

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

**PROGRAM PROPOSAL NARRATIVE:
MAJOR IN GENERAL STUDIES**

1. Program Identification

Proposing institution:	Emporia State University
Title of proposed program:	Major in General Studies
Degree(s) to be offered:	Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies
Anticipated date of implementation:	Spring 2018
Responsible department:	Department of Interdisciplinary Studies College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
CIP Code:	24.0102

2. Program Justification

Locational and comparative advantages:

Students who started but did not finish their degrees at ESU will be able to finish the GRS on campus or online. They can take advantage of the flexible GRS General Education pilot program. Students from other institutions, in other parts of Kansas or in other states, will also be able to complete the degree online.

Relation to the Board-approved Mission Statement of the institution:

The general studies major relates closely to ESU's mission statement and fits with the goals of the current strategic plan. The mission statement reads: "*Preparing students for lifelong learning, rewarding careers, and adaptive leadership.*" The general studies major allows students to flexibly plan their own degree program, encouraging them to take initiative and think creatively about a degree plan that meets their career goals and provides opportunities for leadership in their chosen areas of study.

The proposed major also directly addresses the first goal of KBOR's *Foresight 2020* strategic agenda, as it is specifically aimed to increase numbers of Kansans who complete a bachelor's degree.

Comparisons to similar programs in other institutions in the Regents system and related programs in the same institution:

The Bachelor of General Studies degree exists in other KBOR institutions, including The University of Kansas, Wichita State University, Fort Hays State University and Pittsburg State University. All the programs offer some degree of flexibility in planning and completing the degree program; each is either all or partly available online; each requires students to fulfill all university graduation requirements.

Foresight 2020 Goal 1 aspires to "increase to 60 percent the number of Kansas adults who have earned a certificate, associate or bachelor's degree by 2020." KBOR staff has calculated that to achieve the 60% attainment goal, the state's public universities must increase the number of bachelor's degrees awarded each year by 4,630. 2016-17 Board Goal 1 called for "a proposal to attract Kansans with some college credit, but no degree, back to higher education to complete a credential." That proposal, presented to the Board in April 2017, referenced 37,704 Kansans who are "potential completers" with two or more years' worth of academic credit; it prioritized online baccalaureate degrees tailored to the needs of this population—such as ESU's proposed General Studies major—as a key strategy.

The proposed program would be a second major under the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree at ESU. The existing major, in Interdisciplinary Studies, is multidisciplinary and more highly structured. It

requires the student to commit to the program early in his/her studies, to select more than one disciplinary emphasis, and to demonstrate a synthesis of knowledge and skills derived from those emphases. The proposed General Studies major offers greater flexibility to incorporate coursework already completed in a liberal arts major or minor, and is therefore better suited to the needs of potential completers.

Comparison of similar programs in the region:

Based on available information online, general studies programs at other KBOR institutions draw on courses from other programs on campus, as will the program at Emporia State University. Therefore, it can be assumed that the general studies programs are of the same quality as other programs offered at the universities. As in Emporia State University's program, programs offered at other institutions around the region require students to fulfill all university requirements, including completing a general education program and meeting all graduation requirements.

Advantage of location:

The general studies program at Emporia State University will first target former ESU students who have not completed their degrees. Such students will have completed most of the other graduation requirements, including ESU residence and most or all general education courses. Therefore, finishing their degrees with a major in general studies will be facilitated because the major is offered at ESU.

The second group of students to be targeted will be current ESU students who may change their major late in their academic careers, or who may decide to leave school for the myriad reasons that motivate such decisions. This flexible program will allow them to finish their degree either on campus or from a distance without the necessity of completing many new requirements as they would if they started anew at a different institution.

Finally, students who will be targeted for this program include any who are looking for a flexible online program that will allow them to construct their own degree plan and to complete it in a timely manner. The same requirements will apply to such students as to all degree-seeking students at Emporia State.

