

COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES COMMITTEE
REPORT OF ACTIVITIES
APRIL 2004

1. INDIVIDUAL INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The College of Graduate Studies and Research encourages re-alignment of traditional disciplines into new patterns, crossing department and college boundaries where this will foster new areas of learning. To facilitate this, the College of Graduate Studies and Research provides opportunities for students to develop **INDIVIDUAL INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS** leading to the PGD, M.A., M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees. Students in interdisciplinary graduate programs are not restricted by traditional academic boundaries.

Many departments and colleges have graduate programs that allow sufficient flexibility to students to complete an interdisciplinary program while enjoying affiliation with an established academic unit. Individual Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs are not intended to compete or replace these programs.

The individual interdisciplinary graduate program is administered by the College of Graduate Studies through the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee.

Candidates interested in Interdisciplinary Studies are responsible for developing the program proposal, which must be approved by the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee. To be considered "interdisciplinary", the proposed program must integrate course work and research into a concise program that is not available within the traditional academic setting.

2. INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE COURSES

INT D 898.3 - Special Topics

Topics will be selected according to the student's specific area of interest.

INT D 990 - Seminar

Students are required to attend and to present at least one seminar each academic term.

INT D 992 - Project

Students taking the non-thesis Master's degree must register in this course.

INT D 994 - Research

Students writing a Master's Thesis must register in this course.

INT D 996 - Research

Students writing a Ph.D. Thesis must register in this course.

3. INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

M. Fulton – Agricultural Economics, Chair
D. Quest - Nursing
L. Wason-Ellam – Curriculum Studies
G. Isaac – Management & Marketing
A. Aitken - Geography
J. Bobyn – College of Graduate Studies and Research
GSA Representative

4. STUDENTS

As of April 30, 2004 there are 30 students participating in Individual Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs – three students in Master of Arts programs, three students in Master of Science programs and 24 students in Ph.D. programs. Applications for three other students have been approved and the students will start their programs in either May or September of 2003.

During the past year, eight students entered the Individual Interdisciplinary program and one student convocated.

Three Interdisciplinary students currently hold University Graduate Scholarships.

5. INTERD WEBSITE:

The Interdisciplinary Studies Committee website (<http://www.usask.ca/cgsr/interd>) was developed this past year to serve as the key source of information for both prospective and current students in the InterD program. The website contains details on the application procedure, scholarships, and the InterD seminar. As part of the website development, the application procedures were described in much greater detail, making it easier for prospective students to complete the InterD application.

6. INTERD SEMINARS

The Interdisciplinary Studies Committee initiated a new structure for the InterD 990 Seminar. The INTD 990 seminar now has two components. The first component is the Interdisciplinary Seminar that is held on a monthly basis. Interdisciplinary students must attend a minimum of 50% of the Interdisciplinary Seminars over the course of the academic year. Interdisciplinary students will also be required to make a least one presentation to this seminar series during their time in program. The Interdisciplinary Seminar consists of presentations by students and faculty members. The INTD Committee members rotate chairing the INTD 990 seminars during the year. The Interdisciplinary Seminar was well attended during the year, and students indicated that they found the presentations and resulting discussion to be very informative and a critical element of their InterD program.

The second component of the INTD 990 is regular attendance at one or more campus seminars in an area or areas of relevance to the students program and research.

7. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Coincident with the increase in the number of InterD students has been an increase in the number of faculty involved in the Student Advisory Committees (SACs) of InterD students. A meeting of these faculty and InterD students was held in February. The purpose of the meeting was to answer questions about the InterD Program and to give members of SACs an understanding of some the changes that have occurred or are likely to occur in the InterD program (e.g., Theme areas). The meeting was well attended and the discussion was lively and very informative. Similar meetings will be held again next year.

8. SCHOLARSHIPS

Given the increase in the number of InterD students, the allocation of scholarships for students in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program has now been devolved to the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee. A Scholarship Committee was established to allocate the funds made available by CGSR. Members of the Scholarship Committee are: Professor Grant Isaac (Chair); Professor Alec Aitken; Professor Linda Wasson-Ellam; and Indrani Chakraborty (GSA Rep.). Before allocations were made, a Graduate Awards Action Plan was prepared and approved by Dean Tom Wishart. The Graduate Awards Action Plan is posted on the InterD website.

8. THEME AREAS

As the Interdisciplinary Program grows, a number of students are entering the program in research areas that are focused around a general topic area and a group of faculty that interact quite closely. Examples of these research groupings include biotechnology and co-operative studies.

To facilitate the management of the growing number of interdisciplinary programs and to provide the members of the research groupings with greater ownership and control of the interdisciplinary graduate programs in their area, the Interdisciplinary Committee has proposed the development of theme committees. These theme committees would be set up by the Interdisciplinary Committee to manage the administration of interdisciplinary programs within a research grouping or theme area.

The Interdisciplinary Committee formally approved the concept of theme committees in February 2003 and requested consideration of this concept by the CGSR Executive. In April 2003, the CGSR Executive indicated that the Interdisciplinary Committee should proceed with the development of theme committees. During the past year, the Interdisciplinary Committee formally developed a Letter of Intent that prospective Theme areas would complete and have approved by the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee. This Letter of Intent includes a Pro Forma Application form that would be used by students applying to the InterD program through a theme area. The CGSR Executive reviewed the Theme area proposal in April 2004 and indicated that the Interdisciplinary Committee could proceed with the establishment of theme groups (to be renamed concentration areas) of sufficient quality/magnitude, while undertaking additional work on the rules and regulations of the concentration areas.