

March 28, 2025

David Jackson, Interim Executive Vice President & Provost University of Nebraska 3835 Holdrege Street Lincoln, NE 68583-0745

Dear Dr. Jackson,

I am forwarding to you materials related to a proposal to create a new undergraduate major in Multidisciplinary Studies within the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees administered by the College of Arts and Sciences. The Multidisciplinary Studies program provides a flexible degree completion pathway that is currently missing from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's offerings but is common at many peer institutions, including our NU sister campuses.

The Multidisciplinary Studies major is intentionally designed to support the needs of students who may be in transition, whether transitioning from a different UNL major, a transfer institution, or a pause in pursuing a degree and are interested in readmission. Future states could include online delivery to expand access to services. The proposed major utilizes existing courses and does not require many new resources. An additional academic advisor is expected in Year 5 and will be funded by college resources. The program fulfills a critical and unmet need at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is strongly supported by key community college partners.

This proposal has the unanimous endorsement of the Academic Planning Committee, the full support of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty and curriculum committees, and the support of Acting Dean Patrick Dussault. The proposal is also supported by Amy Goodburn, Sr. Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Undergraduate Education, and it has my approval. I am requesting you approve it and that it be reported to the Board of Regents at its next regular meeting.

Sincerely,

Rodney D. Bennett

Rody D. Ruf

Chancellor



c: Jennifer Clarke, Chair, Academic Planning Committee
Mark Button, Interim Executive Vice Chancellor
Amy Goodburn, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean
Patrick Dussault, CAS Interim Dean
Renee Batman, Assistant Vice Chancellor
Suzi Tamerius, Project Coordinator
Karen Griffin, Coordinator of Faculty Governance
Andrea Kessler, Administrative Assistant



MEMORANDUM

TO: Academic Planning Committee Chair

FROM: Mark Button, Interim Executive Vice Chancellor

Amy Goodburn, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean

DATE: January 24, 2025

SUBJECT: Proposal to Create New Undergraduate Major in Multidisciplinary Studies

Attached please find a proposal to create a new undergraduate major in Multidisciplinary Studies within the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees, administered by the College of Arts and Sciences. The Multidisciplinary Studies program provides a flexible degree completion pathway that is currently missing from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's offerings, but is common at many peer institutions, including our NU sister campuses.

The program is expected to further state-wide goals for degree completion and workforce development. It is intentionally designed to support transfer students, especially students returning after stopping out. Future state could include online delivery to expand access. The program utilizes existing courses and student support structures, thus requiring very few resources. An additional academic advisor is expected in Year 5 and will be funded by college resources. The program fulfills an important an unmet need at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is strongly supported by key community college partners.

This new major has the full support of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty and curriculum committees and Acting Dean Pat Dussault. In addition, the proposal is supported by Amy Goodburn, Sr. Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Undergraduate Education and myself. We ask for your review and endorsement of this new program.





DATE: December 19, 2024

TO: Katherine S. Ankerson

Executive Vice Chancellor

FROM: Mark E. Button Markette

Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Subject: Resubmission for New Major – Multidisciplinary Studies

Please find attached a resubmission proposal for a new major titled Multidisciplinary Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Multidisciplinary Studies is part of a larger effort to offer a more flexible degree completion pathway to students who may have pursued an undergraduate degree but who stopped short of graduating. The new major was designed to address an unmet need at UNL, allowing students to complete their UNL degree in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible. The Multidisciplinary Studies major is a viable option for any student who has completed (either at UNL or another accredited institution) 60 or more UNL degree-applicable credit hours. It should allow students to build a cohesive yet flexible completion plan that recognizes credit previously completed while upholding the same university and degree requirements of all CAS students.

The Multidisciplinary Studies major is intended to serve the needs of students who may be in transition, whether transitioning from a different UNL major, a transfer institution, or a pause in pursuing a degree. In all of these cases, it is not uncommon for interests and goals to have shifted, making continuing on their original path no longer feasible or meaningful. For this reason, it is possible some students pursuing CAS majors may shift to this program, nonetheless the primary audience is transferring students and students who have stopped out and are interested in readmission. The Multidisciplinary Studies major allows students to utilize past coursework toward a broad, general liberal arts major and ultimately earn their four-year degree. It will be especially attractive to those who are seeking completion of a degree for personal growth and career advancement. We anticipate its offering to increase enrollment overall, as otherwise those students may not be retained, or may never return to or enroll at UNL.

While the Multidisciplinary Studies major will be unique to each student pursuing it, its simple structure of two core courses and three focus or theme components, make it much easier to plan and pursue. Completion of a 4-year college degree is often a requirement for many jobs in many employment



sectors. Many of those jobs do not require a specific major, but rather the broad transferrable knowledge and skills that college graduates possess. By earning a degree with a major in Multidisciplinary Studies, students expand their career opportunities, earning potential, and ability to contribute to the workforce in our state and beyond (see Section III, Part D. Evidence of Need and Demand, for data.)

The three components of the Multidisciplinary Studies major may or may not relate to one another. In contrast, students who, upon entering UNL or after a few terms, wish to design their own interdisciplinary major, may use the Individualized Program of Study (IPS). The IPS major allows a student to develop and propose their own major around a single cohesive theme, with a customized title that will be referenced on their official transcript. This process requires a faculty sponsor and a formal curricular proposal reviewed and approved by the CAS Curriculum and Advising Committee.

This proposal was unanimously approved by the CAS Curriculum and Advising Committee on October 28, 2021. This was presented for approval to the college faculty at our regularly scheduled fall faculty meeting on December 15, 2021, and received unanimous approval. This proposal was originally submitted to the Executive Vice Chancellor's office in February 2022.

I strongly support this proposal and believe that it will provide our students with an additional opportunity to pursue a major that will set them apart and give them a competitive advantage.

Multidisciplinary Studies Major Proposal

Appendix A – Catalog Copy

Multidisciplinary Studies Major Proposal

Appendix A - Catalog Copy

Quick Points

College: Arts and Sciences

Degree Offered: Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science

Hours Required: 120

Minimum Cumulative GPA: 2.0

Minor Available: No

Advisor: TBD

Overview Tab

Description

The Multidisciplinary Studies major provides a flexible degree completion option for students with at least 45 degree-applicable credits (either from UNL or a transfer institution.) Students will complete a foundational course and a capstone course tailored to their unique needs, with the remaining hours for the major made up of three focus or theme areas approved by their academic advisor and the college. A focus is a set of courses in a single discipline, while a theme is a set of courses across several disciplines that inform a cohesive topic, population, time period, or geographic region. Depending on the focus or theme, students may be able to complete the major primarily on-line from a distance. All CAS degree requirements outside of the major (ACE, CDR, Experiential Learning, etc.) remain consistent for Multidisciplinary Studies majors.

