INTRODUCTION TO THE MAJOR

The Interdisciplinary Studies Field (ISF) major offers highly motivated students the unique opportunity to design an original program of research and study resulting in a major research project (senior thesis). ISF allows you to take advantage of UC Berkeley’s strengths as a research institution by combining work across disciplines in courses and with faculty where no other structured program exists.

The major is intended for students who wish to focus their studies on a non-U.S. topic, have a clear idea about the research they would like to pursue and the courses that will be most meaningful to them, and who are prepared to write a senior thesis.

ISF CURRICULUM

ISF is an individualized cross-disciplinary research program that includes a course of study and a senior thesis. The course of study is made up of courses taken in the social sciences, the humanities, and/or the professional schools and colleges, alongside the required courses in ISF. The capstone experience is a scholarly, rigorously-researched 40-page required senior thesis, a sustained inquiry in the social sciences and humanities based on original, cross-disciplinary research.

“ I am honored to have been in the ISF major because it provided me an innovative and empowering education. ”

—Emily Cohen, ISF Class of 2015

AMPLIFY YOUR MAJOR

- Engage with your research topic through a study abroad experience.
- Apply your skills and experience as a DeCal facilitator.
- Conduct research abroad and travel to conferences with support from the Institute of International Studies, SURF Fellowship Program, or Haas Scholars Program.
- Do a deep dive into a research topic by writing an Honors Thesis in ISF.
STUDIES FIELD
INTERDISCIPLINARY
Bachelor of Arts

Explore your major
- Meet with your major and college advisor to discuss your academic plans.
- Review major and college requirements.
- Take classes about social problems or social issues that interest you.
- Start preparing a research plan for the ISF application.

Connect and build community
- Join the ISF Facebook group and stay updated on news and events.
- Find study groups, tutoring, and academic support at the Student Learning Center.
- Enroll in UGIS 98: College Success in L&S.

Discover your passions
- Enroll in a Discovery Course to explore new and exciting fields of study.
- Visit the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarships.
- Learn about ISF research fields and consider which field(s) appeal to you.

Engage locally and globally
- Attend the Calapaloosa student activities fair and get involved with a student organization.
- Explore study, internship, and research abroad options with Berkeley Study Abroad.
- Contribute to a community organization with an American Cultures Engaged Scholarship course.
- Go on a service-learning trip with the Alternative Breaks Program.
- Consider a Berkeley Global Internship.

Reflect and plan your future
- Visit Berkeley Career Engagement and the Career Counseling Library.
- Check out the Berkeley Career Engagement Yearly Planner.
- Sign up for Handshake and CareerMail.

First Year
- Complete lower division prerequisites and apply to the major.
- Use the ISF program template to develop your course of study.
- Review major guidelines for study abroad.
- Consider completing a certificate, course thread, or summer minor.

Second Year
- Complete upper division requirements and electives based on your field of study.
- Read through the ISF Senior Thesis guidelines in preparation for your study.
- Ask your major advisor about the ISF Honors Program.

Third Year
- Focus on upper division requirements and electives based on your field of study.
- Read through the ISF Senior Thesis guidelines in preparation for your study.
- Ask your major advisor about the ISF Honors Program.

Fourth Year
- Do a degree check to ensure you are on track to graduate.
- Complete your senior thesis.
- Challenge yourself with a graduate-level course.
- Complete any “bucket list” courses and remaining major, college, and campus requirements.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY MAJOR?
As an ISF major, you will learn critical skills of research, analysis, interpretation, and writing that will translate across professional sectors and domains, including academia, non-profit work, business, government, and community service. Your demonstrable record as a scholar and researcher with the capacity to complete original and innovative work will be a bonus for employers, graduate programs, and professional schools seeking unusual and highly-motivated graduates.

Jobs and Employers
- Account Associate, Accenture
- Analyst, Riviera Partners
- Development, Assoc., Oracle Communications Coordinator, UCOP
- Data Analyst, BALANCE
- Engineer, PG&E
- Fellow,Americorps
- Financial Analyst, Citigroup
- Interaction Designer, VMWare
- Marketing Manager, Freshslice Pizza
- Media Planner, Diggis
- Operations Research Analyst, Zoox
- Technical Trainer, AMN Healthcare
- Volunteer, Peace Corps

Graduate Programs
- Anatomy, PhD
- Business Administration, Masters
- Computer Science, PhD
- Education, Masters
- International Development, Masters
- International Relations, Masters
- Information Technology, Masters
- Law, JD
- Latin American Studies, Masters
- Physical Sciences, Masters

Examples gathered from the First Destination Survey of recent Berkeley graduates.