

Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan, 2008-2018

MISSION

Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington Tacoma prepares diverse students to contribute to a complex multicultural society and encourages sustainable citizenship at the local, national, and global levels. Using an interdisciplinary approach to knowledge, inquiry, and problem-solving, students learn to create, analyze, and express themselves in ways that enhance their own development, their sense of community within human and natural environments, their ability to deal with problems of injustice and inequality, and their dedication to positive change. We prepare students to be adaptable outstanding leaders, professionals, and citizens.

VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Academic Distinction and Student Success**
IAS provides a distinctive academic program where students have the opportunity to participate in small classes and interact with instructors who are scholars in their fields. IAS faculty and staff create multiple pathways that encourage student success.
- **Interdisciplinary Teaching and Scholarship**
IAS is a dynamic program of study where students gain the benefits of a comprehensive liberal arts and sciences education as part of the University of Washington, while learning to make connections across disciplinary boundaries to solve complex problems. This approach allows us the freedom to teach, research, explore, and understand the world in innovative ways.
- **Engaged Inquiry**
The creation of knowledge through active, engaged inquiry is a route to positive change. We are committed to faculty scholarship; involvement of students in active learning through innovative pedagogies, research, and community service; and engagement of staff, faculty, and students in professional development.
- **Diversity and Inclusiveness**
Diversity and inclusiveness are essential for successful learning communities. Learning how we differ as human beings helps us understand how much we have in common and how much we can learn from each other. The richness of our learning community is enhanced when we study diverse human experiences and include staff, students, and faculty from diverse backgrounds, including underrepresented groups. We value traditional and non-traditional students, including those who historically may have had limited access to higher education.
- **Community and Social Responsibility**
IAS is integrated within and responsive to the multiple communities and environments around us. Through learning, outreach, and engagement, we partner with community organizations and institutions to make a real difference.

VISION

IAS brings innovative approaches and a pioneering spirit to building a dynamic learning community as we respond to the needs of our students and serve as the liberal arts and sciences cornerstone of the University of Washington Tacoma. We promote academic excellence by encouraging students to understand the interconnectedness of world problems and to become responsible local and global citizens. We engage in inquiry and research that is both socially and culturally relevant and promotes a scientific understanding of the natural world and environmental issues.

During the next ten years, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences will continue to grow and remain the academic cornerstone of the campus. Maintaining a focus on interdisciplinary learning and scholarship, we will continue to build a faculty and staff committed to student success and responsive to the needs of our community.

SCHOLARSHIP

Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington Tacoma aims to promote innovative research and scholarship that enhances our educational mission, addresses important societal concerns, and drives the further development of a public university as a place of intellectual leadership in the twenty-first century.

Specific IAS goals include:

- I. **Enhance and maintain an intellectually stimulating and rewarding environment. This academic climate will (1) illustrate to our students the benefits of studying in a truly interdisciplinary academy, (2) energize our current faculty, (3) boost faculty recruitment, retention, and success and (4) maintain IAS as an intellectual leader at UWT. (Goals II & III)**

This will be accomplished as we

1. Foster, recognize, and reward individual research and scholarship
 - a. Promote mentoring; clarify and codify expectations of scholarly criteria for tenure and promotion
 - b. Increase incentives for and recognition of research.
2. Encourage interdisciplinary research, collaborations, and collective scholarship
3. Support activities that stimulate intellectual exchanges and enhance scholarly activity both inside and outside of IAS & UWT.
 - a. Activities to include:
 - i. support cultural events, lecture series, working groups, visiting scholars, *etc.*
 - ii. support interdisciplinary research centers on campus
 - iii. identify, recruit, and host conferences and workshops in the local community
 - b. Raise private funds to support these activities.

4. Increase visibility of our scholarship, including:
 - a. communication to the broader community (improved web pages, establishing a speakers bureau, support for faculty and student participation in conferences, etc.)
 - b. increased internal recognition of our externally-valued scholarship (citations, election to editorial boards, invited lectures and conferences, commissioned works, leadership in scholarly associations, *etc.*)

II. Integrate research and scholarship across all UW Tacoma curricula. This integration ensures that our students receive an education reflecting cutting-edge knowledge, and creative teaching methods. (Goals II, III & IV)

This will be accomplished as we

1. Integrate faculty research into the curriculum. Recognize and reward the importance of on-going research to the quality of classroom instruction.
2. Promote undergraduate and graduate research, especially integrating student and faculty research in interdisciplinary research teams.
3. Promote venues for undergraduate and graduate research presentations, including UWaters and a UWT Undergraduate Research Symposium.

III. Strengthen the depth, breadth, and integration of our research enterprise. This goal ensures that UWT develops and maintains a balance across fields of study during a period of rapid growth, enhancing our ability to advance knowledge within and across our disciplines. (Goals I, II, & III)

This will be accomplished as we

1. Conduct leading research that applies innovative approaches to address societal and environmental concerns including issues of justice and inequality
2. Support scholarship by increasing research capacity (facilities, human resources and research tools).
3. Foster external collaborations by creating institutional partnerships with leading public and private sector research organizations in the region, U.S., and abroad.
4. Increase external funding for research activities including the scholarship of teaching by:
 - a. establishing more effective grant, development and support systems
 - b. encouraging collaborative grant writing

TEACHING & CURRICULUM

Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington Tacoma

- provides students with critical creative, analytical, and communications skills that allow them to continue to learn and grow intellectually throughout their lives,
- improves the quality of life of the communities we serve,
- and remains a model for the best education a public university can provide in the twenty-first century.