Process: Once a student declares the Multidisciplinary Studies major, they will take a required academic and career planning course in which they will reflect upon their past academic background alongside their current interests and goals. In this course, a degree and experiential learning plan will be required that will guide selection of theme and focus areas as well as remaining coursework to earn their degree. Through that process, students may be asked to identify and connect with academic advisors and faculty with expertise related to their theme or focus areas. Their degree plan will be submitted to the Sr. Director for Student Academic and Career Development, who will review and prepare it for final approval by the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum and Advising Committee. Once approved, the degree audit will be programmed to reflect their remaining requirements for the major. Regular connection to their academic advisor and the CAS career coaches is essential every semester to stay on track and prepare for the best after-graduation opportunities.

Major Tab

Major Requirements

Core Requirements

Required Courses	
CASC 300: Academic and Career Planning for Multidisciplinary Studies	1
CASC 481: Multidisciplinary Studies Capstone	3
Subtotal	4 hrs
Themes or Focus Areas ¹²	
Theme or Focus #1 - Select 15 hours from the same designator, or courses from different departments that represent an approved theme	15
Theme or Focus #2 - Select 15 hours from the same designator, or courses from different departments that represent an approved theme.	15
Theme or Focus # 3 - Select 15 hours from the same designator, or courses from different departments that represent an approved theme.	15
At least 15 hours within the theme or focus areas must be at the 300 or 400 level.	
Total Credit Hours	49 hrs

¹ Themes and Focus Areas must be approved by the advisor. Some courses from a single designator may not be used in a focus area based on content or exclusions by the college or department.

Additional Major Requirements

Grade Rules

C- and D Grades

A grade of C or above is required for all courses in the major.

Pass/No Pass

No more than 6 hours of courses taken Pass/No Pass will be counted toward the major.

Restrictions

- Multidisciplinary Studies majors may not double major or dual matriculate.
- Minors must be approved in their degree plan to prevent significant overlap with the theme and focus areas of the major.
- Courses may be included in only one focus or theme.
- No more than 9 hours of internship, research, thesis, or other independent study courses may apply in the major. No more than 9 hours of internship, research, thesis, or other independent study courses may apply in the major.

² At least 30 hours in the Theme or Focus Areas must be from CAS disciplines.

Learning Outcomes Tab

The primary student learning outcomes of the Multidisciplinary Studies major are:

- Comprehend, critically evaluate, and discuss complex issues and information
- Examine problems from multiple perspectives and disciplinary lenses
- Communicate clearly using different forms of writing for a variety of audiences
- Develop and defend evidence-based arguments
- Contextualize political, social, and historical events
- Reflect upon and articulate the value of a liberal arts multidisciplinary academic preparation to career pathways of interest.

Multidisciplinary Studies Major Proposal Appendix B – Letters of Support

Internal

Tony Lazarowicz, Director of Advising

Meagan Savage, Associate Director of Career Development

External

Central Community College
Northeast Community College
Southeast Community College



Date: January 7. 2025

Re: Support in Establishing Ability for Multidisciplinary Studies Major and Degree Completion

I want to share a few recent quotes from students that highlight the importance of this program request.

All my classes at UNL from history, psychology, math, and engineering helped me find different ways to connect with the people around me (customers, peers, managers, employees, etc.) That helped me be one of the top bankers in my market, and eventually become a branch manager... having Math, Engineering, and History as the focuses of my college degree will give me a well-rounded college education and strong foundation to continue growing in my field.

There have been many reasons for me to return to finish my degree, such as furthering my career, but the single most important reason was for "Me". I had always wanted to finish my degree to prove to myself that I could achieve that goal. As the years went on, I finally made the decision that now was the time. As a bonus, to be able to complete my degree where it all began helps to complete that dream. I am excited to continue and complete my degree at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

We have a real opportunity to increase access to higher education both in the State of Nebraska and beyond our state boarders. I've had multiple students reach out to inquire whether such a program as a multidisciplinary studies program exists. To date, there has been no formal mechanism. To do so, however, we need to be creative in our curriculum delivery. We've had both former local and long-distance students inquire about the opportunity, and while we cannot guarantee a fully-online degree completion option, this approach to curriculum does provide some flexible options including some paths that would allow former students, including those who have moved away, the opportunity to complete their degree.

The cost of education is often a deterrent for students to attend college. A recent survey by ECMC Group (As reported in a CNBC article March 14, 2021) found that only 53% of high school students were likely to attend a four-year school, which was 20% lower than 8 months prior. With the price tag being a barrier, students are working more. A 2020 report by the National Center for Educational Statistics indicates that 43% of full-time undergraduate students are also working, while 27% are working more than 20 hours per week. A flexible degree completion option, such as this can create cost-of-living savings while potentially also allowing students the ability to maintain their current employment. They will stay engaged in a high quality education from a college that is committee to their ability to complete their degree.

This program will attract both new students and returning students alike. I recently visited with a colleague at UNO who works with their Division of Continuing Studies. She noted that they often receive students who transfer from UNL and many adult learners who need the flexible program and a way to have a flexible pathway to graduation. In fact, I have often referred many prospective returning students to our UNO colleagues because I knew they could reach their goals and meet them where they were at. By establishing a multidisciplinary studies major, we can now confidently keep those same students here. Not only will we be able to keep those



students here at UNL, but we'll allow them a flexible, yet highly intentional pathway toward graduation that is rooted within our strong liberal arts tradition.

I fully recognize that a main question that we must be prepared to answer is whether student support services will be available to students pursuing this additional major within the college. As a current advising leader in the college, I am committed to ensuring that these students have access to the same level of advising that all of our current students have, including:

- Availability to meet with either in person or remote.
- Provide continued access to other campus offices such as Husker Hub, the Center for Academic Success and Transition and many tutoring centers across campus

In closing, I believe that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the College of Arts and Sciences, and our departments have an opportunity to be a leader in undergraduate education. While it will serve students who want to return to UNL to complete their degree, it also can be an opportunity for global recruitment, particularly students who may find the cost of higher education to be a barrier (for reference, the most expensive portion of higher education for an in-state student living on campus is room and board). We would join 6 of our Big 10 peers as well as UNO and UNK who offer a Bachelor's degree with a major in Multidisciplinary Studies (also referred to as Interdisciplinary Studies or Liberal Studies at these institutions), which will help us compete with other institutions who are already attracting learners who desire a Big 10 caliber degree. To this end, I am in full support of our institution's desire to establish a Multidisciplinary Studies Major and pathway for completion of a bachelor's degree.

