

## Four-Year Degree Concept Proposal

### Bachelor of Integrated Studies

Brad V. Olsen  
Chair, Department of Theatre Arts

The Theatre Department/Fine Arts Division would like to propose a Bachelor of Integrated Studies as one of Snow College's next four-year degrees. The following rationale is submitted for your consideration.

1. It is believed that an Integrated Studies degree will support statewide initiatives, goals and priorities by increasing the number of students graduating with Bachelor degrees. One of the state's strategic priorities is to "increase the rate of student participation in higher education." The BIS will aid success in this priority by giving many students an opportunity in the six county area of completing a Bachelor degree in their chosen field of study. The BIS will provide the largest field of study for students to choose from. Completion of degree programs is also one of the strategic priorities and having the BIS at Snow will make it much easier for students to stay and complete their degrees. The result of those completed degrees will also result in increased economic innovation in the six-county area.

2. The Integrated Studies degree will assist with regional and statewide economic development or workforce preparation by providing interdisciplinary courses. Many students from the six-county area have been unable to complete 4-year programs because of the distance and costs involved in relocating to one of Utah's other educational institutions. The BIS degree at Snow College would provide good opportunities for six-county residents. The BIS can have a wide appeal across many disciplines without as much immediate need for new faculty since most programs already have terminal degreed faculty.

One objection to the BIS degree that has been voiced is that it may be a watered down degree. The basic preliminary plan of the BIS degree will include a major concentration (31 hours) and two minor concentrations (21 hours each) and 10 hours of electives, plus the GE component (31 hours) and an integrated studies core course set including a preliminary course and capstone course. Counting the elective hours a student could complete 41 hours in their major emphasis. This is very close to the number of hours required in many major fields of study at other institutions for a BA. Hence a student can effectively gain a degree with a major emphasis that will stand against other BA or BS programs. With careful planning they can be just as well qualified in their field of study or better qualified if they select good options for their minor concentrations.

3. The Integrated Studies degree is consistent with the college strategic plan, mission and core themes because many of the academic programs at Snow College have strong regional and national recognition and the BIS can tap into that recognition. The BIS lends itself to improving communication processes between all units on campus that desire to participate.

4. Cost and affordability to implement a BIS degree would most likely be less than other Bachelors degrees since many programs on campus could already deliver much of the course materials without requiring as many new faculty and facilities.

Thanks for your consideration of this proposal.