study.

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As with employment opportunities, because MSIS student will be particularly motivated and focused, they should have a high success rate at getting into doctoral programs.

#### D. Program Accreditation

- Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide reasons.

Since the degree is interdisciplinary, there is no applicable accrediting agency.

#### E. Alumni and Employer Survey

- Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, including timing and method of surveys.

Since the programs of study will be customized for each student, the level of satisfaction in alumni is expected to be high. Given the small number of students anticipated in this program, it may take 10 years to accumulate a large enough sample to conduct a meaningful survey of MSIS alumni. However, all MSIS graduates will be asked to take the same exit survey that other graduate students take (administered by the Graduate College).

- Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys.

Given the small number of students anticipated in this degree, it could take about 10 years to have a large enough pool of employers to survey. As this critical mass is reached, the MSIS Program Committee will determine the best way to get feedback from employers.

6. No Program Specific Accreditation: If accreditation is not a goal for this program, provide a brief rationale for your decision. If the institution is seeking program accreditation, provide any additional information that supports your program.

Since the degree is interdisciplinary, there is no appropriate accrediting agency.

7. Will this program be offered primarily at an off-campus location? If yes, complete this section. If no, skip to item 9. No

Quality Assurance for Off-Site Programs:

- A. General Oversight: Describe the manner in which this program will be managed. How does the management of this program fit within the institution's academic administrative structure?
  - B. Faculty Qualifications: How do the qualifications of faculty at this site compare with those of faculty for this program at the main campus? Please also note the comparable data regarding the proportion of course-section coverage by full-time faculty at each site.
  - C. Support Services: Describe how the institution will ensure that students at this site will be able to access services such as academic support, library, computing, and financial aid, as well as other administrative functions, at a level of quality comparable to that of on-campus programs.
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8. Institutional Characteristics: Please describe succinctly why your institution is particularly well equipped or well suited to support the proposed program.

Missouri State University offers many strong graduate degrees and graduate certificates. This requires dedicated faculty, most of who already have graduate faculty status and are active in graduate education. Still others have the credentials, but are in departments with no graduate degrees. These faculty and the classes they teach are the basis of the proposed MSIS degree, which will utilize this infrastructure (departments, faculty, classes, research opportunities), just blended in ways different than existing departmental boundaries. The MSIS program allows students who find

existing masters degrees do not meet their unique, creative, and professional needs to develop an individualized interdisciplinary program. This is done in consultation with graduate faculty in the selected areas, to combine the curricula of at least two programs, and produce a focused interdisciplinary program of study.

#### 9. Any Other Relevant Information

An MSIS "Program Committee" will be formed to oversee this degree, with faculty appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College. This committee will handle admissions, advise perspective students prior to admission, and approve the faculty members on each student's "graduate committee". These graduate committees, led by the student's advisor, will: i) approve course work on the program of study; ii) supervise/approve the research component of the degree (thesis/seminar); and iii) conduct the comprehensive exam.

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APPENDIX: MDHE Related Forms

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MDHE Form SE: STUDENT ENROLMENT PROJECTIONS

Form SE	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
Full Time	1	2	3	5	5
Part Time	2	4	6	7	8
Total	3	6	9	12	13

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**MDHE Form FP - FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS**

	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Years
<b>A. One-time:</b>					
New/renovated space					
Equipment					
Library					
Consultants					
Other					
<b>Total for One-time Expenditures</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>B. Recurring:</b>					
Faculty					
Staff	\$5000	\$5000	\$5000	\$5000	\$5000
Benefits					
Equipment					
Library					
<b>Other (marketing)</b>	\$400		\$400		\$400
<b>Total for Recurring Expenditures</b>	\$5400	\$5000	\$5400	\$5000	\$5400
<b>TOTAL(A+B)</b>	\$5400	\$5000	\$5400	\$5000	\$5400
*State Aid - CBHE					
*State Aid - DESE					
Tuition/Fees	\$6300	\$12,600	\$18,900	\$22,600	\$26,100
Institutional/Resou rces					
Other					
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	\$6300	\$12600	\$18,900	\$22,600	\$26,100



## MDHE Form PG:PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

Institution Name: Missouri State University

Program Name: Interdisciplinary Studies

Date: (for MDHE Use) \_\_\_\_\_

Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.