Tony Lazarowicz, Ph.D.

Director of Academic Advising College of Arts and Sciences University of Nebraska-Lincoln



December 13, 2024

College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office 1223A Oldfather Hall University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Dear Dean's Office:

As Assistant Director for Career Development in the College of Arts and Sciences, I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed Multidisciplinary Studies degree program. Degrees in the College of Arts and Sciences are inherently flexible, with a combination of focus and range, both of which are at the core of this program. Like all of our majors, Multidisciplinary Studies will prepare students with essential skills to be successful not only in their respective careers but also in their lives and as contributing citizens in local and global communities.

Where I see this program filling a need is for those who understand the value of a college education, but who are not drawn to a specific major discipline. Often the conversation around pursuing higher education encourages students to "major in something you're passionate about." But not every student has a passion. The student population is changing, and students pursue higher education for various reasons. For some, it's a passion for their major. Others have more practical and tangible motivations. They seek the skills, qualifications, and educational foundation necessary for a secure and stable future for themselves and their families. These students, who previously felt they didn't have options, can find an academic home within the Multidisciplinary Studies program.

I recently met with an employer representative from Omaha National, who looks to hire from CAS majors because our students learn quickly, ask good questions, and work well on teams. She is less concerned about a student's specific major and instead values the well-rounded, flexible nature of our students and alumni. Her testimonial is consistent with broad data compiled by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), which indicates the skills at the center of our degree options are all things employers desire in new graduates—communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and curiosity.

Multidisciplinary Studies has the potential to attract students who might otherwise not complete a 4-year degree, help them develop these skill sets, and prepare them for careers they find meaningful in countless fields and industries. They will be equipped to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of work, pursue several different career paths if they choose, and rise quickly into leadership and supervisory roles. All of this will significantly impact their earning power over their lifetime, especially compared to their peers without a 4-year degree.

Establishing the Multidisciplinary Studies Major is an opportunity for the College to meet the changing demands of those we serve and broaden our reach. It will increase access to quality education, open up countless meaningful career opportunities, and vastly improve the financial security for those that elect to pursue the major. This will result in more influential alumni having a positive impact on their communities and the world around them.

Sincerely,

Meagan Savage Associate Director for Career Development College of Arts and Sciences







Central Community College maximizes student and community success

December 4, 2024

Dear Dean Button,

It is my pleasure to provide a letter of support for the new UNL Arts & Sciences Multidisciplinary Studies degree. I see it as another viable opportunity for our community college transfer students who come to the University or who may have started or stopped out and now have the opportunity to reengage with learning from UNL's talented faculty and staff.

Central Community College serves a broad range of students throughout our 25-county service area through our campuses in Columbus, Grand Island and Hastings and our centers in Kearney, Lexington, Holdrege and Ord. In addition to traditional age and nontraditional adults, we annually work with over 2,000 high school students earning "early college" credit coursework designed for academic transfer or workforce readiness. From October 2023 through September 2024, 666 transcripts were sent to UNL from CCC, the largest single transfer institution. Historically, of Central's first-time full- and part-time credit students from the Fall 2017 cohort, 14% (352) transferred to UNL with 68% (240) of those transferring ultimately graduating. About a third of those 240 degrees earned were in majors within Arts & Sciences. Similar breakdowns were observed from the Fall 2016 cohort. I am confident if the Multidisciplinary Studies program would have been available, that number of degrees and graduating transfer percentages would be higher. To ease the burden on transfer students, seeking appropriate mixes of in-person and distance-delivered courses may be further beneficial, but not a requirement. The Academic and Career Planning and Capstone courses seem especially beneficial to provide students with a clear pathway to success as well as application in their chosen career and life goals.

If approved, CCC looks forward to assisting with promotion of this opportunity to our current and former students as a viable pathway to earning a bachelor's degree in addition to continued work for seamless articulation and transfer of current and new Arts & Sciences courses to UNL.

Sincerely,

Matt Gotschall, Ph.D.

College President and UNL Alumnus

College Administration 3134 W Highway 34 PO Box 4903 Grand Island, NE 68802 (402) 564-7132 (308) 398-4222

Columbus 4500 63rd St. PO Box 1027 Columbus, NE 68602

Grand Island 3134 W Highway 34 PO Box 4903 Grand Island, NE 68802 (308) 398-4222

Hastings 550 S Technical Blvd PO Box 1024 Hastings, NE 68902 (402) 463-9811

Holdrege 1308 2nd St. PO Box 856 Holdrege, NE 68949 (308) 995-8133

Kearney 1215 30th Ave. PO Box 310 Kearney, NE 68848 (308) 338-4000

Lexington 1501 Plum Creek Pkwy. PO Box 827 Lexington, NE 68850 (308) 324-8480

Ord 1514 K St. Ord. NE 68862 (308) 728-3299

Central Community College is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.



December 10, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

Northeast Community College is pleased to offer our support for the proposed Multidisciplinary Studies major in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). This innovative program addresses a significant need in higher education by providing a flexible and efficient pathway for transfer students to complete their undergraduate degree.

At Northeast, we are deeply committed to fostering pathways that align with our students' educational and career goals. We are excited about the potential for collaboration between our institution and UNL to promote Multidisciplinary Studies to students seeking degree completion options. We are confident this initiative will not only benefit students but also enhance the broader educational landscape in our state.

Thank you for your dedication to expanding educational opportunities and supporting student achievement. We look forward to seeing the positive impact of the Multidisciplinary Studies major on students and the community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charlene Widener, Vice President of Educational Services Northeast Community College



Area Office Beatrice Campus Lincoln Campus Milford Campus

Learning Centers

8800 O St. 600 State St.

301 S. 68th St. Place Lincoln, NE 68510-2449 402-323-3400/800-642-4075 4771 W. Scott Rd. Beatrice, NE 68310-7042 402-228-3468/800-233-5027 Lincoln, NE 68520-1299 402-471-3333/800-642-4075 Milford, NE 68405-8498 402-761-2131/800-933-7223

FAX: 402-323-3420 FAX: 402-228-8935 FAX: 402-437-2402 FAX: 402-761-2324

In Falls City, Hebron, Nebraska City, Plattsmouth, Wahoo, and York 402-437-2702

www.southeast.edu

Dr. Mark Button, Dean College of Arts and Sciences University of Nebraska-Lincoln

12/19/2024

Dear Dean Button.

