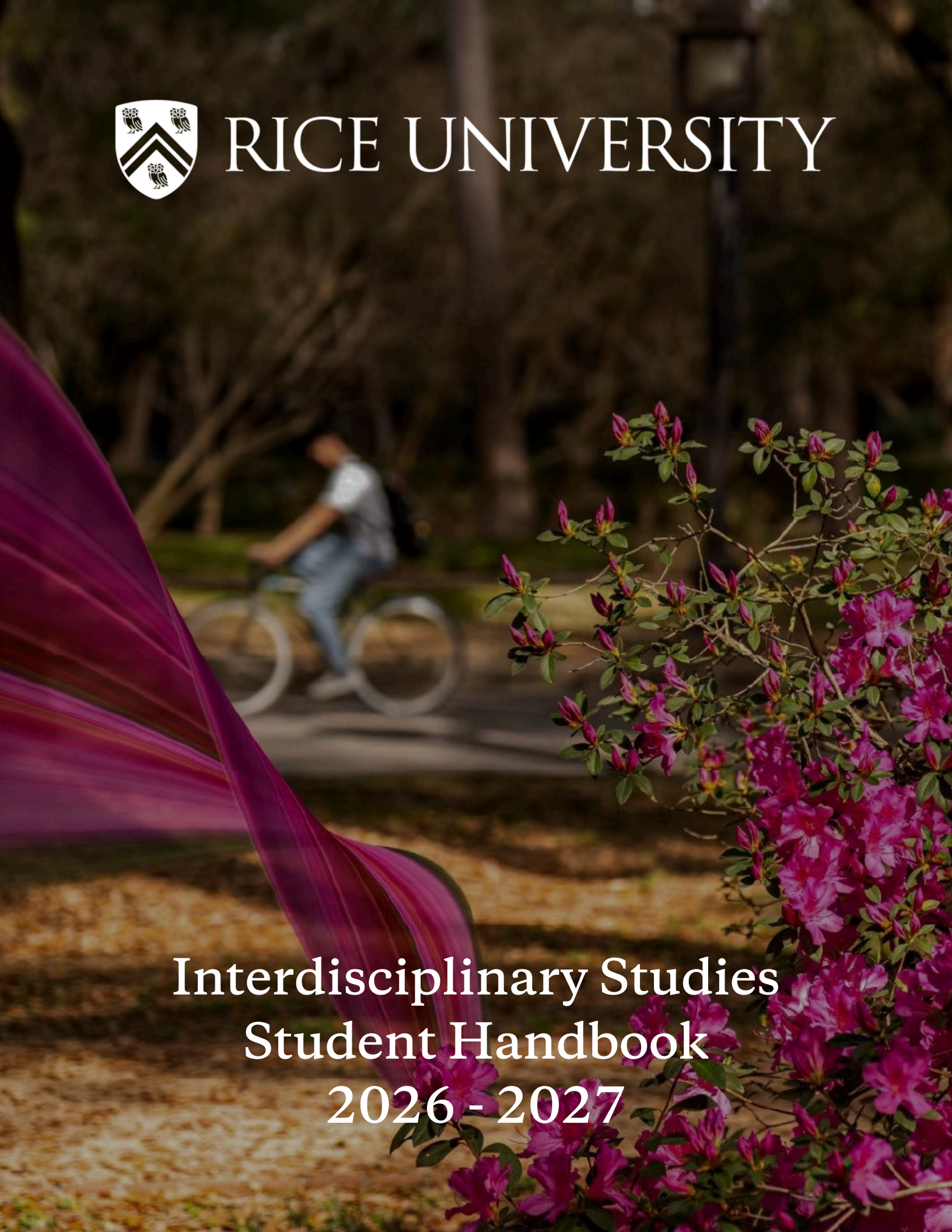

RICE UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Studies Student Handbook 2026 - 2027

RICE UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Studies
Student Handbook
2026-2027

Degree Programs:
Master of Interdisciplinary Studies
Diploma in Liberal Studies

Graduate Certificates:
Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing – English
Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing – History

Rice University
Glasscock School of Continuing Studies
6100 Main Street
Mail Stop 550
Anderson-Clarke Center
Houston, TX 77005
(713) 348-4767
mis@rice.edu

WELCOME

Welcome to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies, Rice University!

We are delighted to have you as part of our vibrant academic community. Our program values curiosity, critical thinking, and collaboration, and we look forward to supporting you on your educational journey.

This Student Handbook is designed to help you navigate your program requirements, policies, and resources. You will find answers to many common questions, from new student orientation through graduation and beyond. In many cases, this handbook will be the fastest way to get the information you need.

We believe that open communication is essential to your success. If you have any questions or concerns after reviewing this handbook, please reach out to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office. We are committed to partnering with you to ensure a positive and enriching graduate experience.

In addition to the policies and guidelines included here, you are expected to comply with the Rice General Announcements, Graduate Academic Integrity System (Honor Code), Code of Student Conduct, Sexual Misconduct Policy, and all INDS Course Syllabi. If there is ever a conflict between policies, university-wide regulations take precedence over department-level rules, which take precedence over research group rules. If in doubt, please contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office first or consult the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

We hope this handbook helps you plan your studies effectively, connect with the Interdisciplinary Studies community, and make the most of your time at Rice.

Warm regards,

Rebecca Sharp
Executive Director, Interdisciplinary Studies
(713) 348-4767
rksharp@rice.edu

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INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES AT RICE UNIVERSITY

The Interdisciplinary Studies program at Rice University offers intellectually rigorous graduate pathways for students interested in broad-based, interdisciplinary study. Three program options are currently available:

- **Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS):** Designed for students with a bachelor's degree or higher who wish to engage in interdisciplinary coursework grounded in creativity, collaboration, and practical application. The MIS program emphasizes synthesis across disciplines and builds skills in research, communication, and leadership. Rather than completing a traditional thesis, students take on a capstone project that allows them to explore a specific topic in depth while drawing on the breadth of their interdisciplinary coursework.
- **Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS):** Designed for students who have completed the MIS or an equivalent interdisciplinary graduate degree, the DLS supports advanced interdisciplinary research, writing, and critical inquiry. The program helps students deepen their intellectual interests, prepare for doctoral study, or pursue civic and creative projects. Admission of non-MIS graduates is considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Graduate Certificates in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing (DCTC):** Designed for practicing secondary teachers in English and History who need graduate-level coursework to meet credentialing requirements for dual credit or community college teaching. These certificates are stackable and may be pursued concurrently with the MIS or as standalone credentials.

Why It Matters

Interdisciplinary Studies at Rice supports learning that crosses traditional boundaries, encouraging curiosity, critical thinking, and collaboration across fields. By drawing together knowledge from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, students develop the skills to address complex problems in society, their professions, and their communities.

