CONNECT WITH US

Cal Day
Come to Berkeley’s annual Open House in April for information sessions, campus tours, special talks, and more. ISF faculty will discuss the possibilities for student interdisciplinary research at Berkeley and tackling the most pressing problems facing society today.

Golden Bear Orientation
Join your peers in the campus-wide UC Berkeley orientation program for all new students. Attend an ISF info session to hear from faculty about this amazing interdisciplinary research major.

Events
Attend an ISF Application Workshop to find out more about the major and the application process. Visit isf.ugis.berkeley.edu for news and updates.

ADVISING

Meet with an ISF undergraduate advisor via appointment or drop-in advising. Appointments can be made by contacting advisors directly. Visit isf.ugis.berkeley.edu/people/ for office hours and locations.

Advising Drop-In Hours:
Monday - Friday 9-11:45am, 1:45-5:30pm

HOW TO USE THIS MAP

Use this map to help plan and guide your experience at UC Berkeley, including academic, co-curricular, and discovery opportunities. Everyone’s Berkeley experience is different and activities in this map are suggestions. Always consult with your advisors whenever possible for new opportunities and updates.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES FIELD

Bachelor of Arts

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAJOR

The Interdisciplinary Studies Field (ISF) major offers highly motivated students the unique opportunity to design an original program of research and study resulting in a major research project (senior thesis). ISF allows you to take advantage of UC Berkeley’s strengths as a research institution by combining work across disciplines in courses and with faculty where no other structured program exists.

The major is intended for students who wish to focus their studies on a non-U.S. topic, have a clear idea about the research they would like to pursue and the courses that will be most meaningful to them, and who are prepared to write a senior thesis.

ISF CURRICULUM

ISF is an individualized cross-disciplinary research program that includes a course of study and a senior thesis. The course of study is made up of courses taken in the social sciences, the humanities, and/or the professional schools and colleges, alongside the required courses in ISF. The capstone experience is a scholarly, rigorously-researched 40-page required senior thesis, a sustained inquiry in the social sciences and humanities based on original, cross-disciplinary research.

“ I am honored to have been in the ISF major because it provided me an innovative and empowering education.”

–Emily Cohen, ISF Class of 2015

AMPLIFY YOUR MAJOR

- Engage with your research topic through a study abroad experience.
- Apply your skills and experience as a DeCal facilitator.
- Conduct research abroad and travel to conferences with support from the Institute of International Studies, SURF Fellowship Program, or Haas Scholars Program.
- Do a deep dive into a research topic by writing an Honors Thesis in ISF.
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES FIELD

STUDIES FIELD DESIGN YOUR JOURNEY

Bachelor of Arts

FIRST YEAR

Explore your major

- Meet with your major and college advisor to discuss your academic plans.
- Review major and college requirements.
- Take classes about social problems or social issues that interest you.
- Start preparing a research plan for the ISF application.

Connect and build community

- Join the ISF Facebook group and stay updated on news and events.
- Find study groups, tutoring, and academic support at the Student Learning Center.
- Enroll in UGIS 98: College Success in L&S.

Discover your passions

- Enroll in a Discovery Course to explore new and exciting fields of study.
- Visit the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarships.
- Learn about ISF research fields and consider which field(s) appeal to you.

Engage locally and globally

- Attend the Calapalooza student activities fair and get involved with a student organization.
- Explore study, internship, and research abroad options with Berkeley Study Abroad.

Reflect and plan your future

- Visit the Career Center and Career Counseling Library.
- Check out the Career Center Yearly Planner.
- Sign up for Handshake and CareerMail.

SECOND YEAR

- Complete lower division prerequisites and apply to the major.
- Use the ISF program template to develop your course of study.
- Review major guidelines for study abroad.
- Consider completing a certificate, course thread, or summer minor.

- Enroll in a Sophomore Seminar such as UGIS 39.
- Assist faculty and graduate students in their research through URAP and SMART.
- Attend debates, talks, and panels by a variety of professionals through Berkeley Forum.
- Find research and funding opportunities in the OIRS database.

- Contribute to a community organization with an American Cultures Engaged Scholarship course.
- Go on a service-learning trip with the Alternative Breaks Program.
- Consider a Berkeley Global Internship in the United States or abroad.

- Experience life at another UC or college on a visitor and exchange program.
- Find service opportunities through the Public Service program.

THIRD YEAR

- Focus on upper division requirements and electives based on your field of study.
- Read through the ISF Senior Thesis guidelines for preparation.
- Ask your major advisor about the ISF Honors Program.

- Get inspired by projects of recent ISF graduates.
- Check the Institute of International Studies for research funding.
- Planning a senior thesis or project? Apply to the Haas Scholars Program or SURF.

- Experience life at another UC or college on a visitor and exchange program.
- Find service opportunities through the Public Service program.

FOURTH YEAR

- Do a degree check to ensure you are on track to graduate.
- Complete your senior thesis.
- Challenge yourself with a graduate-level course.
- Complete any “bucket list” courses and remaining major, college, and campus requirements.

- Get support for your thesis project in the Townsend Honors Thesis Workshop.
- Connect with alumni groups and build your network as you prepare to graduate.
- Join the “ISF Alumni LinkedIn Group.”

- Attend debates, talks, and panels by a variety of professionals through SMART and URAP.
- Assist faculty and graduate students in their research.
- Enroll in a Sophomore Seminar.
- Work with peers and graduate students in HUM 196: Mentored-Research and Discovery Groups.

- Conduct informational interviews.
- Going to graduate school? Take required exams and discuss options with advisors and professors.
- Update your resume and LinkedIn profile.
- Attend career and graduate school fairs.

- Attend Job Search Essentials workshops.
- Ask professors and graduate student instructors for recommendation letters.
- Meet employers at Employer Info Sessions and On-Campus Recruiting.
- Apply to jobs, graduate school, and other opportunities.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY MAJOR?

As an ISF major, you will learn critical skills of research, analysis, interpretation, and writing that will translate across professional sectors and domains, including academia, non-profit work, business, government, and community service. Your demonstrable record as a scholar and researcher with the capacity to complete original and innovative work will be a bonus for employers, graduate programs, and professional schools seeking unusual and highly-motivated graduates.

Jobs and Employers

- Account Associate, Accenture
- Analyst, River Partners
- Business Development, Assoc., Oracle
- Communications Coordinator, UCOP
- Data Analyst, BALANCE
- Engineer, PG&E
- Fellow, Americorps
- Financial Analyst, Citigroup
- Interaction Designer, VMware
- Marketing Manager, Freshslice Pizza
- Media Planner, Digitas
- Mentor, Teach for America
- Operations Research Analyst, Zoox
- Technical Trainer, AMN Healthcare
- Volunteer, Peace Corps

Graduate Programs

- Anatomy, PhD
- Business Administration, Masters
- Computer Science, PhD
- Education, Masters
- International Development, Masters
- International Relations, Masters
- Information Technology, Masters
- Law, JD
- Latin American Studies, Masters
- Physical Sciences, Masters

Examples gathered from the Career Destinations Survey of recent Berkeley graduates.

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