We are writing to express Southeast Community College's full support for the University of Nebraska, College of Arts and Sciences' proposed major in Multidisciplinary Studies. As the Dean of Arts & Sciences and Vice President for Instruction at Southeast Community College, we recognize the profound value this new program holds for Southeast Community College students and beyond, particularly those who have already earned significant academic credits but have yet to complete their degrees.

The introduction of the Multidisciplinary Studies major addresses a critical gap in higher education, providing a flexible, yet structured, pathway for students seeking to complete their degree in a way that accommodates their unique academic histories and career aspirations. Many of our students at Southeast Community College are in a similar situation, having completed substantial coursework in diverse fields, but facing challenges when it comes to returning to a traditional, narrowly defined academic program. The Multidisciplinary Studies major is precisely the kind of innovative, forward-thinking solution that can help these students fulfill their educational goals.

We are particularly impressed by the design of the major, which allows students to create a personalized academic path that leverages their prior learning while fulfilling the degree requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences. This flexibility, combined with the thoughtful inclusion of core courses such as CASC 300 (Academic and Career Planning) and CASC 481 (Arts and Sciences Capstone), ensures that students will not only complete their degrees but will do so with the skills necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving workforce.

Furthermore, the major's emphasis on critical thinking, communication, and interdisciplinary learning aligns with the essential competencies that employers across industries value most. By encouraging students to approach problems from multiple perspectives and develop evidencebased arguments, the program will cultivate well-rounded graduates who are equipped to succeed in a wide range of careers, particularly in sectors where a specific disciplinary focus is not required but a broad set of transferable skills is paramount.

At Southeast Community College, we are deeply committed to supporting our students in their academic and career pursuits, and we believe that this new major at the University of Nebraska will significantly enhance opportunities for our graduates. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with your office to ensure that our students are aware of and able to take advantage of this exciting opportunity.

Please accept our strongest endorsement of the Multidisciplinary Studies major. We are confident that it will make a positive impact on students' lives.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can be of further assistance as you move forward with this new major.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joel Michaelis

Vice President for Instruction Southeast Community College

Carrie Ross

Dr. Carolee Ritter

Dean, College of Arts & Sciences Southeast Community College Multidisciplinary Studies Major Proposal

Appendix C – Student Example Plans

Multidisciplinary Studies Proposal

Appendix C: Student Example Plans

Example 1: Pre-Health Student Initially, Change of Direction

This student entered UNL declared as Pre-Health with an intention to go to Medical School. After their 2nd term, they declare a major in Biological Sciences, and a minor in Humanities in Medicine. In their 5th term, they realize that they may not be competitive for Medical School and they do not enjoy the sciences. They are not close to finishing the Biological Sciences major, and wish they could switch to a different one in Humanities or Social Science, but it would significantly prolong their time to degree. The Multidisciplinary Studies major allows them to utilize all of that science coursework, alongside the interdisciplinary courses they have enjoyed.

<u>Component 1: Focus Biology</u> - LIFE 120, 120L, 121, 121L, BIOS 206, BIOS 312, BIOS 310 <u>Component 2: Focus Chemistry</u> - CHEM 109A/L, 110A/L, 251, 252, 253, 254, BIOC/CHEM 431, BIOC/CHEM 432

<u>Component 3: Theme Health in Humanities and Social Sciences</u> - PHIL 213, HIST 221, COMM 354, SOCI 252, COMM 368

Term 1 – Undeclared, Pre-Health	15	Term 2 – Undeclared, Pre-Health	16
MATH 103 – College Algebra/Trigonometry	5, B	MATH 106 (ACE 3) – Calculus I	5, B-
LIFE 120 (ACE 4) – Fundamentals of Biology I	3, B-	LIFE 121 (CDR Science) – Fundamentals of Biology	3, B
LIFE 120L (CDR Lab) – Biology I Lab	1, A	II	1, B
ENGL 150 (ACE 1) – Writing and Inquiry	3, A	LIFE 121L - Biology II Lab	3, C
SPAN 201 (CDR Language) – Intermediate Span I	3, A	CHEM 109A – General Chemistry I	1, B
		CHEM 109L – General Chemistry Lab I	3, A
		SPAN 202 (CDR Language) – Intermediate Span II	
Term 3 – BS Biological Sciences	15	Term 4 – BS Biological Sciences	15
CHEM 110A – General Chemistry II	3, B	CHEM 251 – Organic Chemistry I	3, B
CHEM 110L – General Chemistry Lab II	1, B	CHEM 253 – O Chem Lab I	1, B
BIOS 206 - Genetics	4, B-	PHYS 141 – Elementary General Physics	5, C
PSYC 181 (ACE 6) – Intro to Psychology	3, A	PHIL 213 (ACE 5) – Medical Ethics	3, B
SOCI 101 (ACE 9) – Intro to Sociology	4, A	STAT 218	3, A
Term 5 – BS Biological Sciences	16	Term 6 -Multidisciplinary Studies	16
CHEM 252 – Organic Chemistry II	3, C	CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning	1, P
CHEM 254 – O Chem Lab II	1, B	Multidisciplinary	3, B
BIOS 312 - Microbiology	3, C	BIOS 310 – Biological Sciences Seminar	3, C
BIOC 431 – Biochemistry I	3, C	BIOC 432 – Biochemistry II	3, A
COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication 21st	3, A	SOCI 252 (CDR Social Science) – Health and	3, A
Century	3, A	Society	
HIST 221 (CDR Humanities) – History of Science		COMM 354 – Health Communication	3, A
		Elective	
Student begins to seek alternatives and learns	about	Student takes CASC 300 to map out a plan but is r	ot
Multidisciplinary Studies.		ready to cease pursuing BIOS major until end of the	nis
	T	term.	1
Term 7	15	Term 8	12
COMM 368 – Communication and Aging	3	CASC 481 – Multidisciplinary Capstone	3
CDR Writing	3	ACE 8 (upper level)	3
CDR Diversity (upper level)	3	ACE 7	3
Additional Sci-base Course, any level	3	Elective (upper level)	3
Elective (upper level)	3		

Example 2: Transfer Student with Associate of Arts Degree

This student began coursework at a Community College with an original intention to transfer to UNL and ultimately pursue med school at UNMC. While attending classes they worked part time at a bank and really enjoyed it, and through their coursework they realized their interests and strengths were not in the sciences. After finishing their Associate of Arts degree, they continued to work at the bank full-time. While they enjoy their work, they know that to move up to a supervisory position, they need a 4-year degree, and would like to claim it in the most efficient way possible. They enjoyed some English and History courses they took in the past and have general interest in Pop Culture, but above all, want to advance their career potential to lead people and projects.