Student Profiles

Students in these programs come from a wide range of backgrounds, including K–12 teachers, higher education staff, nonprofit leaders, attorneys, physicians, corporate professionals, artists, scientists, engineers, and lifelong learners. They range in age from recent college graduates to retirees, and many balance graduate study with work and family commitments. They are motivated, curious, and community-oriented.

Program Staff

Our Interdisciplinary Studies Program staff are dedicated to supporting your academic success and helping you navigate every step of your graduate experience. Please reach out anytime you have questions or need assistance.

- **Rebecca Sharp, Executive Director**
  rksharp@rice.edu | (713) 348-4767
  Provides academic and administrative leadership for the Interdisciplinary Studies programs, including strategic planning, curriculum development, faculty recruitment and engagement, graduate admissions and advising, course scheduling, scholarships, budgeting, assessment, and accreditation. Rebecca also leads alumni engagement, fundraising, external partnerships, and initiatives designed to strengthen the programs' visibility and long-term growth. She teaches the INDS 699 Capstone Seminar course in the MIS program and is the primary resource for questions about academic requirements, curriculum, capstones, and complex student or faculty matters.

- **Paulina Vieitez, Program Coordinator for Outreach and Engagement**
  pv32@rice.edu | (713) 348-2708
  Supports recruitment, admissions communications, outreach, and program operations for the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies. In partnership with the Executive Director and the Glasscock School marketing team, Paulina helps develop and implement recruitment strategies, promotional materials, and prospective-student engagement initiatives. She also supports enrollment processes, community and corporate outreach, program logistics, and operational improvements.

Governance

The Interdisciplinary Studies Faculty Steering Committee oversees admissions, curriculum, and academic policy for these programs, in coordination with the Rice University Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The Faculty Steering Committee currently consists of:

Bruce, Robert. Dean, Glasscock School of Continuing Studies, Rice University.
BA (1991) University of Texas; MA (1993) Texas A&M University; PhD (1997) Texas A&M University

Campana, Joseph. Alan Dugald McKillop Chair and Associate Professor of English, Rice University.
BA (1996) Williams College; MA (1997) University of Sussex; MA (2000) Cornell University; PhD (2003) Cornell University

Cohen, G. Daniel. Samuel W. & Goldye Marian Spain Associate Professor of History, Rice University.
BA (1991) Tel Aviv University; MA (1992) Institute of French Studies; MA (1993), PhD (2000) New York University

Henze, Matthias. Isla Carroll & Percy E. Turner Professor of Biblical Studies and Professor of Religion, Rice University.
MDiv (1992) University of Heidelberg; MA (1996) Harvard University; PhD (1997) Harvard University

Johnson, Cassidy. Assistant Teaching Professor of BioSciences, Director of Lynn R. Lowrey Arboretum, Rice University.
BS (2001) Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; MS (2005) Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; PhD (2011) Rice University

Kemmer, Suzanne. Associate Professor of Linguistics and Cognitive Sciences, Rice University.
BA (1980) Rice University; MA (1985) Stanford University; PhD (1988) Stanford University

Sharp, Rebecca. Executive Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, Rice University
BS (1992) and MS (1998) Texas A&M University

Stoll, Richard, Chair. Albert Thomas Professor of Political Science, Rice University
A.B. (1974) University of Rochester; PhD (1979) University of Michigan

RICE UNIVERSITY GOVERNING POLICIES

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rice University General Announcements describe university-wide academic policies and procedures for graduate study. Students are responsible for meeting all program and university requirements. In addition to the regulations in this handbook, you are expected to comply with the General Announcements and the Code of Student Conduct. Students who do not meet program or university requirements may be dismissed from the program.

If there is conflicting information, university-wide regulations take precedence over program requirements, which take precedence over research group regulations. If in doubt, please consult the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office first or the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The General Announcements summarize regulations and procedures for doctoral degrees, diploma programs, non-thesis master's degrees, and thesis master's degrees.

Interdisciplinary Studies students should become familiar with policies for all graduate students, including:

- Academic and Judicial Discipline
- Academic Regulations and Good Standing
- Academic Graduation Requirements
- Application for Degree and Degree Conferral
- Grades
- Interruptions of Study: Releases, Leaves, and Withdrawals
- Registration and Courses
- Regulations and Procedures for Non-Thesis Master's Degrees
- Rights and Responsibilities, including Faculty Grading Guidelines

The General Announcements are available online at http://ga.rice.edu/.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

"The life and work of a Rice University student should be based on integrity, responsibility, and consideration and respect for others."
– Rice University Code of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Judicial Programs administers the Code of Student Conduct, which governs student behavior and discipline. This code applies to all Rice students — undergraduate, graduate, professional, and Continuing Studies — including visiting and online students, visiting post-baccalaureates, second-degree students, and auditors.

For students attending class on campus, the code applies from the moment you arrive for orientation or other activities related to your student status. For online students, it applies from the time you begin engaging with the university as a student. Organizations are also subject to this code.

Alleged violations of university rules are handled according to the Code of Student Conduct. Students have the right to appeal decisions as described in the code. Rice retains final authority over all disciplinary actions affecting its educational mission or community safety. The code does not grant contractual rights to any party. Note that procedures may differ for fully online students.

You can view the full Code of Student Conduct on the Student Judicial Programs website.

Graduate Academic Integrity and the Graduate Honor Code

"Rice University is a community dedicated to the principles of honesty, integrity, and respect for others. We uphold these high standards in our research and conduct. We do not tolerate lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarizing, using unauthorized tools, or any other instance of academic dishonesty that violates these standards."
– Rice University Graduate Honor Code

Academic integrity is foundational to your success and to the university community. Upholding honesty and respect protects the integrity of knowledge and the trust we share as scholars. Maintaining that trust requires everyone's active participation.

Rice's Graduate Academic Integrity System, established by the Faculty Senate and Provost, investigates possible violations of the Graduate Honor Code by graduate students. Suspension or expulsion is generally the outcome for repeat or severe violations.

For more details on expectations, reporting processes, and procedures, visit the Graduate Academic Integrity website or contact gradhonor@rice.edu.

Research Integrity

"As an institution of higher learning, Rice University expects all its members to maintain the highest standards of conduct in pursuing research and scholarly activities. Any form of research fraud or misconduct is contrary to the University's principles and adversely affects the reputation of all individuals in the Rice community."
– Rice University Policy No. 324

Research misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting research results. Examples include making up data, changing results, or failing to credit others' work appropriately.

Students engaged in research should review the Research Integrity website for further information and resources.

Alcohol Policy

Rice University encourages safe and responsible behavior around alcohol. As part of Rice's Culture of Care, all students are expected to be mindful of their own safety and that of fellow students. For those legally permitted to consume alcohol, Rice encourages moderation and a preference for beer or wine over distilled spirits, which carry higher risks of abuse.

Violations of alcohol policies by students, organizations, or residential colleges are subject to sanctions under the Code of Student Conduct, ranging from fines to expulsion.

You can view the full alcohol policy at https://policy.rice.edu/848.