Specific IAS goals include:

I. Provide access to distinctive interdisciplinary education for qualified students consistent with IAS mission, values, and vision. [Goals II, III, IV]

This will be accomplished as we:

1. Diversify the student body reflective of the South Puget Sound demographic pool.
2. Prepare students for further study, careers, and life-long learning.
3. Provide flexible curriculum to support multiple-entry points for education in preparation for career and life success.
4. Encourage and support underrepresented minority students in pursuit of graduate degrees
5. Identify and eliminate barriers to and promote further development of interdisciplinarity in the curriculum.
6. Ensure integration of lower and upper division curriculum. Ensure integration of transfer students with lower-division student population.
7. Maintain small class sizes and student-access to faculty.
8. Promote the increase of supplemental instruction, providing academic support services to increase student success (including ESL).

II. Maintain and grow the unique interdisciplinary nature of IAS curriculum as we simultaneously strengthen academic foundations grounded in solid disciplinary knowledge. [Goals I, II, III]

This will be accomplished as we

1. Intentionally grow the interdisciplinary curriculum grounded in critical fields of inquiry with a focus on addressing real-world issues.
2. Analyze foundational course needs, obtain sufficient resources to offer them, and strategically add new undergraduate and graduate programs.
3. Create intellectual space and provide encouragement, rewards, and resources for faculty interactions and collaborations within and across units.
4. Move concentrations to majors.
5. Refine the freshman core into a signature cohort experience for students and faculty alike.
6. Foster the study of fine and performing arts as integral to liberal arts education.
7. Build opportunities for writing and mathematics across the curriculum.

8. Engage in a dialogue on standards and rigor with respect to educational outcomes.

III. Remain the liberal arts and sciences cornerstone of the University of Washington Tacoma. [Goals I, II, III, IV]

This will be accomplished as we

1. Explore innovative teaching methods and maintain distinguished teaching records as we continually strive to improve the quality of our craft.
2. Foster a balance between teaching and research—recognizing the important role that research plays in the constant evolution of one’s teaching.
3. Support student scholarship and research at every level.
4. Expand opportunities and support for internships and experiential and service learning.
5. Forge better ties with other programs across the campus.
6. Reward faculty professional development around teaching. Develop new and improved evaluation methods consistent with goals.
7. Hire world-class faculty including underrepresented minority faculty who believe in and are committed to interdisciplinary vision.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

IAS is embedded within multiple internal and external communities, and we are committed to creating and maintaining the structures and collaborations that support these relationships in the context of a dynamic, growing institution. IAS will continue to require additional development and resources, particularly in the areas of personnel, facilities, and administrative infrastructure, in order to fulfill our mission as we grow.

Specific IAS goals include:

I. Grow in a manner that is consistent with IAS mission, values, and vision and that includes careful planning and efficient use of resources. [Goals I, II, IV]

This will be accomplished as we

1. Transition from a Program to a College.
2. Hire experienced Dean committed to achieving IAS vision.
3. Create internal structures in support of interdisciplinary vision that can accommodate growth while increasing transparency and efficiency of administrative functions.
4. Hire sufficient personnel to create appropriate student/faculty/staff ratios.
5. Provide mechanisms that ensure diversity and inclusiveness are a priority as we increase students, staff, and faculty such as hiring a diversity specialist.
6. Help campus promote and design facilities to support current and future academic needs including facilities for teaching, research, professional development and creativity.

7. Aggressively market educational advantages, opportunities, and successes in pursuit of financial and academic support with help of a designated IAS development officer.

II. Maintain a student-centered environment within IAS through the development of efficient systems for delivery of services that maximize the effectiveness of staff and faculty. (Goals I, II, IV)

This will be accomplished as we

1. Promote student success through the professional development of students, staff, and faculty.
 - a. Provide professional development for curriculum development and continuing education that addresses issues of diversity and inclusiveness.
 - b. Support the professional development of staff and their inclusion in the learning community. IAS staff participate in professional conferences.
 - c. Enhance integration of junior faculty through programs such as individual mentoring and community building activities.
 - d. Clarify the relationships and balance between scholarship, teaching, and service.
2. Recognize and reward the contributions to the learning community of service activities of staff and faculty.
3. Improve internal administrative systems for efficient, effective operations.
 - a. Build on our existing systems of advising and support, including cross-program support.
 - b. Enhance our ability to handle the growing complexity of our program through full use of automated systems, such as a creation of an electronic scheduling system and on-line grade reporting.
 - c. Develop clear systems that reflect the procedures and specific requirements of the UWT campus and that are integrated with campus-wide systems, such as budgetary/fiscal systems.

III. Promote active citizenship and encourage collaboration with constituencies outside IAS. (Goals II, III, IV)

This will be accomplished as we

1. Support and increase collaboration across programs at UWT, with other UW campuses, and with other academic institutions, including community colleges and high schools.
 - a. Encourage participation in shared governance at the UWT campus and the other UW campuses.
 - b. Create opportunities for enhanced cross program collaborations by identifying and removing barriers to these activities.
 - c. Encourage and reward contributions, collaborations, and professional development of faculty and staff across programs and institutions.

2. Promote active citizenship and socially responsible engagement for students, faculty and staff in the broader local, national, and international communities.
 - a. Serve as both collaborators and catalysts in community service at local, national, and international levels.
 - b. Enhance ties to the local community by involving students, staff, and faculty in community issues.
 - c. Provide intellectual leadership and resources to support and enhance local community goals (see Scholarship, I, items 3 and 4).
3. Foster community ties through formation of Advisory Board for IAS.

5 June 2009