Previous CC Coursework (65 credits)

CC Courses		Cr	
General Biology	BIOS 101/101L	General Biology and Lab	4
Human Relations Skills	ALEC 102	Intro to Leadership	3
Pre-Calculus Algebra	MATH 101	College Algebra	3
Elementary Spanish I	SPAN 101	Beginning Spanish I	5
Public Speaking	COMM 209	Public Speaking	3
English Composition I	ENGL 150	Writing and Inquiry	3
Elementary Spanish II	SPAN 102	Beginning Spanish II	5
Principles of Physics I	PHYS 141	Physics for Life Sciences I	5
World Civilization I	HIST 120	World History to 1500	3
Introduction to Literature	ENGL 180	Introduction to Literature	3
Trigonometry	MATH 102	Trigonometry	3
College Chemistry	CHEM 109A/109L	General Chemistry I and Lab	4
US History to 1877	HIST 110	American History to 1877	3
Intermediate Spanish I	SPAN 201	Intermediate Spanish I	3
US History from 1865	HIST 111	American History after 1877	3
Intermediate Spanish II	SPAN 202	Intermediate Spanish II	3
Statistics	STAT 218	Introduction to Statistics	3
English Composition II	ENGL 151	Writing for Change	3
American National Government	POLS 100	Power and Politics	3
Total Equivalent Credits			65

Transfer Equivalencies and Degree Plan

Upon transferring to UNL, the student has 65 credits of specific degree requirements, but UNL has a limit of 60 transfer hours toward the necessary 120, leaving 60 more needed at UNL. The following specific degree requirements have been fulfilled upon transfer:

- ACE 1-9 per new articulation agreement (ACE 10 unfulfilled)
- CAS College Distribution: Writing, Science, Humanities, Social Science, Language

Component 1 - Focus in History
CC Equivalencies: HIST 110, 111, 120
UNL Courses: HIST 305 and HIST 320

Component 2 - Theme of Professional Practice and Communication

CC Equivalencies: ALEC 102, COMM 209, and STAT 218

UNL Courses: COMM 311 and COMM 325

Component 3: Theme of Pop Culture and Media

CC Equivalencies: none

UNL Courses: COMM 250, COMM 280, ENGL 206, ENGL 315B, and SOCI 373

UNL Coursework and Completion Timeline (61 credits)

The following timeline is possible, if the student chooses to enroll full-time in fall and spring terms. Summer terms may be possible if a lighter load is preferred.

16	UNL Term 2	15
1	HIST 320: History of American Medicine	3
3	COMM 311: Intercultural Communication	3
3	(CDR Diversity)	
3	Elective	3
3	Elective	3
3	Elective	3
15	UNL Term 4	15
3	CASC 480 (ACE 10): Capstone	3
3	ENGL 315B: Women and Pop Culture	3
3	Elective	3
3	Elective (3/4XX)	3
3	Elective (3/4XX)	3
	1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	1 HIST 320: History of American Medicine 3 COMM 311: Intercultural Communication 3 (CDR Diversity) 3 Elective 3 Elective 3 Elective 15 UNL Term 4 3 CASC 480 (ACE 10): Capstone 3 ENGL 315B: Women and Pop Culture 3 Elective 3 Elective 3 Elective 3 Elective 3 Elective 3 Elective (3/4XX)

Note: Students who have not completed the Associate's degree may still transfer and begin the Multidisciplinary Studies major, with the possibility of claiming their Associate's Degree retroactively through a Nebraska Community College.

Example 3: Returning Student to UNL after 10 years away

This student began at UNL as a traditional first-time freshman majoring in Engineering. In her third term, she changed her major to History, but then had her first child and stopped out. 10 years later, she is interested in returning to academics and ultimately the workforce but knows that finishing her degree will create more and better opportunities for careers. She is no longer interested in Engineering, or feeling prepared to pick back up in Math and Science. She completed 4 years of a single world language in High School. She enjoyed the History and Sociology courses she took in the past, and has general interest in topics related to health and families. She wonders if there is a way to complete her degree focusing on those interests, so that she can stay motivated to finish and advance her career.

Component 1: Focus History (HIST 110, 111, 113, 249, 320, 305)

Component 2: Theme Pop-Culture and Media (COMM 250, COMM 280, ENGL 207, ENGL 315B, SOCI 373)

Component 3: Theme Health and Family (SOCI 226, SOCI 326, COMM 354, COMM 370, ENGL 210I)

Term 1 – UNL, Engineering	15	Term 2 – UNL, Engineering	16
MATH 106 (ACE 3) – Calculus I	5, B	MATH 107 – Calculus II	4, C
CHEM 109A/L (ACE 4, CDR Lab) – General	4, B	PHYS 211 – General Physics I (CDR Science)	4, B
Chemistry I		CIVE 130	2, B
HIST 110 (ACE 5) – Am. History to 1865	3, A	CIVE 221 – Geometric Control	3, C
CIVE 112 – Intro to Civil Engineering	3, A	SOCI 101 (ACE 9) – Intro to Sociology	3, B
ENGR 10	0, P		
Term 3 – UNL, Engineering	17	Term 4 – UNL, Considering History	14
MATH 208 – Calculus III	4, C	HIST 111 (CDR Humanities) – Am. History	3, B
PHYS 212 – General Physics II	4, C	1865-present	
JGEN 200 (ACE 1) – Tech. Communication	3, B	PSYC 181 (ACE 6) – Intro to Psychology	4, B
THEA 112G (ACE 7)	3, B	CHEM 110A/L	4, C
MECH 223 – Engr Statistics	3, B	MATH 221	3, C
ENGR 20	0, P		
			-
Term 5 – UNL	13	Term 6 - UNL	15
Term 5 – UNL CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning	13	Term 6 - UNL COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media	15 3, A
101111			
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning		COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media	
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary	1, P	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life	3, A
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21 st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and	1, P	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family	3, A 3, B
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21 st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities	1, P 3, A 3, A	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21 st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and	1, P 3, A	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL)	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective Term 7 - UNL	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL)	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective Term 7 - UNL COMM 280 – Communication and Pop	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B 15 3, A	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL) Term 8 - UNL CASC 480 (ACE 10) – Multidisciplinary	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective Term 7 - UNL COMM 280 – Communication and Pop Culture	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B 15 3, A 3, B	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL) Term 8 - UNL CASC 480 (ACE 10) – Multidisciplinary Capstone	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective Term 7 - UNL COMM 280 – Communication and Pop Culture SOCI 373 – Sociology of Pop Culture	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B 15 3, A 3, B 3, A	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL) Term 8 - UNL CASC 480 (ACE 10) – Multidisciplinary Capstone SOCI 326 – Families in Crisis	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P 15 3, B
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective Term 7 - UNL COMM 280 – Communication and Pop Culture SOCI 373 – Sociology of Pop Culture HIST 305 – Digital America	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B 15 3, A 3, B 3, B 3, A 3, B	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL) Term 8 - UNL CASC 480 (ACE 10) – Multidisciplinary Capstone SOCI 326 – Families in Crisis COMM 370 – Family Communication	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P 15 3, B 3, A 3, A
CASC 300 – Acad. Career Planning Multidisciplinary COMM 101 (ACE 2) – Communication in 21st Century ENGL 254 (CDR Writing) – Writing and Communities HIST 113 (CDR Diversity) – History of Hip Hop Elective Term 7 - UNL COMM 280 – Communication and Pop Culture SOCI 373 – Sociology of Pop Culture	1, P 3, A 3, A 3, B 3, B 15 3, A 3, B 3, A	COMM 250 (CDR Social Sci) – Rhetoric Media Civic Life HIST 249 – History of the American Family HIST 320 – History of American Medicine ENGL 207 – Reading Popular Fiction SOCI 226 – Sociology of the Family CASC 95 – Internship (EL) Term 8 - UNL CASC 480 (ACE 10) – Multidisciplinary Capstone SOCI 326 – Families in Crisis	3, A 3, B 3, A 3, B 3, B 0, P 15 3, B