Disability Support Services (DSS)

Rice University is committed to supporting students with disabilities, including those with learning, physical, medical, sensory, psychiatric, or psychological conditions. DSS helps establish eligibility for accommodations, consults with faculty, and provides resources as needed.

If you are newly admitted, you should contact DSS promptly to ensure eligibility is established and reasonable accommodations are evaluated and approved in a timely manner. Accommodations are not retroactive.

For more information, visit the DSS website http://dss.rice.edu/ or contact DSS via phone at 713-348-5841 or adarice@rice.edu.

Campus Safety

Your safety and security are important priorities at Rice. The Rice University Police Department (RUPD) offers these key reminders:

Parking lot safety:

- Place valuables in the trunk or under the seats.
- Always lock your car, even briefly.
- Have your keys in hand before leaving the building.
- Walk with someone, especially at night.
- Use the Rice escort service if you feel uneasy.
- Check your back seat before entering your vehicle.

Personal safety:

- Walk with someone whenever possible.
- Be aware of your surroundings and walk confidently.
- Stay on well-lit, well-traveled sidewalks.
- Trust your instincts! If you feel unsafe, seek help.
- Use emergency phones on campus if needed.
- Report suspicious behavior to RUPD.
- Always lock your room or office, even for short absences.

The campus police office is just inside Entrance 8 at Stockton Street and University Boulevard. The dispatch/reception office is open, and a supervisor is available 24 hours a day. Most administrative services are available during normal business hours. Other supervisory and administrative staff are on a 24-hour response. The RUPD phone number is ext. 6000 on campus or 713-348-6000 off-campus.

For more information, visit the RUPD website at http://rupd.rice.edu/

Weapons Prohibition Policy

Rice University prohibits carrying concealed handguns or other weapons on campus under Texas Penal Code Section 30.06. Rice University has a policy banning various other weapons from campus. If you have any questions about the Campus Handgun Policy or the Weapons Prohibition Policy, please contact the Rice University Police Department or visit the Weapons Prohibition Policy website.

GETTING STARTED

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

All new Interdisciplinary Studies students must attend the official Graduate Student Orientation and the program orientation before beginning their studies, including the Online General Graduate Student Orientation on Canvas. Orientation provides an overview of what to expect at Rice, including key policies, procedures, resources, and available services. For details, visit https://graduate.rice.edu/admissions/after-admission/graduate-student-orientation.

If you have questions before orientation, please contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office.

RICE ID

Your Rice University ID card identifies you as a current member of the Rice community. All registered graduate students must carry a student ID card. The Identification Office manages Rice ID cards and electronic building access and is housed in the Rice University Police Department next to the Anderson-Clarke Center.

Cardholders are responsible for maintaining their card in good condition. Punching holes, bending, folding, or otherwise damaging your card — or losing it by accident or theft — will result in a $15 replacement fee. The card becomes void if your enrollment at Rice is terminated or interrupted.

RICE HONOR COUNCIL

The Rice Honor System, created by students in 1912, is one of the university's most valued traditions. It reflects the trust and respect that Rice students show to each other and to the institution and is a vital part of your education in responsibility and integrity.

The Honor System gives you flexibility in completing coursework and examinations, but it depends on everyone's commitment and active participation. You will be asked to sign a pledge to uphold the code on all student work.

Please review the Honor Code and understand the role of the Graduate Honor Council — how it functions, how you can support it, and what happens if a violation is suspected. This knowledge will help you continue Rice's tradition of honesty and respect.

You will learn more about the Rice Honor Council and Honor Code through a video at orientation, and you can visit their website at http://honor.rice.edu.

TECHNOLOGY AND ACCOUNTS

Esther

ESTHER (Employee and Student Tools, Help, and Electronic Resources) is the Rice online portal for managing your academic records, course schedules, evaluations, bills, financial aid, and other student information.

Before orientation, you should receive a "Welcome to Rice University" email from graduate@rice.edu with your ESTHER login and Rice email information. If you have not received this information, please contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office.

To use ESTHER:

- Log in at http://esther.rice.edu with your NetID and the PIN you created from your welcome email.
- You will need to set up Duo two-factor authentication to access your account. For instructions, visit the Duo Enrollment Guide.
- In ESTHER, please update your address, emergency contact information, and affirm the Honor Code.
- For assistance, contact the Office of the Registrar at registrar@rice.edu.

NetID

Your NetID is your unique login credential for Rice systems and will be created within 24–48 hours of your departmental acceptance. It activates your Rice email and personal storage account, and is required to log in to campus computers, ESTHER, Canvas, and other tools.

How to activate your NetID:

- Visit http://mynetid.rice.edu/ and select "Start by activating your NetID."
- Provide the requested information and submit.
- If you already have an active NetID, click the link "I already have a NetID" to log in instead.
- Once you set up your password, you will receive a confirmation message and instructions for setting your Rice Google account password.

Learn more about setting up Rice Google Apps for Calendar, Drive, and other tools here: https://kb.rice.edu/102292.

Email

Rice automatically provides you with a university email account, which serves as your official channel of communication. Once your NetID and Google passwords are active, you can check email at http://webmail.rice.edu.

Be sure to check your Rice email regularly for important messages from your department, instructors, and the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Your NetID and Rice Google password also give you access to Rice Google Apps for Education (GAE), including university calendars and Google Drive. (Note: Gmail itself is *not* included in the Rice GAE for graduate students, because Google stores mail on external servers that may not meet Rice security requirements for confidential data.)

VPN Account

If you plan to access secured campus resources — like library reserves and journals — from off campus, you will need a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection.

Use your NetID and NetID password to log in. For instructions, visit the VPN Guide.

IT Help?

If you run into any technical issues, submit a request at http://helpdesk.rice.edu or call 713-348-HELP (4357). The Help Desk is in Mudd 103 and is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Important: IT will never ask for your NetID and password by email. Never share your password with anyone!

Registration Holds

All students must clear any registration holds in ESTHER before enrolling in classes each semester.

To check your holds:

- Log into http://esther.rice.edu
- Go to:
    - Student Services and Account Information
    - Student Records and Account Information
    - View Holds

GRADUATE STUDENT TRAINING

As a new Rice graduate student, you must complete several mandatory training requirements. These trainings are essential to help you understand community expectations, maintain a safe campus, and meet federal and university standards.

All required training is due by **October 1** for students starting in the fall semester, and by **February 15** for those starting in the spring semester. You will not be allowed to register for future semesters until the training is completed. Please note that late registration fees will not be waived if your training is incomplete.

Sexual Harassment Prevention

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated at Rice. It is every student's responsibility to understand what behavior crosses the line, how to intervene, and how to support a culture of respect. New graduate students are required to complete the "Lasting Choices: Protecting Our Campus From Sexual Assault" training. You will receive access instructions using your NetID and password. Once you finish the training, confirm your completion on the Grades screen of the course. If your score does not show 100%, return to the course and ensure you have completed all the required screens. You must complete this training by the deadline to avoid registration holds.

