

Interdisciplinary Social Science (INSS)

INSS 2010 Interdisciplinary Soc Sci I 4 Credits

Interdisciplinary Social Science I is the first in a two course sequence which serves as the core requirement in social science for all students in the BLA program and a gateway into the major for those who choose to pursue an Interdisciplinary Social Science major. The course will introduce students to key disciplinary approaches in the social sciences to better understand the criminal legal system in the U.S., which will serve as the thematic focus of the course.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 2020 Interdisc Social Science II 4 Credits

This course is the second in a two course sequence which serves as the core requirement in social science for all students in the BLA program and a gateway into the major for those who choose to pursue an Interdisciplinary Social Science major. The course will introduce students to key disciplinary approaches and methodologies in the social sciences to better understand the criminal legal system in the U.S., which will serve as the thematic focus of the course.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the BLA-INSS program.

INSS 2100 Social Science Methodologies 4 Credits

Introduces quantitative and qualitative research methods, inclusive of methodologies employed across the social sciences, in a problem- or project-based approach

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 2120 Social Science MethodologiesII 4 Credits

Introduces quantitative and qualitative research methods, inclusive of methodologies employed across the social sciences, in a problem- or project-based approach

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

INSS 2300 Principles of Economics 4 Credits

The language of economics has come to dominate discussions about government policy and the business world. Students will learn about the core concepts of economic analysis, including supply, demand, market equilibrium, competitive markets, monopoly, and externalities. The course will focus on real-world applications that illustrate the usefulness of course material.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

INSS 2500 Engaged Interdisc Pedagogy 4 Credits

This course asks: what are the best practices for facilitating an interdisciplinary learning environment? What theories and methods might we study to better understand interdisciplinarity, as well as interdisciplinary learning and teaching? To get at these questions, we will study a range of scholarship on interdisciplinary inquiry and education. Furthermore, we will explore research on cognition, pedagogical method and classroom learning, as we investigate what fosters engaged learning and classroom collaboration. We will put these theories to the test as we develop our own pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning across disciplines and apply practical teaching skills in different learning contexts.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 3600 Comparative World Cultures 4 Credits

This mid level anthropology course explores the diversity of human cultures through a comparative lens, examining cultural structures, social institutions, and patterns of change in the context of globalization. Students will engage with ethnographic case studies from diverse societies, analyzing how economic, political, and technological shifts shape cultural practices and identities. Key topics include kinship, religion, gender roles, economic systems, and the impacts of global forces on local traditions. Through critical discussions and comparative analysis, students will gain a deeper understanding of both cultural resilience and transformation in an interconnected world.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the BLA-INSS program.

INSS 3602 Building Peace 4 Credits

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of conflict resolution and peacebuilding across interpersonal, community, and international settings. Students will examine the social, psychological, cultural, religious, and gender dimensions of conflict while exploring how identity, power, and structural inequalities shape relationships and violence. The course combines theory with practical peacebuilding skills, including conflict analysis, negotiation, mediation, dialogue, reconciliation, trauma-informed approaches, and Do No Harm analysis, equipping students with tools to better understand conflict and contribute to constructive social change.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 3700 Intro to African American Lang 2 Credits

No variety of English has received more academic and public attention than African American Language (AAL). From criticism to celebration, this course examines AAL through both its linguistic features and its social significance. Students will explore the language's vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and syntax; its role in artistic expression through rhetoric, storytelling, signifying, rappin', Black preaching traditions, and music; and its historical development, including connections to African languages, creole theories, early forms of AAL, and regional and social variation within the language. The course also examines education, Ebonics, and other applied issues, including language attitudes, linguistic profiling, teacher expectations, literacy development, and the role of AAL in the courtroom and politics. Through weekly activities and assignments, students will connect linguistic theory to real-world applications while developing a deeper understanding of the cultural, social, and historical significance of African American Language.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 3702 Constitutional Crim Procedure 2 Credits

This course focuses on constitutional limits on the police when they investigate crime. Students will study the fourth amendment protection against unreasonable searches and seizures and the fifth amendment protection against self-incrimination and coerced confessions.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 4000 Policymaking Bias in the US 4 Credits

This interdisciplinary seminar explores the ways implicit bias and structural or institutional discrimination shape public policy in the United States. Students will critically examine key 20th and 21st century U.S. policies across areas such as healthcare, housing, criminal legal systems, gender and reproductive justice, income inequality, disability rights, education, and environmental justice. Through close reading, discussion, and analysis, students will uncover how racism, xenophobia, sexism, ableism, and other forms of systemic oppression have influenced policymaking and contributed to unequal outcomes. The course will also challenge students to reflect on their own identities and perspectives, recognize the role of bias in policymaking, and explore how cultural narratives and institutional power intersect in shaping laws and policies. Using frameworks like JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), intersectionality, and proximity-centered analysis, students will begin to develop tools for ethical and equity-focused engagement with contemporary policy issues.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students with the Prison Justice Initiative attribute.

INSS 4100 US Labor History 4 Credits

The Industrial Revolution is often a staple of history survey courses. But what about the people who worked in the factories, dug the coal to fire industrial machines, and operated the trains that carried the new products far and wide? What about their families that made up the working-class communities that surrounded the centers of industry? What about the movement workers formed to fight for their rights but too often excluded immigrants, people of color, and women? As a US working-class history course, we will explore the events, homes, work spaces, and cultures of different groups of working people to understand their historical experiences and what prompted many to rise up in the attempt to improve their lives and seek greater justice. Because of the vastness of this topic, the course will be representative rather than exhaustive. The bulk of the class will extend from the mid-19th century through the middle of the twentieth century.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

INSS 4200 Global Histories 4 Credits

This course will take a comparative approach to global history, with emphasis on the Indian Ocean region.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.

INSS 4300 Knowing Community 4 Credits

This advanced seminar is a hybrid course integrating social science theory and research methods through a deep examination of three foundational thinkers – W. E. B. DuBois, Anna Julia Cooper, and Walter Rodney. The course will focus on both what these thinkers argued and how they came to shape those arguments. Each week, we will analyze the methodological tools these scholars used to study communities under stress: ethnographic observation, archival research, statistical analysis, historical materialism, and what Rodney called "groundings". Students will then apply these methodological lessons to design their own research projects on a social issue of their choice. The course moves student understanding from how knowledge is produced to becoming producers of knowledge themselves.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the BLA-INSS program.

INSS 4970 Interdisc Soc Sci Capstone I 2 Credits

First of two courses dedicated to developing Interdisciplinary Social Science capstone projects. Emphasis on mentored research, sharing of work in progress, and integration and reflection.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the BLA-INSS program.

INSS 4971 INSS Capstone II 2 Credits

In the two-semester Capstone course, we will work together to guide you through the research and writing process for your Capstone project. We will work from defining a problem, to engaging with sources, to choosing and refining a methodology, to data collection, analysis, write-up and presentation, and, of course, following ethical guidelines when engaging with human subjects. In the first semester, we will focus on planning your research. In the second semester, we will focus on carrying out and reporting the research. Writing a substantial research paper can be a daunting prospect, so we will break it down into manageable steps, with support and feedback all along the way. The Capstone Research Seminar is required for all Interdisciplinary Social Science majors in their final semesters of the program.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree.