

IS Major/ Minor Statement

Authored by Katayoun Chamany last updated in 2013

The IS Major Statement is intended to encourage reflection. What would you like to pursue through the IS major and why? What experiences, courses, or ambitions led you to this decision? Taking the time to write such a personal statement helps you to be intentional of the courses you select as well as other activities and experiences you may consider pursuing. The product will be revisited with each new semester and, thus, also serves as a marker of progressive learning and allows you and your advisor to plan your academic, internship, and research experiences appropriately. It is not a formal document written in stone—it is designed to be a work in progress. The sooner you submit it the better your academic experience will be.

The guidelines that follow are intended to assist in the writing of this statement. They will help you organize the statement in a simple, coherent way. The statement should be no more than 2 or 3 pages long. If this is the first time you are doing this, the statement may be somewhat speculative – that is fine.

You should re-visit this statement every semester before an advising session with your IS academic advisor and use it to plan the courses you will take. You should discuss your statement with your advisor (make sure you give a copy of this statement to your advisor as well).

Guidelines

1. Goals and aims of student's major:/minor. You should describe briefly and succinctly (in a few paragraphs) what your interests are and what subjects you want to combine in your program of study. This description should be as specific as possible.

2. Plan for achieving your goals: You should describe how you plan to fulfill your goals. You need to describe the subjects you want to focus on in your curriculum. You should move quickly from the general to the more specific: describe the general area(s), and the specific parts of those areas that interest you. Then describe which courses you will need to complete; give specific examples of courses you have identified as relevant to your plan. Remember that you are attending a university and there may be courses in other divisions that may be pertinent to your plan of study. If you have already begun work in your proposed course of study, you should also describe the courses you have already taken that are relevant to your plans, and clearly explain how together they build towards an interdisciplinary area of study that will allow you to achieve your post graduate goals.

3. Internships and Research Experiences. Internships and Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) are an important part of being a major. You should indicate what internships you contemplate, and when you think you might do them. See the web page: <http://www.lang.edu> for a list of possible internships and communicate with your IS academic advisor about which research or study abroad experiences might be of interest to you and how you intend to complete the requisite background or prerequisite course to be competitive and prepared for the application process involved with these experiences; often REUs and study abroad programs require applications 6-9 months prior to the experience. Please also consult with your academic advisor for an updated list some of internships specific to your interests. You may also develop internship possibilities of your own – again in consultation with your IS advisor.

4. Conferences, Meetings, and Talks. Together conferences, meetings, and talks extend your learning in the classroom in important and meaningful ways and you should consider how to incorporate these into your learning plan. Locally, there are a multitude of freely available seminars offered by every science and math department at local universities that have graduate programs in these fields (NYU, Columbia, CUNY Grad Center, etc). In addition, more interdisciplinary programs host annual conferences on global health, environmental policy (Mount Sinai) etc and The New York Academy of Sciences has programs that merge

science with policy, writing, and society as well as specific sessions in the natural and physical sciences (\$35 student membership). Attendance at these talks allows you to experience the culture of the scientific community and to stay abreast of cutting edge discoveries in these field and areas. In addition, students may want to consider if and when they might want to present some of their own work at these meetings. The AAAS, SENCER, SUNY Case Studies, and other professional societies host meetings on an annual basis or more frequently and many have undergraduate venues in which to showcase work via a poster, talk, or even a journal article. The University Science Club can often fund these experiences as well as the Lang Student Union.

5. Post-B.A. goals: If your interest in the program is motivated by an interest in further studies, or inspired by professional goals, you may discuss those at the beginning and again at the end of the statement. (For a list of past IS major's biographies please see the end of this document.)

6. Style: The statement should be written simply and concretely, so that it is easily comprehensible. The path statement does not require a lengthy exploration of all of your interest and talents, an entire academic subject, your philosophy of life, or your philosophy of education, but should you feel this important to share, provide some background.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE MAJOR

STUDENT NAME _____ Id _____ DATE _____ DEGREE ☐ B.A. ☐ B.A./B.F.A.
DEPARTMENT: _____ EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: _____ ADVISOR _____

1. ☐ _____ [SEMESTER/YEAR (TO BE) COMPLETED]
(LSCI 2700 ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY)
2. ☐ _____
(LMTH 2050 MATHEMATICAL MODELS IN NATURE)
3. ☐ _____
(CHOOSE 1: LSCI 2820 CHEMISTRY OF LIFE OR LSCI 2500 CHEM OF ENVIRONMENT)
4. ☐ _____
(LSCI 2040 GENES, ENVIRONMENT & BEHAVIOR)
5. ☐ _____
(LSCI 3020 METHODS OF SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY—ADVISED ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS)

- LSCI 2037 FOUNDATIONS IN PHYSICS **or** LSCI 2020 CONSTRUCTING THE LAWS OF NATURE
- LSCI 2310 INTRO TO EPIDEMIOLOGY IN ACTION!
- UENV 2400 INTRO TO ECOLOGY

6. ☐ _____

7. ☐ _____

- LMTH 2XXX CALCULUS
- LMTH2XXX STATISTICS WITH SPSS

8. ☐

- LSCI3XXX BIODIVERSITY ACHIEVED (6 CREDITS)
- LSCI3XXX WATER QUALITY LAB (4 CREDITS)
- UENV3XXX ECOLOGY LAB (4 CREDITS)

9. ☐ _____

- LSCI3030 CHEMISTRY OF ATMOSPHERE
- LSCI 3XXX CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL HEALTH
- OTHER 3000 LEVEL LSCI OR LMTH

10. ☐ _____

11. ☐ _____

- LSCI4XXX SCIENCE AND POLITICS OF CANCER
- LSCI4XXX THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT
- LSCI4XXX NANOTECHNOLOGY

12. ☐ _____

13. ☐ _____

TOTAL CREDITS _____ (BA 120 total credits; BAFA 180 total credits)

Date

3

Students who choose to major in IS should consider the ways in which their academic and experiential work lead to a focus in environmental health, public health, climate change, science education, or other areas of interest. Upon declaring the Major/Minor, student should review the guidelines for writing a Major/Minor statement and submit a statement outlining their goals for the academic course of study. This statement should be submitted to the academic advisor and be revisited and revised each year with the academic advisor.

The Majors/Minor Statement Guidelines, Specific Track Requirements for the Major, and course offerings can be accessed from the IS Google Site under [Resources/Advising](https://sites.google.com/site/interdisciplinarityscience/) . <https://sites.google.com/site/interdisciplinarityscience/>. More advising documents are available from the Biohealthsocietylang site <https://sites.google.com/site/biohealthsocietylang/> under Resources.

The template below is not written in stone, but rather suggests a useful sequence in which to complete the requirements for this program. Students declare their major at various points, but we recommend that when you declare, you review this chart, submit a MAJORS/MINOR statement, and schedule an advising appointment with a member of the Interdisciplinary Science Program so that advising can be personalized and appropriate to your interests and post-graduate plans.

Transfer Students who enter the college at the junior or senior level can satisfy the Foundations Requirements by completing four courses in TWO scientific disciplines rather than three, whereas sophomore transfers must complete four foundations in THREE disciplines.

For MAJORS: Generic Sample Interdisciplinary Course Menu

	FALL	SPRING
YEAR 1	IS Introductory Elective Writing 1 Course Advising Course Freshman Workshop	IS Introductory Elective Writing 2 Course
YEAR 2	Genes Environment and Behavior Energy and Sustainability Mathematical Models in Nature	Chemistry of the Environment Second Math Course University Lecture Course
YEAR 3	IS Foundation Course IS Foundation Course IS Internship	IS Intermediate Course One Lab course University Lecture Course
YEAR 4	Methods of Scientific Inquiry IS Intermediate/Advanced Course	IS Advanced Elective IS Advanced Course

For MINORS: Generic Sample Interdisciplinary Course Menu

LSCI 2700 Energy and Sustainability

One Mathematics Course

One Lab Course

Two Foundations (across any two following disciplines; biology chemistry, epidemiology, physics)

**** all students must receive a C or higher in all courses that meet the requirements of the major/minor