Advantages and disadvantages of the program being a freestanding, cooperative or joint program:

One of the big advantages of the general studies major is that it allows students to complete their degree with the greatest flexibility possible. It will be housed in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, which will coordinate the one required course (the 1-credit-hour capstone), and which is already set up to facilitate interdisciplinary, unique degree plans that draw on courses from across campus. By its nature and in context within the University, the general studies degree is a cooperative program, as students take courses from diverse programs, departments, and colleges across campus.

The institutional rank of the proposed program in list of priorities:

As a high-value option for students requiring essentially no new resources, the general studies major does not compete with other institutional priorities. The proposed program meets ESU's objective of "changing lives for the common good" as it seeks to enhance student success. It directly addresses the goals of the strategic plan which set a priority on distinctive initiatives in curricula and programs, enriching students experiences with opportunities for leadership development and practice, and enhancing the competitive role of Kansas by achieving the State's goals for public higher education.

Research shows that higher levels of educational attainment translate into higher earnings and an enriched personal and professional life, as noted in ESU's mission statement. As a degree completion program, the proposed new major in general studies offers those who have finished most of their degree requirements, but, for whatever reason, have not completed the degree. This provides students with the opportunity to finish a bachelor's degree with the fewest barriers possible.

3. Students

Student demand for the program:

Currently evidence of student demand for the general studies major is anecdotal. Students have approached the advisor and chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies seeking the quickest and most flexible plan for finishing their degrees. Other faculty, chairs, and the dean have also fielded such inquiries. The number of students who will be interested in the general studies major at ESU is hard to estimate.

KBOR noted in January 2017 (KS Board of Regents on Twitter) that nearly 1,200 students in state universities had between 60 and 119 credit hours when they enrolled for academic year 2016, and when those enrolling in community colleges were added in, the total reached over 4,200. KBOR tweeted that it is “exploring and identifying the best strategies to attract adults with some college but no degree back to higher education to complete a certificate or degree.” Such people (who have few remaining requirements in the way of completing their degree) are the initial target audience for the proposed major in general studies at ESU. This will be a relatively large pool of prospective students who may be attracted to the new major.

Student demand demonstrated through disciplined survey analysis:

As noted above, evidence of demand for the program is based on anecdotal evidence, including conversations between prospective students and advisors. The existence of the large pool of former students who have not yet completed a bachelor’s degree is documented by KBOR. We anticipate that some percentage of those students will be attracted to the general studies program at ESU because, for example, they already meet residency requirements, or have completed most of the other graduation requirements for a degree at ESU.

Student demand at a sufficient volume to justify the program.

The program will be reviewed each year to assess its effectiveness in terms of attracting students.

Characteristics of students attracted to program:

We anticipate that the students who will choose to complete a general studies major will be those who nearly finished a degree at ESU in the past but chose to do something else for the many reasons that can deflect students from completing their degrees, as noted above. That may be because of marriage, children, job opportunities, financial issues, or any one of many other reasons. Such students may be working full time and find that they need to have a complete bachelor’s degree to advance in their careers; they may decide that they want to pursue a professional program such as a law degree or other advanced study that requires a completed bachelor’s degree. They may have quit school to have children and now determine that they want to complete the degree. Potential students will come from a wide variety of circumstances.

General studies majors may also include current students who decide late in their academic careers that they do not wish to teach, for example, or to continue with whatever degree they have been pursuing. For such students, who are close to the end of their degree programs, the availability of a major that will allow them to finish their degree without having to complete many more degree requirements will hold great appeal.

Demand for graduates of the program:

The proposal shall demonstrate specific job opportunities including labor market demand data at both the local and state level. The proposal shall also demonstrate other post-collegiate experiences for graduates of this program.

We anticipate that students choosing to complete the general studies major will mostly be working adults who left the university before finishing a degree. They will be, therefore, non-traditional, working students with job experience, who need or want to complete a bachelor’s degree to advance in their careers.