Suicide Prevention Training

Suicide prevention training is offered through the Rice Wellbeing Office and typically occurs during New Student Orientation in the online training modules. This program is an important resource for recognizing warning signs and supporting yourself and your peers.

PARKING & TRANSPORTATION

Most graduate students choose one of two annual parking options:

- Greenbriar Lot – "Night Owl"
    - Access to West Lot 4 after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends
    - Access to North Lot after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends
    - Access to Greenbriar/Stadium Lot all day, every day

Note: If you arrive on campus before 5:00 p.m. on a weekday, you must park in the Stadium Lot ($2/day) or in one of the paid visitor lots until 5:00 p.m.

- West Lot Commuter
    - Access to West Lot 4 all day, every day
    - Access to North Lot after 4:00 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends

Please note: Current contract parking rates can be found on the Parking website at https://parking.rice.edu/registration/rates-information/parking-rates.

Your proximity ("prox") card is used to enter these lots. It is important to protect your prox card from

damage — avoid bending it, punching holes in it, or exposing it to heat, which can break the circuitry. Hold the card near the reader surface (do not insert it) for entry. A replacement fee of $30 will be charged for lost, broken, or damaged cards. You must display your parking sticker as directed by the Parking Office to avoid tickets, which are the responsibility of the student.

Bus Service

Although the bus service is generally not necessary for Interdisciplinary Studies students due to the Anderson-Clarke Center's convenient location, you are welcome to use Rice's on-campus shuttle buses. Buses typically run every 5–10 minutes on weekdays, with stops marked along the route. Students can track shuttle locations and routes using the Rice shuttle tracker and mobile app available through the Rice Transportation website.

Parking Registration

- **Returning students** can register for parking through ESTHER. Permits will be sent to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office via campus mail, and you can pick them up at the ACC reception desk on the first floor.
- **New students** must register for parking in person at the Parking Registration Office, located in the Central Campus Parking Garage.
- **Interdisciplinary Studies alumni auditors** should visit http://alumni.rice.edu and click "Alumni Parking Registration" at the bottom of the page.

CANVAS

Canvas is Rice University's learning management system, used for most course-related activities. Canvas provides a virtual workspace to support teaching, learning, and collaboration within the Rice community.

You can access Canvas at http://www.rice.edu/canvas/. Click the "Rice Login" link and sign in with your NetID and password.

Please note: Not all Interdisciplinary Studies instructors use Canvas for their courses. Be sure to check with your instructor about whether they will use Canvas.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (GSA)

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents all degree-seeking graduate students at Rice. Its mission is to enrich graduate student experience and to support, advocate for, and promote the interests and values of graduate students.

The GSA provides programs and services to help recruit and retain graduate students, represents graduate student perspectives to university administration, and builds a sense of community across campus.

All Interdisciplinary Studies students are automatically part of the GSA. Officers and representatives work to continually improve graduate student experience. The GSA includes students from each of Rice's eight academic schools.

Learn more about GSA programs, resources, and leadership at http://gsa.rice.edu.

WRITERS GROUP

The Rice Interdisciplinary Studies Writers Group is dedicated to the art and craft of creative writing. Its primary focus is sharing original pieces and improving writing through supportive, constructive workshops. The group hosts guest authors and speakers, attends writing events, and discusses topics such as contests, agents, and publication. Meetings typically occur once a month.

For more information, visit: https://bit.ly/RiceWritersGroup

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Founded in 2013, the Rice Interdisciplinary Studies Alumni Association creates opportunities for alumni and current students to maintain strong connections within the program's close-knit community. The Association fosters relationships through educational, intellectual, and social activities, supports program recruitment, and raises funds for scholarships and tuition assistance.

The Alumni Association hosts events throughout the year and welcomes participation from all alumni, students, family, and friends. There are no membership dues.

LIBRARY ORIENTATION

New Interdisciplinary Studies students are strongly encouraged to attend the Fondren Library Orientation. As library resources and research methods continue to evolve, this orientation will help you stay up to date and make the most of Rice's research tools.

During the session, Fondren Library staff will cover topics such as:

- Online Catalog
- Journal Catalog
- Interlibrary Loan
- Course Reserves

This orientation is usually scheduled during the INDS 500 The Interdisciplinary Mind course.

DEGREE WORKS

Degree Works is a web-based degree-auditing and tracking tool that helps you and your advisors monitor your progress toward graduation. It shows which requirements you have completed and which are outstanding, based on the academic program requirements in the General Announcements.

How Degree Works benefits students:

- Provides real-time progress updates toward degree completion
- Clearly identifies courses taken, electives, and outstanding requirements
- Reduces paperwork and manual degree checklists
- Confirms your academic standing
- Offers a "What If" feature to see how coursework applies if you change programs or add a major, minor, or certificate

How Degree Works benefits advisors:

- Supports real-time academic advising
- Reduces errors through consistent degree plans
- Minimizes paperwork and manual tracking
- Enables advisors to search by school, degree, or major to view student progress

Important: Degree Works supports, but does not replace, one-on-one academic advising with the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office. For more information, including step-by-step instructions, visit: https://registrar.rice.edu/students/degreeworks#what_is.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

As part of our commitment to continuously improving graduate student experience and meeting accreditation requirements, the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office conducts ongoing program

evaluations. Your feedback about your experiences is important and helps us assess whether program goals are being met and where improvements are needed. We encourage you to participate fully in all surveys, evaluations, and feedback requests. All assessments are confidential, and individual responses cannot be linked to specific students.

Course and Faculty Evaluations

The course and instructor evaluation process is an essential ingredient in the university's ongoing effort to monitor and improve the quality of instruction at Rice. As part of this valuable process, each semester, students are encouraged to submit candid, accurate feedback on the quality of the course and the effectiveness of its instructor. The evaluations are intended to be available only to Rice students, faculty, and staff on its internal computer network and to be used only for legitimate, education-related purposes.

Student evaluators should be aware that the university reserves the right to remove or redact narratives or comments that may be considered harassing, obscene, indecent, personally attacking and/or otherwise inappropriate.

Regardless of the manner by which a user obtains evaluation information, this information is considered confidential and is to be used solely by, within, and amongst the Rice University community and its members. Failure to follow this rule may result in a student's access to the evaluations being restricted or other disciplinary action.

Near the end of each semester, the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office will remind students to complete their course and faculty evaluations. Students will log in to their ESTHER account to complete both a course and faculty evaluation.

Please note that the evaluation process is always confidential, and we encourage every student to participate and submit evaluations early. Instructors cannot view course/faculty evaluations until the Registrar releases them after final grades are due.

Students cannot view semester grades on ESTHER until course/faculty evaluations are completed.

Your responses are important to the program and will help us to plan future classes and assess the program as a whole. Please provide complete and honest feedback so the program can address concerns in a timely manner and continue supporting effective teaching and positive student experiences.