University of Nebraska-Lincoln New Undergraduate Major or Degree

I. Descriptive Information

Name of Institution Proposing New I	Major or Degree	
University of Nebraska-Lincoln		
Name of Proposed Major or Degree		
Multidisciplinary Studies		
Degree to be Awarded to Graduates	of the Major	
Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science	ce	
Other Majors or Degrees Offered in	this Field by Institution	
None		
CIP Code: 6 digit		
30.0000 Multi-/Interdisciplinary Stud	ies	
Subject Code: 4 characters		
CASC		
Administrative Units for the Major o	r Degree	
College of Arts and Sciences		
Proposed Delivery Site		
City Campus		
Program will be Offered [full program	n, not individual course	rs]
X On-campus only	Distance only	_ Both (on-campus and distance)
Program leads to licensure or certific	ation	
X no yes If yes, e	xplain:	
Curriculum Categories and Number	of Credit Hours (must e	qual 120 credit hours)
Existing or repackaged curricula:	116 credit hours	
Revised or redesigned curricula:	0 credit hours	
New curricula:	4 credit hours	
Proposed Date the New Major or De	gree will be Initiated	
Fall 2025		

II. Details

A. Purpose of the Proposed Major or Degree:

Multidisciplinary Studies is part of a larger effort to offer more flexible degree completion pathway to students who may have pursued an undergraduate degree but who stopped short of graduating. The new major was designed to address an unmet need at UNL, allowing students to complete their UNL degree in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible. The Multidisciplinary Studies major is a viable option for any student who has completed (either at UNL or another accredited institution) 60 or more UNL degree applicable credit hours. It should allow

students to build a cohesive yet flexible completion plan that recognizes credit previously completed while upholding the same university and degree requirements of all CAS students.

The Multidisciplinary Studies major is intended to serve the needs of students who may be in transition, whether transitioning from a different UNL major, a transfer institution, or a pause in pursuing a degree. In all of these cases, it is not uncommon for interests and goals to have shifted, making continuing on their original path no longer feasible or meaningful. For this reason, it is possible some students pursuing CAS majors may shift to this program, nonetheless the primary audience is transfer students and students who have stopped out and are interested in readmission. The Multidisciplinary Studies major allows students to utilize past coursework toward a broad, general liberal arts major and ultimately earn their four-year degree. It will be especially attractive to those who are seeking completion of a degree for personal growth and career advancement. We anticipate its offering to increase enrollment overall, as otherwise those students may not be retained, or may never return to or enroll at UNL.

While the Multidisciplinary Studies major will be unique to each student pursuing it, its simple structure of two core courses and three focus or theme components, make it much easier to plan and pursue. Completion of a 4-year college degree is often a requirement for many jobs in many employment sectors. Many of those jobs do not require a specific major, but rather the broad transferable knowledge and skills that college graduates possess. By earning a degree with a major in Multidisciplinary Studies, students expand their career opportunities, earning potential, and ability to contribute to the workforce in our state and beyond (see Section III, part D. Evidence of Need and Demand, for data.)

The three components of the Multidisciplinary Studies major may or may not relate to one another. In contrast, students who upon entering UNL, or after a few terms, wish to design their own interdisciplinary major, may use the Individualized Program of Study (IPS). The IPS major allows a student to develop and propose their own major around a single cohesive theme, with a customized title that will be referenced on their official transcript. This process requires a faculty sponsor, and a formal curricular proposal reviewed and approved by the CAS Curriculum and Advising Committee.

B. Description of the Proposed Major or Degree:

Learning Outcomes: The primary student learning outcomes of the proposed major or degree.

- Comprehend, critically evaluate, and discuss complex issues and information
- Examine problems from multiple perspectives and disciplinary lenses
- Communicate clearly using different forms of writing for a variety of audiences
- Develop and defend evidence-based arguments
- Contextualize political, social, and historical events
- Reflect upon and articulate the value of a liberal arts multidisciplinary academic preparation to career pathways of interest

Admission criteria:

The Multidisciplinary Studies major will be listed only on the applications for Transfer and Readmission to UNL. For any current students, the major can be declared after meeting with the assigned academic advisor to discuss its applicability to the students past academic record and future career goals.

Requirements: The chart below outlines the core requirements and specific major requirements along with restrictions and grade rules. One of the core requirements is CASC 300, which is designed to help students consider and plan their focus or theme areas in accordance with their past credit, interests, and career goals. Ideally, students will take CASC 300 their first term after declaring the major. In addition to helping plan their curriculum, the course will challenge students to consider their past academic and career pathways and identify

their goals for additional experiential learning and career development. CASC 481 should be taken in their final term and not at the same time as CASC 300. This means students will have a minimum of 2 semesters before graduating in most cases.

