



INTER-COLLEGE PROGRAM

College of Continuing Education

ICP Adviser Handbook

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University of Minnesota

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Overview and History of Program

Program Overview

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus has 19 degree-granting colleges and schools 10 of which offer undergraduate degrees. Among them, the College of Continuing Education (CCE) is home to two individually-designed undergraduate degree options, including the Inter-College Program (ICP). The Inter-College Program offers interdisciplinary, individually-designed B.A. and B.S. degrees that draw on coursework from at least two separate University of Minnesota colleges or schools. Typically, students admitted to ICP are in their sophomore or junior years, are enrolled full-time, and are able to attend on-campus, University day or evening classes.

Prospective Inter-College Program students work with an ICP adviser to discuss interests and educational/post-graduate goals; they then use that information to explore curricular options. If ICP is a good match, the student will continue to meet with his/her ICP adviser to develop a course plan and major proposal. Most ICP students develop course plans with two or three areas of study. However, a thematic option is also possible. A thematic major focuses on a single subject or theme and must draw relevant coursework from three or more departments and at least two colleges or schools.

Development of the major proposal requires consistent consultation with an ICP adviser and, occasionally, faculty/departmental advisers. Through these adviser meetings, students are coached through the process of crafting a plan that articulates a history of their interests and goals as well as developing a coherent course of study. Generally, the timeline for this process is one semester. When a finished ICP proposal is in place and related prerequisite coursework is complete, the proposal is submitted to faculty/departmental reviewers in the student's concentration areas of interest for final approval. With final approval, the student transitions from ICP degree planning status to ICP major status.

History of ICP

ICP: A Brief Chronology

In the spring of 1930, University President Lotus D. Coffman recommended to a curriculum committee charged with improving cross-disciplinary study that it consider ways to “insure a more liberalized and coherent educational procedure than is possible with the emphasis now placed upon the various specialties.” The Inter-College Program (ICP) has its origins in this recommendation and in the resulting efforts of the All-University Curriculum Committee to permit and encourage individually-designed baccalaureate education for appropriate students. The *Bulletin of the University of Minnesota, 1932-1933* first recorded this opportunity as follows:

“In practically all of the colleges, students of mature age and adequate preparation are permitted to pursue, under the direction of the faculty, one or two distinct lines of study.

A student who is unable to find in any of the curricula of the colleges a program of study suited to his special intellectual interests or professional aims may, with the advice and approval of the All-University Curriculum Committee, arrange a course of study best adapted to his needs. Any course offered in the University may be drawn upon in making up such a program. The satisfactory completion of an approved curriculum entitles the student to the degree of bachelor of art or bachelor of science.”

Individual Curricula

The All-University Committee operated for a decade under the unofficial name, “the University College,” until 1942, when text for “Individual Curricula” appeared in the *Bulletin* under the new heading, “University College,” and individualized degree programs were advised and officially approved by “the University College Committee.”

With the development of other individualized degree programs at the University in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the educational processes practiced under the “University College” name evolved in 1969 into the Inter-College Program (ICP). The University College remained, however, serving more broadly to house new and ongoing experiments in undergraduate education, including ICP.

By the mid 1980s, University College comprised two individualized degree programs: Inter-College Program (ICP) and the Program for Individualized Learning (PIL). In the mid 1990s, the University College merged with Continuing Education and Extension, to become the College of Continuing Education (CCE). ICP has retained its essential curricular opportunity for students over these many years and administrative changes.

For the ICP Faculty/Departmental Adviser

This chapter is written specifically for the ICP faculty/ departmental adviser and provides information on how to perform the duties of a faculty/ departmental adviser. Faculty and faculty-appointed staff members from departments and colleges across the University serve as faculty/ departmental advisers for ICP students, assisting ICP professional advisers and students in the development of disciplinary areas and providing a formal review and approval for ICP area proposals.

Note: The Faculty/Departmental Adviser does not need to read the entire ICP Adviser Handbook, Chapters 1 and 9 are sufficient.

Inter-Collegiate Support for ICP

ICP students are the beneficiaries of the generosity of literally dozens of departmental faculty and advisers from across the University—each of whom volunteers her/his valuable time to help ICP students develop rigorous, innovative, and marketable individualized degrees. Simply put, without your support the inter-collegiate foundation to ICP would be lost—and with it, an important alternative to traditional baccalaureate education.