Capstone Reflection

During the final weeks of the MIS program, students will complete a brief Capstone Reflection Essay as part of the program's assessment plan. This ungraded assignment provides students with an opportunity to articulate their learning, reflect on their growth, and consider how the program has shaped their knowledge, skills, and perspectives. It also provides the program with valuable assessment data to evaluate student learning and continuously improve the curriculum. Detailed instructions and prompts will be shared on the Capstone Canvas site, and the essay is due by the last day of the semester.

Graduate Exit Survey

Upon completion of the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies, Diploma in Liberal Studies, or a Graduate Certificate in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing, students will be asked to complete a Graduate Exit Survey assessing their experiences with the curriculum, coursework, culminating project, faculty, and program administration.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Interdisciplinary Studies at Rice University offers several scholarships to support current students who demonstrate financial need. All scholarships require a formal application, and awards are made on a competitive basis. Application announcements are emailed to students at least one month before each scholarship deadline.

Margaret Denson Endowed Scholarship

Funded by a generous gift from Margaret Denson, MLS alumna, this scholarship provides limited funds each Fall to support students in the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) program who demonstrate financial need and ongoing academic progress. One or more scholarships may be awarded each year to continuing students who demonstrate dedication to their studies and a commitment to the values of lifelong learning.

Eligibility:

- Enrolled in the MIS program for the Fall semester
- Have completed at least one semester in the MIS program (new students are not eligible)
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 and be in good academic standing
- Students may receive this scholarship for no more than three semesters, consecutive or otherwise

Bernard F. and Vivian M. Clark Endowed Scholarship

Funded by a generous donation from Virginia Clark, MLS alumna, this scholarship provides limited funds each fall, spring, and summer to support teachers and other professionals working in the service of others. The award recognizes students who exemplify dedication, compassion, and impact through their professional or community roles.

Eligibility:

- Enrolled in the MIS program for the semester the scholarship will be awarded
- MIS students who are teachers or engaged in service-oriented professions
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 and be in good academic standing

Interdisciplinary Studies Alumni Association - John Freeman Scholarship

Funded through the generosity of alumni, students, and staff, this scholarship honors Dr. John Freeman, the founding faculty director of the program. Each Spring, one $1,000 scholarship is awarded to a student who demonstrates financial need and continued academic progress in the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) program.

Eligibility:

- Enrolled in the MIS program for the Spring semester
- Have completed at least three courses toward the degree
- Minimum GPA of 3.33 and be in good academic standing

Shipman-Gresik Scholarship

Funded through the generosity of MLS and DLS alumnae, Karin Shipman and Vicky Gresik, this scholarship provides limited funds each Summer to support students in the Master of Interdisciplinary

Studies (MIS) program who demonstrate financial need. Awards of $1,000 are granted to students who have made meaningful progress toward their degree and who can clearly articulate how the scholarship would help them continue their studies.

Eligibility:
- Enrolled in the MIS program for the Summer semester
- Have completed at least three courses toward the degree
- Minimum GPA of 3.33 and be in good academic standing

Jeff Weed Scholarship in Liberal Studies

Established through a generous estate gift from Wilson Geoffrey "Jeff" Weed, MLS alumnus, this scholarship provides limited funds each semester to support continuing students in the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) program who demonstrate intellectual curiosity, academic excellence, and a strong commitment to interdisciplinary learning.

Eligibility:
- Enrolled in the MIS program for the semester the scholarship will be awarded
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 and be in good academic standing

Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs (AGLSP)

Rice Interdisciplinary Studies is a member of the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs (AGLSP). AGLSP is an international network of more than 40 institutional members who share a commitment to graduate-level liberal and interdisciplinary education, serving primarily adult and part-time learners.

Founded in 1975, AGLSP represents a broad cross-section of American higher education, from small liberal arts colleges to large research universities, both public and private. The Association serves as a forum for sharing information and ideas among interdisciplinary programs, their students, alumni, and other stakeholders.

AGLSP promotes the concept and goals of interdisciplinary and liberal studies, fosters high standards, and provides guidance for institutions seeking to create, sustain, or improve these programs. The Association also works to increase public awareness of the value of these programs.

Degrees offered by AGLSP member institutions include the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS), Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS), Master of Liberal Arts (MLA), Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS), Master of Professional Studies (MPS), Master of Humanities (MH), Doctor of Liberal Studies (DLS), and Doctor of Liberal Arts (DLA).

AGLSP member institutions may nominate eligible faculty for the annual AGLSP Faculty Award. Rice faculty have been honored with this national award four times:
- Dr. Dennis Huston, Professor Emeritus of English (2014)
- Dr. John Freeman, Professor Emeritus of Physics and Astronomy and Founding Director of the MIS program (2016)
- Dr. Joseph Campana, Professor of English (2021)
- Dr. Newell Boyd, Lecturer in History (2023)

Additionally, several of our students have received the national AGLSP Student Writing Awards in both the Excellence in Interdisciplinary Writing and the Excellence in Creative Writing.

The annual AGLSP conference explores issues of both academic and societal concern, providing opportunities for students, alumni, and faculty to present research and share ideas.

Confluence, the Association's peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal, publishes scholarly essays and creative work — including short stories, poetry, creative nonfiction, and visual art — that demonstrate and inspire liberal and interdisciplinary education. Students, alumni, and faculty are encouraged to submit their work.

Visit https://www.confluence-aglsp.org/ to learn more.

AGLSP Honor Society

The Rice Interdisciplinary Studies program has been approved by the AGLSP to establish its own charter of the AGLSP Honor Society.

The Honor Society's mission is to:

- Recognize the scholarly achievements of graduate students in liberal and interdisciplinary studies programs across the United States and Canada
- Promote liberal and interdisciplinary studies on member campuses
- Provide a professional and academic network of scholars and students

During your final semester, eligible students will be invited by the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office to apply to the AGLSP Honor Society. Once approved, names will be forwarded to the AGLSP Home Office, which will then extend official invitations to join. Inducted students who join and pay dues will be officially recognized as Honor Society members. Rice is proud to be among the first interdisciplinary programs in the country to establish this charter.

National Membership Criteria:

- Minimum 3.75 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale
- At least 24 credits toward a master's or doctoral degree, or 16 credits toward a graduate certificate
- Demonstrated leadership in the classroom and broader community
- Selection and nomination by Rice Interdisciplinary Studies

Membership Benefits include:

- Discounted registration for the AGLSP annual conference
- Access to *Confluence*, the AGLSP journal, and the opportunity to submit work for publication
- Gold honor cords for graduation (ordered by the program)
- Honors listing in the official commencement program

Membership Dues:
Inductees may choose a lifetime membership ($75) or a one-year membership ($45). The fee covers a membership certificate, journal subscription, and honor society dues. An annual membership renewal fee of $25 is required to maintain active membership benefits.

Newly inducted members will also be listed on the AGLSP website. For additional information, visit https://www.aglsp.org/national-honor-society.