### I. Student Preparation

- Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required.

Admission requirements for the MSIS will include a 3.00 GPA which is higher than the university minimum of 2.75. In addition, unlike many other graduate degrees, two letters of recommendation will be required. Finally, students must submit a "Statement of Interest" describing their educational goals and why no existing degree would meet their needs. Motivation and focus will also be assessed in making an admissions decision.

- Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.  
*The MSIS will serve students who have well-defined educational goals that combine multiple disciplines and for which no existing degree at Missouri State University will satisfy their objectives. These interdisciplinary foci often represent the leading edge of research and solutions to societal problems. MSIS students will not be admitted into the program unless they have concrete ideas as to what types of disciplines they would like to combine.*

### 2. Faculty Characteristics

- Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.

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Most will have graduate faculty status. This is required to teach classes at the 700-level, and to serve on a student's graduate committee.

- Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here.  
It is anticipated that at least 80% of the credit hours will be taught by full time faculty. No new classes or faculty are requested for this degree. Currently-taught classes will be used to fulfill the degree requirements.

- Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning innovation.  
Three faculty members will form a graduate committee for each student to advise/assist him/her, and to approve his/her unique program of study, including the research project.

### 3. Enrollment Projections (repeat section 1.A.i)

- Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years.  
10
- Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years.  
Approximately 60% fulltime; 40% part time

### 4. Student and Program Outcomes

- Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation.  
3 yrs: 3    5 yrs: 5
- Special skills specific to the program.  
Not Applicable
- Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration.  
Not Applicable
- Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring above the SOth percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.  
Because students will be customizing their degrees, no standardized national exam will be taken to assess their performance. Instead, each student will be evaluated on his/her classwork, research via the thesis or seminar paper/project/performance, and answers on a comprehensive exam. No student will graduate until these elements are completed to the satisfaction of the student's graduate committee.
- Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.  
Since these students are customizing their degrees, and obtaining interdisciplinary training, it is anticipated that placement rates will be high, with about 80% gaining employment in a related field (note that the "related field" will differ among students). There is no way to be more specific because each student represents a different field, some more competitive than others. We hope that the remaining students will obtain employment in other fields (15%), with only a small number (5%) unemployed.
- Transfer rates, continuous study.  
As with employment opportunities, because MSIS student will be particularly motivated and focused, they should have a high success rate at getting into doctoral programs.

5. Program Accreditation

- Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide reasons. Since the degree is interdisciplinary, there is no applicable accrediting agency.

6. Alumni and Employer Survey

- Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, including timing and method of surveys. Since the programs of study will be customized for each student, the level of satisfaction in alumni is expected to be high. Given the small number of students anticipated in this program, it may take 10 years to accumulate a large enough sample to conduct a meaningful survey of MSIS alumni. However, all MSIS graduates will be asked to take the same exit survey that other graduate students take (administered by the Graduate College).
- Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys. Given the small number of students anticipated in this degree, it could take about 10 years to have a large enough pool of employers to survey. As this critical mass is reached, the MSIS Program Committee will determine the best way to get feedback from employers.

7. Institutional Characteristics

- Characteristics demonstrating why your institution is particularly well-equipped to support the program.  
Missouri State University offers many strong graduate degrees and graduate certificates. This requires dedicated faculty, most of who already have graduate faculty status and are active in graduate education. Still others have the credentials, but are in departments with no graduate degrees. These faculty and the classes they teach are the basis of the proposed MSIS degree, which will utilize this infrastructure (departments, faculty, classes, research opportunities), just blended in ways different than existing departmental boundaries. The MSIS program allows students who find existing masters degrees do not meet their unique, creative, and professional needs to develop an individualized interdisciplinary program. This is done in consultation with graduate faculty in the selected areas, to combine the curricula of at least two programs, and produce a focused interdisciplinary program of study.
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