We thank you!

Why do departments support ICP?

Over the years, faculty and advisers from supporting departments have articulated many benefits to working with ICP. Common themes include...

- ICP students are doing interesting work, often pairing traditionally separate (or even disparate) disciplinary areas to create uniquely individualized degrees;
- ICP represents an important “Plan B” for certain students—including those who struggle to decide on a major or those for whom their first choice turns out to be the wrong choice;

- When ICP students enroll in coursework around the University, departments retain the teaching revenue—presenting an important additional revenue source in fiscally challenging times;
- Many faculty welcome the presence of ICP students in their classes—often citing the diversity of perspective they add to the mix;
- In spite of the fact that CCE does not admit freshman, ICP is highly effective at graduating students in a timely fashion. The flexibility of the individualized degree—coupled with the unsurpassed level of advising provided to its students—combines to yield graduation rates which surpass the UMTC average.

All of this is made possible, in part, thanks to the enduring commitment departmental faculty and advisers have to ICP and to individualized education.

Our Commitment as the Host College

In recognition of the generous and ongoing role faculty/departmental advisers play in the overall success of ICP students, ICP advisers and staff are committed to...

- **Pro-active communication.** We will provide periodic updates about the program, and stand ready to address any questions or concerns you may have along the way.
- **Thoughtful preparation of students.** Our veteran academic advisers will ensure students are adequately prepared before they come to visit with you.
- **Mutually rewarding relationships.** Over time, you'll get to know our advisers and program leadership, and we'll all make an ongoing effort to sustain and nurture the relationships which make our work possible!
- **The highest standards** of the University of Minnesota.

Whom should I contact with questions?

With questions related to a particular student's proposal or area development, please contact the student's ICP adviser directly. The ICP adviser may consult with the Director of Individualized Degree Programs or the Director of Undergraduate Programs as needed. Adviser contact information is available at the end of this chapter

With questions related to...

- the departmental or collegiate relationship with ICP/CCE generally;
- the process followed when working with ICP students;
- changes to departmental curricula or prerequisites that impact ICP students;
- potential new curricular areas for ICP students;

Contact Jennifer McCormack, CCE Director of Individualized Degree Programs, at 612.625.8062 / jmccorma@umn.edu.

Your Role as a Faculty/Departmental Adviser

As a faculty/departmental adviser, and an academic representative of your department, you decide how best to advise a student regarding his/her ICP proposal (including their individually designed course list). Once you have signed off on the Program Approval form, thereby granting departmental approval, most student questions will relate to their course list, although the student may also be seek information about the discipline itself or about career possibilities in your field.

Most departments prefer that students work closely with their ICP adviser to develop the proposal *before* they meet with the department. However, some departments prefer an early referral model, whereby students meet with the faculty/departmental adviser early in the process of constructing an ICP degree--before the student drafts the ICP proposal. A faculty/department adviser can call or e-mail the CCE Departmental Director for Undergraduate Programs if s/he wishes to change the preferred process regarding ICP proposal development. On occasion, ICP advisers may also make an early referral to the department at the student's first individual meeting.

NB: The College of Biological Sciences (CBS) utilizes a distinct process vis a vis ICP proposal development and review. ICP students interested in the Life Sciences area from CBS begin with an early referral advising session with the CBS faculty/departmental adviser. Once the Life Science area and ICP proposal is ready for review, CBS convenes a faculty /departmental committee to render an approval decision.

Initial Advising Session

Assuming an early referral was not followed, you will need to read the ICP proposal (see "The ICP Proposal" below) before your first advising session with the student. The student has been directed to give you a copy of the proposal and a transcript about a week before meeting with you. The student will arrive for an appointment with a Program Approval Form. It will be your responsibility to review and approve the course list, to transfer courses from the list to the form, and to then sign it and offer comments, if necessary.