TEXAS GRADUATE LIBERAL STUDIES SYMPOSIUM

Since 2015, the Texas Interdisciplinary Studies Symposium has offered students and alumni from programs across Texas a chance to share their research, ideas, and experiences exploring timeless and

timely human questions within the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. Typically held each July, this one-day event begins with a networking breakfast, followed by student and alumni presentations, with a keynote speaker over lunch. Whether you are presenting a paper or attending to listen, the symposium is a valuable opportunity to connect with colleagues, share ideas, and build community.

Participating universities have included:

- Dallas Baptist University
- Houston Christian University
- Rice University (host in 2015, 2017, 2019, 2024)
- Southern Methodist University (host in 2016, 2018, 2023, 2025)
- Texas Christian University
- University of Dallas
- University of Houston–Clear Lake
- University of St. Thomas
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Texas–Dallas

For more details, visit the symposium website: https://glasscock.rice.edu/texas-graduate-liberal-studies-symposium.

Rice Student Resources

Rice University offers a wide range of resources to help you thrive during your graduate studies. Here are some highlights:

Fondren Library

Access books, journals, databases, and research tools, plus support for grants, publishing, and responsible research practices. Visit **http://library.rice.edu/**.

Valhalla

A graduate-student-run pub that has been a social hub for more than 40 years. Visit **https://valhalla.rice.edu/**.

Barbara and David Gibbs Recreation Center

Encourages physical, social, and emotional wellness through classes, facilities, and wellness programming. Visit **http://recreation.rice.edu/**.

Rice Transportation Department

Offers shuttle services, parking information, and commuter resources. Track shuttle buses at **https://transportation.rice.edu/**.

Rice News

Keep up with Rice community news, research highlights, and events. Visit **https://news.rice.edu/**.

The Thresher

Rice's award-winning student newspaper, published weekly. Visit **http://www.ricethresher.org/**.

Center for Academic and Professional Communication

Offers workshops, courses, and one-on-one consultations to help you develop your writing, speaking, and presentation skills. ESL resources are also available. Visit **https://pwc.rice.edu/whom-we-serve/graduate-students**.

Digital Media Commons
Supports multimedia projects with tools, training, and project assistance. Visit **https://library.rice.edu/places/dmc**.

Rice Cinema
Showcases documentaries, international films, and experimental cinema. Visit **https://vada.rice.edu/rice-cinema**.

Center for Civic Leadership
Encourages engaged citizenship through community partnerships, research, and service opportunities. Graduate students can serve as advisors for Houston Action Research Teams (HART). Visit **http://ccl.rice.edu/**.

Moody Center for the Arts
Supports cross-disciplinary artistic and creative collaboration. Visit **https://moody.rice.edu/**.

Rice Memorial Center / Ley Student Center
Hosts student organizations, dining, events, and meeting spaces. Visit **http://studentcenter.rice.edu/**.

Marching Owl Band (MOB)
A Rice tradition known for playful, satirical performances that combine music and humor. Visit **http://mob.rice.edu/**.

Rice Athletics
Rice competes in NCAA Division I athletics as the Rice Owls, part of the American Athletic Conference. Visit **https://riceowls.com/**.

Important Note on Student Fees
Interdisciplinary Studies student fees **do not** cover services from the following offices:

- Center for Career Development
- Student Health Services (campus health clinic)
- Wellness Center (counseling center)

MASTER OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

MISSION, VISION, AND PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) program provides a rigorous graduate-level education for curious learners seeking intellectual growth and practical engagement with today's complex challenges. Grounded in the traditions of the humanities, social and natural sciences, and the arts, the program fosters an appreciation for the interconnectedness of knowledge. Through interdisciplinary inquiry, critical and reflective thinking, and real-world application, students learn to examine diverse perspectives, communicate with clarity, and connect their learning to personal, professional, and community contexts. The MIS program prepares graduates to think creatively and contribute constructively in a rapidly changing world.

Our vision is to be a leader in interdisciplinary education, empowering students to become thoughtful, ethical leaders who apply broad-based knowledge to advance innovation, well-being, and positive contributions in their professions and communities. The program bridges disciplines to equip students with the skills to think critically, collaborate effectively, and remain engaged, adaptive learners throughout their lives.

The MIS program equips students with the intellectual tools and interdisciplinary foundation to make meaningful contributions across academic, professional, and civic contexts. Emphasizing the human experience and lifelong learning, graduates emerge as adaptable, socially aware individuals prepared to meet the demands of a dynamic world. Through a supportive scholarly community, the program fosters collaboration and the exchange of ideas, ensuring that students and alumni remain active participants in a vibrant intellectual community.

The Program Learning Outcomes articulate what graduates of the MIS program will know, be able to do, and value by the time they complete their degree. These outcomes reflect the core competencies and habits of mind we expect students to develop through interdisciplinary coursework, research, and applied learning. They serve as a framework for both academic growth and program assessment.

1. **Critical, Creative, and Analytical Thinking**
   Graduates will analyze complex issues through multidisciplinary lenses, synthesizing insights to develop innovative, human-centered solutions. They will cultivate creative and analytical approaches to inquiry, integrating imaginative and evidence-based methods to explore and address societal challenges.
2. **Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration**
   Graduates will integrate perspectives and approaches from the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and arts to address real-world problems with a nuanced understanding of human culture, behavior, and values.
3. **Academic Research and Inquiry**
   Graduates will apply academic research methods, critically evaluate sources, and synthesize information to construct clear, well-supported arguments.
4. **Communication, Collaboration, and Leadership**
   Graduates will develop advanced skills in writing, oral communication, collaboration, and leadership, enabling them to communicate interdisciplinary ideas clearly and collaborate across a variety of professional and academic contexts.
5. **Cultural Competency**
   Graduates will engage respectfully with diverse viewpoints, cultures, and identities, fostering inclusive and collaborative environments in both professional and community settings.
6. **Lifelong Learning and Adaptability**

Graduates will embrace the joy and necessity of lifelong learning, demonstrating the adaptability needed to respond to evolving societal needs, technological developments, and global challenges by integrating new knowledge and insights into their work.

ADMISSION

Admission to the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) program is open to qualified students holding a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from an accredited institution. A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is expected, although the admissions committee also considers relevant postgraduate experience and recent accomplishments.

Admission Requirements and Process

- Completed Application for Admission
- $85 Application fee
- Current resume
- Personal statement outlining academic and/or professional objectives in applying to the MIS program and various influences that have been important in the applicant's intellectual development.
- Writing sample that demonstrates the applicant's ability to think and write critically; demonstrates coherent and concise arguments; provides support for assertions made; leads to a logical, meaningful, and clearly stated conclusion; and properly credits all ideas and quotes from sources. Applicants are given three essay topic choices (one each in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences) and must choose one topic and prepare a four- to five-page essay.
- Official transcripts from all previous colleges or universities attended
- Two letters of recommendation, each accompanied by a complete Letter of Recommendation form.
- Application interview

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program requires a total of 34 credit hours. Part-time students can typically complete the degree in approximately four years, with a maximum of seven years allowed. Full-time students can complete the degree in about two years, with a maximum of five years to finish. All courses require class participation, research papers, and presentations; some also include exams.