With regard to preparation for specific job opportunities, the general studies major prepares students with skills in written and oral communication and problem solving. Some classes will help students enhance skills in leadership and teamwork. Many will directly develop skills in personal initiative and technical skills, as courses will be offered online. Students in online programs are required to be motivated and to take initiative to be successful, and they must communicate effectively in the online format, which requires skills in technology as well as in written communication.

All of these skills are those mentioned as being highly valued in *Job Outlook 2016*¹, the survey of U.S. employers.

Statistics on earning potential for those with a bachelor's degree compared with those who do not have a degree still clearly indicate that "simply earning a four-year degree is often integral to financial success later in life."² Even in majors with lower potential, a 4-year degree leads to higher lifetime earnings.³

4. Admission

Procedures and criteria for admission into the proposed program:

Procedures and criteria for admission into the major in general studies will align with procedures and admission to Emporia State University.

5. Curriculum

Curriculum of the proposed program:

Program proposals will be expected to describe the curriculum of the proposed program and shall be judged on the criteria determined by the respective department.

Description of the more important academic objectives:

The General Studies advisor will assist students with learning progressions, aligning skills, and sequencing courses across fields of discipline. By planning learning goals for a specific instructional period, students will better be equipped to meet expectations and achieve completion.

The most important academic objective of the General Studies major is to provide an avenue for degree completion and graduation for students near the end of their degree programs. Students declaring the general studies major must meet the same academic requirements, prerequisites, and standards as all other majors on campus.

Required internships and practica:

Internships and practica are not required for students in the program, but are available for students interested in pursuing them. Students may enroll in *ID 491, Interdisciplinary Studies Internship*, and work with the DIS department chair and advisor to plan and implement an internship relevant to their career plans.

¹ National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016. *Job Outlook 2016: The Attributes Employers Want to See on New College Graduates' Resumes*. Retrieved on August 11, 2017 at <http://www.nacweb.org/career-development/trends-and-predictions/job-outlook-2016-attributes-employers-want-to-see-on-new-college-graduates-resumes/>

² Burnsed, Brian. 2011. How Higher Education Affects Lifetime Salary. *U.S. News & World Report*, August 5. Retrieved on August 11, 2017 from <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2011/08/05/how-higher-education-affects-lifetime-salary>.

³ PayScale. n.d. College Salary Report 2016-17: Lifetime Earnings of College Degrees. Retrieved August 11, 2017 from <http://www.payscale.com/college-salary-report/degrees-and-majors-lifetime-earnings>.

6. Faculty

Program faculty:

The one required course for the program, *ID 492, General Studies Capstone*, will be coordinated by the chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. Currently this position is filled by Dr. Ellen Hansen, Professor of Geography in the Department of Social Sciences and Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies.

Additional faculty for this program consist of those who teach in departments across the university. No faculty are involved solely in the general studies major. At this point, no new faculty are anticipated to be required. If demand for the program grows large enough, additional faculty may be necessary to supervise *ID 492*, the GRS capstone course.

Faculty qualifications:

Aside from Dr. Hansen, Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, where the GRS major is housed, the program does not have any core faculty.

There is no additional cost of proposed new faculty for this program. Graduate assistants and academic support are not specifically assigned to this program. Therefore, there are no additional costs here as well.

7. Academic Support.

Academic support services:

The advising services, library, audio-visual, and academic computing resources shall be of sufficient volume and quality to support the program effectively.

Advising will be conducted by the DIS advisor and department chair. If numbers grow sufficiently large, additional advising help will be requested.

All courses for the major are currently being taught at ESU, or are accepted as transfer credit from other universities and community colleges. No new library resources are anticipated.

No new staffing resources are required at this time. If numbers of students warrant it in the future, staff support in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies may be requested.

Facilities and equipment:

All current facilities and equipment are appropriate and sufficient for this program.

8. Program Assessment

Program review, assessment and accreditation.

Because this program feeds from other programs across campus, the courses and programs that tie to this proposed program will be under the assessment guidelines and accreditation requirements of the various departments.