If, during the proposal review, you find that the student has chosen courses that do not represent his or her best options, you can discuss possible changes with the student and make those changes permanent. If you feel that the student needs to rewrite portions of the proposal, for any reason, you can indicate to the student that this is necessary. ICP advisers try to ensure that the proposal is written to the best of the student's ability, but the **final approval on the proposal package resides with you, as the departmental authority.** The ICP adviser's contact information is provided on the Program Approval Form, and you should feel free to contact this adviser for any more information you may need to make an approval.

Your department may require certain courses as prerequisites to ICP. It is important that the student take these seriously and realize that they must be completed before he or she can be admitted to major status. Usually the prerequisites will appear on the Program Approval Form in the front boxes under the departmental adviser name.

After reading the proposal, you will consider the student's lifetime goals and interests, then make suggestions, changes, or confer approval based on those goals and interests and the student's background.

After reviewing the course list, making sure the student has the correct number of credits in the departmental area (see “ICP Program Options” below), you will sign the proposal in the space provided. As the faculty/departmental adviser, you’ll be primarily responsible for approving the area in your respective department. It will be important for you to evaluate the proposal as a whole and to see the necessary balance between departments. This signed form and proposal will act as the student’s contract with ICP.

Common Student Issues

Incorporating Previous Coursework in Departmental Areas

It is not uncommon for ICP students who are returning to school or transferring colleges to have completed some—or nearly all—of a major in your department. Others may have taken a number of your departmental courses *before* completing and presenting the proposal. Others may be just beginning coursework in your department. Whichever the case, it is up to you as the departmental authority to determine whether the student needs to refresh his or her academic background in the area, or whether the coursework is sufficient as listed.

In the case of transfer students, the department can decide what gaps there may be in the student’s learning, and which courses are most appropriate to close the gaps. International students will often have a significant amount of coursework in a single area. Some departments will take 50% of the coursework, and require, in some cases, a summation course or a major project course that will bring closure to the student’s program.

Changes to the Original Proposal

Students will occasionally need to make changes to their original proposal. Usually, this will happen because a course may not be offered and the student needs a substitution. The ICP Amendment Form is used to record the change. A change is valid *only with a faculty/departmental adviser signature* indicating approval. You may accept or refuse the suggested change, based on your perception of the student’s individual situation.

On the amendment form, there is a space to indicate a deletion to the program and an addition to program. Please make sure that each are indicated clearly before signing. It is the student’s responsibility to return the form to the ICP office. The form is available on the ICP Web site at <http://www.cce.umn.edu/documents/DCP/ICP-Amendment-Form.pdf>.

A student may request multiple changes during the course of study. If the nature of the coursework and the amount of changes are considerable, or the student decides to delete an area, the student will need to rewrite the proposal. Most of the time, the student will have presented a change of this scope to the ICP adviser before meeting with an area adviser. This situation is uncommon, but such a situation may occur from time to time.

The ICP Proposal

The Proposal Format

The ICP proposal contains a student's academic and/or career goals and proposed curriculum in the context of his or her educational history. It is less of a theoretical investigation and more of an attempt to explain how the student arrived at his or her choice of study. The proposal itself is not credit-bearing or graded; rather, the goal of the proposal is to discern a meaningful degree path, and, having done so, to have it approved by departmental representatives. The ICP proposal consists of three parts:

- Goal Statement
- Background Statement
- Rationale for Chosen Coursework

Goal Statement

The goal statement is usually one or two paragraphs in length. The student will often identify a career goal based on his or her current understanding of the job market. The career objective should be described in some detail. For instance, if the student wishes to become a marketing manager, the goal statement should explain what exactly a marketing manager does and how the choice of areas helps to prepare for that role. The student may also identify something he or she wishes to learn or accomplish. In a well-designed proposal, the goal statement should lead the student to certain coursework that will help him or her accomplish a certain goal.

The goal statement also acts as an introductory statement offering an academic perspective on each area and how the student perceives the areas in terms of his or her overall plan.

Background Statement

The background statement offers some information about how the student acquired an interest in the topics at hand. This section is based in experience and often describes the student's influences in life and his or her educational path. The student is free to describe any influences that may have contributed to his or her choices. Some of these influences may fall into the category of mentoring. The student will try to describe anecdotally the events in a valued relationship with this mentor and how the experience or information contributed to the decision to pursue an ICP major.