Program Sequence

- **Orientation:** Before each semester begins, new students participate in an orientation covering Rice systems, the Honor Code, Canvas, and library resources. Textbooks are not carried by the Rice Bookstore; students typically order them online.
- **Library Orientation:** Fondren Library staff provide an orientation on research tools, online catalogs, interlibrary loan, and course reserves.
- **Core Courses:**
    - INDS 500 The Interdisciplinary Mind: Liberal Arts and the Pursuit of Knowledge
    - INDS 600 The Interdisciplinary Scholar: Research, Writing, and Intellectual Practice
    - One course each in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences
    - These courses introduce students to broad interdisciplinary perspectives and methodologies.
- **Electives:**
    - Five additional elective courses, allowing students to focus on a single track (humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, or one of the professional tracks) or span multiple disciplines depending on individual interests and goals.

- **Capstone Preparation:**
  - Before beginning the capstone project, students must complete INDS 699 Capstone Seminar, a one-credit-hour course that introduces the academic requirements of the MIS Capstone Project and supports students in developing their research plan and proposal.
  - Enrollment in the Capstone Seminar requires completion of at least 24 credit hours and is usually taken with the final elective before the capstone course.
- **Capstone Project:**
  - The final requirement is a capstone course, in which students integrate their learning by writing an extended paper or completing a project to be presented orally.
  - Students may complete the capstone in one semester (INDS 701) or over two semesters (INDS 700 and INDS 701).
  - Students should refer to the detailed Capstone Course section below for additional expectations and timelines.

Optional MIS Tracks

The Master of Interdisciplinary Studies offers optional tracks in Philanthropic Leadership and Strategic Communication. These tracks allow students to pursue focused, professionally relevant study through the elective requirements of the MIS degree. Each track consists of 9 credit hours, or three approved courses. Track coursework counts toward the 34 credit hours required for the degree and does not add additional credit hours to the program.

Students interested in completing a track should consult with the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director early in their program to develop an appropriate plan of study. Approved track courses will be identified by the program and may change as new courses are developed and offered. Because course availability varies by semester, students should plan ahead to ensure that track requirements can be completed within their intended graduation timeline.

Philanthropic Leadership

The Philanthropic Leadership track examines the historical, ethical, systemic, and practical dimensions of philanthropy. Students explore philanthropic structures, strategic leadership, social impact, evaluation, and community-centered practice. The track is designed for individuals working in or alongside foundations, nonprofit organizations, boards, grantmaking institutions, donor-advising organizations, educational institutions, and civic or community initiatives. Through interdisciplinary coursework and capstone study, students develop the knowledge and skills needed to lead thoughtfully and effectively in philanthropic and mission-driven settings.

Strategic Communication

The Strategic Communication track prepares students to use communication as a core leadership practice in complex organizational and community settings. The curriculum emphasizes audience-centered messaging, persuasive writing and speaking, storytelling, stakeholder engagement, ethical and inclusive communication, and communication strategy. Designed for professionals in nonprofit leadership, philanthropy, education, public policy, public service, civic engagement, and related fields, the track helps students develop communication initiatives that build trust, support collaboration, shape organizational strategy, and advance mission-driven goals. Students apply these skills through interdisciplinary coursework and a related capstone project.

Track Requirements and Declaration

Participation in an MIS track is optional. Students pursuing a track complete the standard MIS core, elective, and capstone requirements, including three approved track courses totaling 9 credit hours.

Students must formally declare a track through the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office. Any proposed course substitutions must be approved in advance by the Executive Director. Students must also complete a capstone project substantially related to the focus of the track.

Students who choose not to complete a declared track may continue in the general MIS degree program, provided they meet all degree requirements. Approved coursework already completed will continue to count toward the MIS degree when applicable.

MASTER OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES PLAN OF STUDY

The MIS degree is a non-thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, see Non-Thesis Master's Degrees.

COURSE	TITLE	HRS
CORE	*Two required interdisciplinary courses and one each in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences*	
INDS 500	The Interdisciplinary Mind: Liberal Arts and the Pursuit of Knowledge	3
INDS 600	The Interdisciplinary Scholar: Research, Writing, and Intellectual Practice	3
INDS		3
INDS		3
INDS		3
ELECTIVES	*All core courses must be completed before enrolling in Electives*	
INDS		3
INDS		3
INDS		3
INDS		3
INDS		3
CAPSTONE	*The Capstone Seminar may be taken once 24 hours are complete. All elective courses and Capstone Seminar must be completed before enrolling in the Capstone course.*	
INDS 699	Capstone Seminar	1
INDS 700	Capstone I (optional)	-
INDS 701	Capstone II	3
	TOTAL HOURS:	**34**

- All students must take INDS 500 and INDS 600 in their first year of study.
- The core requirements are designed to acquaint first-year students with contrasting perspectives and methodological approaches that define academic inquiry in the three broad fields of humanities, social sciences, and natural science. Core courses must be completed before courses that satisfy the electives can be taken.
- The Capstone Seminar may be taken once 24 hours are complete.
- All MIS courses must be completed with a B- or better to count toward the degree, and students must maintain a 3.0 (B) grade point average (GPA).
- MIS students must maintain continuous enrollment in the program and are expected to successfully complete at least two courses an academic year and be enrolled in at least two semesters of the academic year unless granted an official leave of absence. Part-time students may take up to seven years to complete the degree, and full-time students may take up to five years to complete the degree.

MIS CAPSTONE

The capstone project is the culminating academic experience of the MIS degree. It offers students the opportunity to synthesize their learning, demonstrate mastery of interdisciplinary study, and pursue a topic of intellectual and personal significance. Students may choose among several capstone pathways, including:

- **Research-Based Projects** — a substantial academic paper grounded in a clear research question, literature review, and original analysis.
- **Creative Projects** — an original work in a literary or artistic genre, accompanied by a critical essay.
- **Applied Projects** — such as internship-based projects, community-engaged or service-based initiatives, and applied problem-solving projects that connect academic learning with professional practice.

Regardless of the option chosen, the capstone is expected to meet Rice University's standards for graduate-level work in both rigor and quality and must:

- Follow the current capstone timeline, proposal, and approval processes, including submission through the online capstone portal and adherence to published academic deadlines.
- Demonstrate mastery of interdisciplinary methods and critical inquiry.
- Exhibit strong graduate-level research, writing, and communication skills.
- Integrate prior coursework in the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies curriculum, as appropriate.
- Involve collaboration with the Interdisciplinary Studiers Executive Director, Capstone Advisor, and Second Reader.
- Include a written analytical or reflective component that contextualizes the applied work.
- Include a public oral presentation, completed prior to submission of the final written project, summarizing the project's goals, methodology, outcomes, and interdisciplinary significance.