Core Requirements (4 cr)	CASC 300 Academic and Career Planning for Multidisciplinary Studies – 1 cr CASC 481 Arts and Sciences Capstone – 3 cr										
Specific Major	Focus/Theme #1 - 15 cr	Focus/Theme #2 - 15 cr	Focus/Theme #3 - 15 cr								
Requirements (45 cr)	Course 1	Course 1	Course 1								
Three components,	Course 2	Course 2	Course 2								
either focus or theme	Course 3	Course 3	Course 3								
areas consisting of at	Course 4	Course 4	Course 4								
least 15 cr each with at least 15 cr of upper level	Course 5	Course 5	Course 5								
coursework within the 45 total credits. At least 30 of the 45	A focus consists of coursework from the same department or designator. A theme consists of courses related to a topic pre-approved with the advisor.										
hours must be from CAS disciplines.											
Total Credit Hours	49										
Degree Requirements	only), must be compl • Minimum GPA of 2.0	lirements including ACE, CDR eted. required for graduation. Ilied to the major must be fro									
Grade Rules	C- and D Grades: A gr	rade of C or above is required	d for all courses in the major.								
	 Pass/No Pass: No mo counted toward the i 	re than 6 hours of courses ta major.	ken Pass/No Pass will be								
Restrictions	Multidisciplinary Stud	dies majors may not double r	najor or dual matriculate.								
		oved in their degree plan to ocus areas of the major.	prevent significant overlap								
	 Courses may be inclu 	ded in only one focus or the	me.								
	 No more than 9 hour study courses may ap 	s of internship, research, the oply in the major.	sis, or other independent								

4-Year Plans: See Appendix C – Sample Case Studies and 4-Year Plans

Advising: Students will be assigned to the Assistant Director of Advising, who also serves as a non-voting member of our College Curriculum and Advising Committee. She has wide knowledge of all majors in the college and has participated in the review of Individualized Program of Study proposals.

As the major grows, it may be necessary to add another designated advisor for this program. The assigned advisor will regularly teach CASC 300 in partnership with our college Career Coaches.

C. Plans for Implementation

In Fall of 2022, the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences approved the Multidisciplinary Studies major. We have continued to refine the proposal since then and are hopeful this version will be moved forward for further consideration. We have utilized this approved structure for approximately 8 students since then by using the

Individualized Program of Study process. Once the major is approved, and we are able to promote it, we look forward to expanding those efforts to help more students complete their degree without the extra steps of college curriculum committee review and approval.

For the students we have worked with so far, most come with 1-2 focus or theme areas already complete or nearly complete, but they often need to identify a 3rd theme or focus. If they have a particular discipline of interest, we typically work toward a focus, but themes offer more breadth and flexibility. We have developed some possible themes and course suggestions to make this process a bit easier if a student does not already have something in mind. It may also help ease the burden on degree audit programming. Possible themes include:

- Health and Family
- Pop Culture and Media
- Professional Practice and Communication

In the examples provided in Appendix C, you will see some of the courses that contribute to these themes. Students will be able to follow existing themes or develop one of their own.

III. Review Criteria

A. Centrality to UNL Role and Mission

"The university's graduates and its faculty and staff are major contributors to the economic and cultural development of the state."

The Evidence of Need data shared below reinforces the impact of increasing the number of citizens with a college degree. A flexible Multidisciplinary Studies major will directly affect retention and time to degree, possibly preventing students from stopping out, or welcoming back those that have. As the flagship institution of the State of Nebraska, we should be leading in this effort, but in fact have been slow to act to serve the needs of undergraduate returning students for a flexible degree completion pathway. This new major fills an unmet need at UNL and is in direct support of the related N2025 Aim: "Innovate student experiences that prepare graduates to be life-long learners and contributors to the workforce in Nebraska and the world."

B. Relationship of the proposal to the NU 5-year strategy

Access, Affordability, and Attainment: The Multidisciplinary Studies major will be attractive to students eager to leverage the Nebraska Promise Scholarship, and similarly the recently announced Transfer Student Guarantee. By allowing students to earn a degree in a more flexible manner, graduation rates will be positively impacted, and students will spend less (and perhaps borrow less) to meet this important goal. For students who seek this program due to changes in their interests and goals, it could help retain them and avoid stopping out, or if they have stopped out, allow them to return and finish in a more timely manner.

Workforce Development: The very act of earning a 4-year college degree increases career opportunities and earnings. Allowing graduates to contribute to the economic base of our state (see evidence of need data.)

Culture, Diversity, and Inclusion: There is a clear equity gap in both retention and graduation of students who are first-generation, pell-eligible, and who identify as an underrepresented minority. These students are most likely to struggle to finance and then to balance their education amidst a variety of challenges (financial, work/school balance, family commitments, etc.) The embedded career exploration and development support in this major will help students persevere, confident in the opportunities that their degree will bring.

C. Consistency with the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Post-Secondary Education

Participation and Access: The Multidisciplinary Studies major will help meet the CCPE's goals to increase Nebraskans' participation in and access to postsecondary education by enabling students who have stopped attending to return and complete their degree in ways that enable them to customize their program so they can utilize the credits they have already earned most effectively. As the flagship institution in the state, UNL should offer access to degree completion for the more than 350,000 Nebraskans with some progress toward a Bachelor's degree (see Evidence of Need.)

Student-Centered and Serving Citizens: Students work together with an academic advisor and career coach to develop their multidisciplinary studies program in ways that enable them to build from the academic work they have already done and design a completion plan that enables them to achieve their personal and professional goals and participate actively in their communities.

Work-force Development: As noted above, earning a 4-year college degree increases career opportunities and earnings and thus expands the number of Nebraskans contributing to the economic base of the state.

D. Evidence of Need and Demand

Need: As individuals attain increasing levels of education, their prospects for employment and weekly earnings increase. And as the percentage of a state's population with a college degree increases, so does economic growth. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the following relevant data from 2020 related to unemployment rates and median weekly earnings for workers with a Bachelor's degree vs. Associates or no degree:

- Bachelor's Degree: \$1305 and unemployment rate of 5.5%
- Associate's Degree: \$938 and unemployment rate of 7.1%
- Some college, no degree: \$877 and unemployment rate of 8.3%

Research conducted by the American Action Forum in 2019 showed that for every 1% increase in population with a Bachelor's degree, there is a .08% increase in the state's Gross Domestic Product.

Demand: The following data comes from the CCPE 2021 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report (3/11/21):

- The percentage of Nebraskans ages 22 to 64 who have some college or an associate's degree is 35.1%
- For the period 2015-2019, Nebraska had 363,701 total 22-64-year-olds with some college or associate's degree.
- The percentage difference in college attainment between whites and minorities ages 25 to 44 is 25.7%, which ranks third worst in the country.

The major relies on courses already available to students with many that have additional capacity to accommodate the predicted enrollment growth. However, the goal is to reach 100 declared majors by AY 2025, and given their time to graduation is shorter than others, by eventually admitting 50 students per academic year, the total number of active majors should stay at approximately 100.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Projected	20 New	30 New	40 New	50 New	50 New
Students	Students	Students	Students	Students	Students

Similar offerings at other peer institutions support this goal as reasonable. Policies vary, but most of these institutions are targeting degree completion rather than first time freshman.