Course-level learning outcomes are stated on every ESU syllabus. Instructors utilize direct, course-embedded assessments to improve learning at the formative level. Student evaluations of instruction provide an additional level of indirect assessment for each course. Course assessment results and the corresponding adjustments are reported at the end of each of the fall and spring terms and/or annually at the end of June. Each ESU academic program, in turn, identifies broader student learning outcomes for the program and creates a curriculum map aligning program-level outcomes with the courses that contribute to those outcomes. Program-level assessments measure the effectiveness of groups or clusters of courses, with the results used to guide curricular adaptations, to align programs with external accrediting requirements, and to ensure that curricula are current with the discipline.

For the capstone course and all courses from the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, the program review processes will follow ESU's guidelines and schedule, and will be completed by the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies.

The program will undergo periodic comprehensive review per KBOR's eight-year review cycle, following the KBOR Program Review format. Department chairs have primary responsibility for gathering qualitative and quantitative program information for the review. Program faculty then participate in the drafting of a written summary, with recommendations, to the dean and provost. In addition to the periodic KBOR Program Review, all ESU academic programs are reviewed internally each year utilizing program indicators compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (e.g., headcount majors, credit hour enrollment, retention & completion, instructional costs). This program productivity review, updated annually and providing 5-year trends, informs decisions on resource allocation and program continuance.

The general studies major will be accredited under the university's accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission. No other accreditation is required or applicable.

Student learning outcomes measures used to assess the program's effectiveness:

General Studies Program Outcomes (from the curriculum description as approved through ESU's curriculum review process, 3-15-17):

Students completing the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree with a major in General Studies will:

- demonstrate enhanced knowledge in an area or areas of interest to them;
- increase their understanding and appreciation of concepts and principles in a range of academic disciplines; and
- connect knowledge from academic training and life experience to their communities by participation in civic life.

New Program Request - Emporia State University

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Program Summary</u>
1. Program Identification	Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Major in General Studies (GRS)
2. Academic Unit Implementation CIP Code	Department of Interdisciplinary Studies (DIS) Spring, 2018 24.0102
3. Program Description	<p>The General Studies major is a degree completion program designed for students who wish to finish a bachelor's degree but not to seek a major in a traditional program or from one department. The degree is designed to: 1) allow such students to graduate in a timely manner after fulfilling all university graduation requirements; 2) provide a broad introduction to various subjects of the students' choice; and 3) create engaged, generally-educated citizens who have skills appropriate for today's rapidly changing society.</p> <p>This degree, housed in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, accepts undergraduate courses from all departments on campus. The degree may be completed online as well as on campus. It is required that the student's program of study is to be discussed with and approved by the DIS advisor.</p>
4. Demand/Need for the Program	<p>The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) recently announced that of adults in Kansas with some college but no degree, nearly 27% had earned between 60 and 119 credit hours when they enrolled in courses in academic year 2016-17. This cohort included 1,170 students enrolling at state universities in Kansas and is a prime audience for this major.</p> <p>Students leave the university without completing a degree program for a variety of reasons. Often, such students have few requirements remaining and, if a flexible degree completion program existed at ESU, many such students would have more of an opportunity to complete a degree. The GRS major will benefit those students who have only a few requirements remaining, wish to finish their degree online, and do not desire or need a traditional degree.</p> <p>KBOR's Foresight 2020 strategic plan aspires "to increase to 60 percent the number of Kansas adults who have earned a certificate, associate, or bachelor's degree by 2020" and to "achieve a ten-percentage point increase in retention and graduation rates by 2020." In addition, KBOR recently announced that the Board will explore how to attract this audience (those with some college but no degree) back to college to complete a degree.</p> <p>The GRS major at ESU will be available both on campus and online and is anticipated to raise ESU graduation rates, to increase enrollment in ESU's distance education programs, and to increase the percentage of Kansans with bachelor's degrees.</p>
5. Comparative /Locational Advantage	Students who started but did not complete their degrees at ESU will be able to finish this degree on campus and/or online. Students from other institutions (throughout Kansas or in other states) will be able to complete this degree online.