Other common influences for the background statement include professional life, family history, or avocational pursuits. Sometimes a student will have read an influential book, or have taken a class or seen a film that inspired the current decision to choose a certain area. A personal relationship or experience may also lead to a turning point in the person's life. It is the aim of this statement to articulate an awareness of how all of the student's experiences merged into the choice to create the current degree structure.

Coursework

In this section, each area is introduced individually and the coursework is listed with an explanation of why each course or grouping of courses is appropriate for the degree. This section allows the student to offer an academic perspective on the coursework that holds the two or more complementary areas together. The history, philosophy, themes or methods of the disciplines may be stated. There should be some attention to detail in describing the coursework proposed and some awareness of how the areas fit together. A list is presented, as well as a description of the coursework individually. As the faculty adviser, you and the student will select the most appropriate choices for courses for the individualized degree.

ICP Program Options

Students can choose from several degree options. The following table illustrates the various options and credit structure for each. Each major structure requires a total of 50 upper division credits.

Program Option	B.S. Degree Credit Structure	B.A. Degree Credit Structure
Two-Area	<p>Complete 21 approved credits of upper division coursework in one area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 21 approved credits of upper division coursework in a second area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 8 supporting upper division credits in approved coursework.</p>	<p>Complete 20 approved credits of upper division coursework in one area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 20 approved credits of upper division coursework in a second area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 10 credits of elective upper division coursework.</p>
Three-Area	<p>Complete 20 approved credits of upper division coursework in one area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 15 approved credits of upper division coursework in a second area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 15 approved credits of upper division coursework in a third area of concentration.</p>	<p>Complete 20 approved credits of upper division coursework in one area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 12 approved credits of upper division coursework in a second area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 12 approved credits of upper division coursework in a third area of concentration.</p> <p>Complete 6 credits of elective upper division coursework.</p>
Thematic	<p>Complete 50 approved upper division credits on a theme with 12-20 credits in one primary department and additional credits from any number of departments, but all including content related to the theme</p>	<p>Complete 40 approved upper division credits on a theme with 12-20 credits in one primary department and additional credits from any number of departments, but all including content related to the theme</p> <p>Complete 10 credits of elective upper division coursework.</p>

The Two-Area Program Option

The Two-Area Program design balances two disciplines in an equal number of credits. Any number of possibilities is possible. What is most important is that the student makes clear his or her interest equally in each discipline.

The Three-Area Program Option

The student who chooses the Three-Area Program option may have a variety of interests, and so course decision-making is somewhat more complex among the three disciplines. Advisers should make sure that students choose coursework that genuinely adds alternative viewpoints to a program without risking redundancy in content.

The Thematic Program Option

While most ICP students concentrate their major studies in two or three departments, 15-20 percent focus on one topic. These students choose the thematic option. Some examples of past thematic programs include:

- Aging Studies
- Agricultural Practices of Women in Third World Countries
- Animal Behavior
- Counseling Youth with Addictive Disorders
- Food and Immigrant Societies
- Health and Wellness
- Human Sexuality
- Marketing and Sustainability
- Women's Voice in the Legislature

Thematic Programs and the Role of the Faculty/Departmental Adviser

ICP Thematic Programs must comprise coursework from three or more departments and at least two colleges. All coursework relates specifically to the topic in the title.

Thematic programs are more fluid in construction than the two-area or three-area programs. In thematic programs the choice of coursework is based on how the content of each course relates specifically to the central theme. Usually a large body of coursework from one department or discipline is suggested with accompanying supporting coursework; however, students structure supporting coursework in an individual fashion through consideration of a broad range of departments and disciplines.

The faculty/departmental adviser for a thematic degree student will serve as the student's primary program adviser and usually represents the department with the largest body of coursework in the program plan. A consulting faculty adviser (there are usually two) oversees the student's initial coursework selections to ensure that the coursework is comprehensively chosen. These advisers may have a strong knowledge base in all or part of the student's thematic interest and are able to offer the student a response or make suggestions about coursework that may be more appropriate than what the student has chosen.

Advising Forms

Faculty advisers will need to approve the ICP student's program plan. The student is responsible for presenting a Program Approval Form to their faculty adviser for degree approval and signature. These forms can be found on the ICP web page at: <http://cce.umn.edu/node/6351>

How to Contact Us

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