- Missouri 244 Students (this program is closest in structure to what we propose.)
- Indiana 310 Students
- Penn State 32 Students
- Michigan 126 Students

E. Avoidance of Unnecessary Duplication

There are no other Multidisciplinary Studies majors within the College of Arts and Sciences or the University. The closest match in the College of Arts and Sciences is to the Individualized Program of Study major that allows a student to develop their own major with its own title. In this program, a major is designed around a unique and interdisciplinary theme. The student proposes a title for their major which is listed on their transcript. The main difference between these two majors in CAS is that the Multidisciplinary Studies major provides a prescribed structure and the three Theme or Focus areas do not necessarily have to connect, making it much more accessible to students in transition.

The Bachelor of Applied Science offered by CASNR is also a flexible degree but focused on science and leadership in society. It leads students through CASNR degree requirements and students choose electives in consultation with an advisor, primarily from CASNR disciplines, but it does not offer a broad, liberal arts degree, nor does it attract students interested in the Humanities or Social Sciences.

State of Nebraska Comparators – While several other institutions around the state offer degree completion pathways that share some characteristics with the proposed Multidisciplinary Studies major, we do not see this as unnecessary duplication. It is clear that UNL is lacking the kind of degree completion program that is available at other institutions across the state. Students who began their degree program at UNL, but who stopped out, should be able to finish at UNL rather than starting over at another institution, perhaps further prolonging their time to degree. And students in the local area should be able to pursue this flexible degree path nearby when they have personal and professional connections here.

Institution	Program Name	Degree Offered	Degree Marketed to
UNO	Multidisciplinary Studies	Bachelor of	Multigenerational learners, the BMS
		Multidisciplinary	program allows for flexibility in
		Studies	acceptance of transfer credit and
			other college-level learning outside
			the traditional classroom.
UNK	General Studies	Bachelor of General	Students interested in tailoring a
		Studies	program to their interests. Especially
			compatible to transfer students
			wishing to reach their degree sooner.
Chadron State	Essential Studies	BA or BS	Students interested in learning
			outcome-based courses applicable to
			a life of responsible inquiry.
Peru State	Liberal Arts	BA	Continuing or transfer students
			interested in becoming intellectually
			well-rounded individuals who wish to
			attain a broad-based undergraduate
			education.
Wayne State	Interdisciplinary Studies	BA or BS	Students who want to combine
	(More closely aligned		courses from two or more programs
	with our IPS major.)		to create your own.
Doane	Liberal Arts Studies	BA or BS	Students seeking a bachelor's degree
University			for career advancement and personal
			growth.
Nebraska	Integrative Studies	BA or BS	Students who want to let their goals,
Wesleyan	(More closely aligned		passions and imagination guide their
University	with our IPS major.)		proposed course of study.

F. Adequacy of Resources:

- 1. Faculty/Staff No additional faculty will be needed for this program. Eventually, as we grow to more than 100 students, an additional advisor line will be necessary.
- 2. Library/Information Resources There are adequate library resources to support the program.
- 3. Physical Facilities and Equipment No additional facilities or equipment will be needed.
- 4. Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources This program will rely on existing courses already supported within colleges and departments.
- 5. Course and Lab Fees The two required courses will not have course or lab fees assigned. With the variance of courses that may be suitable for this major, it is difficult to establish if course and lab fees will be substantial.
- Budget Projections Attached

IV. Appendix

A. Catalog Copy - See attached Appendix A

B. Letters of Support – See attached Appendix B Internal

Supporting letters of approval from department and participating college graduate committees.

- Tony Lazarowicz, Director of Academic Advising, College of Arts and Sciences
- Meagan Savage, Associate Director for Career Development, College of Arts and Sciences

External

External letters of support, if appropriate, including letters of support from multiple potential employers

- Employers Given the broad and varied nature of this major, there are no specific employment sectors that
 will be especially impacted, rather all of them will. The data provided in the Evidence of Need and Demand
 illustrates the overall benefit of increasing the percentage of the population with a college degree.
- Community College Partners Academic Leaders from Southeast Community College, Northeast Community
 College, and Central Community College have engaged with the college on the value of Multidisciplinary
 Studies for their students.

C. 4-Year Plans – See attached Appendix C for Sample Student Cases and Plans

TABLE 2: REVENUE SOURCES FOR PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

	FY2025-26	FY2	026-27	FY2027-28 FY2028-29		FY2029-30				
	Year 1	Year 1 Year 2		,	Year 3		Year 4 Year 5		Year 5	Total
Reallocation of Existing Funds										\$ -
Required New Public Funds										\$ -
1. State Funds										\$ -
2. Local Tax Funds (community										
colleges)										\$ -
Tuition and Fees ¹	\$ 99,720	\$ 2	249,300	\$	349,020	\$	448,740	\$	498,600	\$ 1,645,380
Other Funding										\$ -
1										\$ -
2										\$ -
3										\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 99,720	\$ 2	249,300	\$	349,020	\$	448,740	\$	498,600	\$ 1,645,380

¹ Tuition only per enrollment schedule below.

CCPE; 11/19/08

Projected Enrollment												
	Year 1			Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		
Number of Students Enrolled		20		50		70		90		100		
Credit Hours per Academic Year		18		18		18		18		18		
Resident Tuition per CH	\$	277	\$	277	\$	277	\$	277	\$	277		
Total Projected Tuition	\$	99,720	\$	249,300	\$	349,020	\$	448,740	\$	498,600		

TABLE 1: PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

	FY2	2025-26	FY2	2026-27	FY2	2027-28	FY2	2028-29	FY2	2029-30			
	Y	ear 1	Y	ear 2	Y	ear 3	Y	ear 4	Y	ear 5		Total	
Personnel	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE		Cost
Faculty											-	\$	-
Professional											-	\$	-
Graduate assistants											-	\$	-
Support staff 1									1.00	\$ 62,820	1.00	\$	62,820
Subtotal	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	1.00	\$ 62,820	1.00	\$	62,820
Operating			•										
General Operating											\$		-
Equipment											\$		-
New or renovated space											\$		-
Library/Information Resources											\$		_
Other											\$		-
Subtotal	\$		- \$	-	\$		\$	-	\$	-	\$		-
Total Expenses	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	1.00	\$ 62,820	1.00	\$	62,820

¹ Estimated salary plus benefits for one full-time Advisor beginning in year five.

CCPE; 11/19/08