6. Curriculum	The GRS curriculum will come from departments and programs across campus, including on-campus and online courses. The degree will take advantage of past, current, and future courses in the curriculum of all campus programs. Guidelines for the GRS major completion include allowing flexibility for students to be able to complete the program with as few barriers as possible. One required course for the degree, <i>ID492: GRS Capstone</i> , will be supervised by faculty in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies.
7. Faculty Profile	Ellen Hansen, Ph.D., Professor of Geography in the Department of Social Sciences and Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, will serve as the coordinator for this program. Any faculty member teaching undergraduate courses at ESU will be able to contribute courses to the degree program.
8. Student Profile	Students who choose to complete the GRS will come from a variety of backgrounds - - from both ESU and other institutions. For example, some may be education students who decide near the end of their degree program that they do not wish to teach. The GRS will allow them to use their content and education courses to complete a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (BID) with a General Studies Major. Some will come from other programs and will decide that the major they have been pursuing is not right for them. Still others will be working professionals who did not finish their bachelor's degree and find themselves in a position where a degree is necessary or would be helpful in advancing their careers.
9. Academic Support	This major, housed in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, will provide administrative support and student advising services. Currently, no new academic positions are required.
10. Facilities and Equipment	No new facilities or equipment will be required.
11. Program Review, Assessment, Accreditation	The Department of Interdisciplinary Studies will be responsible for completing program review, assessing the major and participating in accreditation at the university level.
12. Costs, Financing	No new costs are requested.

Emporia State University
CURRICULUM OUTLINE
NEW DEGREE PROPOSALS
Kansas Board of Regents

I. The Proposed Degree:

Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Major in General Studies (GRS)
 Proposed Implementation Date: Spring, 2018

II. Required Semester Credit Hours:

	Course Name & Number	Credit Hours
Core Courses	ID 492 GRS Capstone	1
	Two academic years of coursework in closely related subjects within any liberal arts program, which may include a minor in any subject	60
	General Education Program equivalent to requirements for the Bachelor of Science degree	47-55
Electives	Electives include all courses beyond the 60 hours of core courses and the 47-55 hours of general education courses used to reach 120 hours required to graduate.	0-10
Research	Student research will be encouraged for all GRS majors through participation in any of ESU's undergraduate research programs, including independent studies and research seminars, among others, in programs across campus.	0-10
Practica	Practica and internships will be encouraged through courses offered in any of ESU's undergraduate programs. ID 510, Internship in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, will serve as the course for planning and supervising internships.	0-10
	<u>Total</u>	<u>120</u>

Emporia State University

IMPLEMENTATION YEAR FY 2018 (Spring 2018)

Fiscal Summary for Proposed Academic Programs

Proposed Program: Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies with a Major in General Studies

Part I. Anticipated Enrollment	Implementation Year		Year 2		Year 3	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
A. Full-time, Part-time Headcount:	5	10	15	25	25	50
B. Total SCH taken by all students in program	$75 + 60 = 135$		$225 + 150 = 375$		$375 + 300 = 675$	
Part II. Program Cost Projection						
A. In <u>implementation</u> year one, list all identifiable General Use costs to the academic unit(s) and how they will be funded. In subsequent years, please include only the additional amount budgeted.						
	Implementation Year		Year 2		Year 3	
<u>Base Budget</u>						
Salaries	0		0		0	
OOE	0		0		0	
Total	0		0		0	

- All courses involved in the GRS Major are taught by current faculty at ESU. Initially, no new faculty will be required.
- All student advising will be handled by the full time DIS Advisor. If we see an increased demand for the program, then additional staffing and resources be needed.
- A portion of the net revenue generated by increased enrollment at ESU would be allocated to the department to help meet the demand.