

INTEGRATED LIBERAL STUDIES, CERTIFICATE

The mission of Integrated Liberal Studies (<https://ils.wisc.edu/>) (ILS) is to provide an integrated exploration of the great themes of human inquiry and expression in scientific, literary, political, economic, historical and artistic thought. As an alternative to scattered electives, ILS offers a set of related courses specially tailored to meet the breadth requirements of the College of Letters & Science. ILS draws exemplary, dynamic faculty from departments across campus to create courses that challenge students with a rigorous program of interdisciplinary study emphasizing critical thinking and judgment rather than passive absorption of information. Although these courses may be taken as single electives, the purpose of the program is to counter the fragmentation of undergraduate education by providing a common ground of learning.

Because ILS courses are interdisciplinary, students are encouraged to make connections between the various subject areas. They study the relations between literature and the arts; science, technology, and philosophy; and political, economic, and social thought. The content of the curriculum has been developed in the belief that historical perspective is required for a full understanding of contemporary issues. Courses numbered 201-206 progress from historical to contemporary topics in each of the three core areas. Those numbered 250 and above cover interdisciplinary special topics in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, including "Magical Realism," "Modern Jewish Thought," and "Machiavelli and His World." ILS also includes a course (ILS 200 Critical Thinking and Expression) in Critical Thinking and Expression to sharpen communication and research skills necessary for college work. This course satisfies the university's Communications B requirement. ILS 400 Capstone Integration Seminar, a senior capstone seminar addressing an interdisciplinary topic, is required in order to complete the ILS certificate.