Prerequisites for Capstone Enrollment

Before registering for the capstone course, students must meet several requirements to ensure they are prepared to undertake the final project:

- Completion of all core and elective courses (30 credit hours) with a minimum GPA of 3.0
- Successful completion of INDS 699: Capstone Seminar, a one-credit, pass/fail course designed to support project development. This seminar is typically taken in the semester immediately prior to starting the capstone to ensure a smooth transition. During the seminar, students will identify and refine their topic, conduct a literature review or critical framework analysis, clarify their methodology or creative process, and build a realistic project timeline. The seminar also helps students secure their Capstone Advisor and Second Reader and prepares them for independent work in the capstone course.
- Attendance at a minimum of 10 capstone presentations over the course of their studies. Students are responsible for tracking their attendance in accordance with the Rice Honor Code.

Capstone Course Structure

After successful completion of the INDS 699 Capstone Seminar, students are eligible to enroll in either a two-semester capstone option (INDS 700 and INDS 701) or a one-semester capstone option (INDS 701), both of which are conducted as independent study under the supervision of the Capstone Advisor and Second Reader. The individualized work plan developed in the INDS 699 Capstone Seminar will serve as the course syllabus.

At the conclusion of the capstone course, students are required to submit both written and oral components that reflect the depth and quality expected of graduate-level work at Rice University.

- Oral Presentation
  Students must deliver an oral presentation of their capstone project to an audience of faculty, peers, and invited guests. Presentations typically occur in the final weeks of the semester and are coordinated through the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office. The presentation offers students the opportunity to:
    - Share the goals, process, and outcomes of their project
    - Demonstrate oral communication and public speaking skills
    - Respond to faculty and peer questions
    - Gather feedback that may inform final revisions to the written work

Students are encouraged to rehearse in advance and seek guidance from their Capstone Advisor and Second Reader on content, clarity, and delivery. Course presentations are recorded for inclusion in the Capstone Projects Archive in RiceBox.

- Written Paper
  The final version of the capstone paper must be submitted electronically to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office by the last day of the semester. The paper should follow formatting and structural guidelines outlined in the Capstone Packet. Students must ensure that their work adheres to standards for grammar, organization, and scholarly referencing appropriate to their discipline or creative genre. Style guides such as APA, MLA, or Chicago may be used, depending on the nature of the project and in consultation with the Capstone Advisor and Second Reader.

- Reflective Essay
  In addition to the final project, all students must submit a reflective essay that addresses how their capstone experience demonstrates growth in each of the MIS Program Learning Outcomes. This ungraded assignment provides students with an opportunity to articulate their learning, reflect on their growth, and consider how the program has shaped their knowledge, skills, and perspectives. It also provides the program with valuable assessment data to evaluate student learning and continuously improve the curriculum.

For complete MIS Capstone requirements, formats, and proposal guidelines, students must refer to the full MIS Capstone Packet.

Capstone Archive

Capstone Project documents, including final papers or creative works, presentation PowerPoints, and presentation videos, are archived in RiceBox and made available to current students and alumni. Students may access the archive folder at https://rice.box.com/v/MLScapstones.

DIPLOMA IN LIBERAL STUDIES

GOALS AND PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) is a selective post-master's program for intellectually motivated adult learners who wish to deepen and advance their interdisciplinary study beyond the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) or a comparable graduate liberal studies degree. The program deepens expertise in two academic focus disciplines, sharpens interdisciplinary research skills, and culminates in a substantial independent thesis or project. Students benefit from advanced coursework, faculty mentorship, and opportunities to contribute to academic and public scholarship through research, teaching, writing, community engagement, or professional practice.

The Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) builds upon the multidisciplinary foundation of the MIS or similar graduate liberal studies programs by offering students the opportunity to deepen their academic expertise in three key ways:

- **Deepen Disciplinary Knowledge**
  Students pursue focused study in two academic disciplines, completing three advanced graduate courses in each focus area, to build depth alongside interdisciplinary breadth.
- **Advance Interdisciplinary Research Skills**
  Through coursework and faculty mentorship, students develop their ability to synthesize ideas, methods, and frameworks across disciplines, emphasizing integrative, research-based learning.
- **Produce Original, Integrative Work**
  Students apply their disciplinary and interdisciplinary learning to complete a substantial Diploma Project or Thesis in their final two terms. This independent work reflects both academic rigor and creative synthesis, allowing students to generate new insights and contribute meaningfully to scholarly or professional discourse.

Upon completion of the DLS, graduates will be able to:

- Identify significant interdisciplinary problems or issues and select one that the student can successfully address in a research project.
- Apply current interdisciplinary research methodologies and techniques, appropriate to the student's selected disciplines, to a problem.
- Demonstrate a critical and creative use of primary sources and content appropriate for the research topic.
- Critically analyze and evaluate one's own findings and those of others.
- Effectively communicate ideas, methodologies, analyses, and interpretations of the research topic.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the current interdisciplinary work in at least two academic disciplines.

ADMISSION

Admission to the Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) program is selective and based on a thorough review of each applicant's academic background, writing skills, research readiness, and capacity for independent graduate-level work. Applicants should have a 3.5 GPA in completed postgraduate work from:

- The Rice Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) or Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) program, or
- Another graduate or interdisciplinary studies program at an AGLSP member institution.

Other postgraduate degrees (such as MA, MD, or JD) may be considered if the applicant can

demonstrate substantial academic experience relevant to the proposed interdisciplinary focus, such as an interdisciplinary undergraduate major or double major.

Successful DLS applicants are intellectually curious, self-directed learners prepared to engage in advanced interdisciplinary research. In addition to a solid academic foundation, strong candidates demonstrate the ability to work independently, meet graduate-level expectations, and contribute meaningfully to scholarly dialogue. Strong applicants typically demonstrate:

- A strong academic record in prior graduate work (3.5 GPA minimum)
- Proven ability to conduct independent, self-directed research
- Experience with graduate-level research or analytical writing
- A clear capacity to synthesize ideas across disciplines using appropriate methods
- Intellectual maturity, academic responsibility, and motivation for advanced study
- A compelling rationale for pursuing further interdisciplinary learning
- A collegial approach to academic engagement and a willingness to contribute to a supportive scholarly community

Admission Requirements and Process

- Completed Application for Admission
- $85 application fee
- Current resume or CV
- Personal statement describing preparation, interdisciplinary interests, relevant experience, and goals
- Proposal for DLS study describing integration of the chosen focus disciplines, including a research question or theme, the role of each discipline, and reference to Ten Cheers for Interdisciplinarity: The Case for Interdisciplinary Knowledge and Research
- Writing sample demonstrating readiness for advanced research and writing (preferred in order: graduate-level thesis or capstone; interdisciplinary graduate paper; single-discipline graduate paper)
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, sent directly from the institution. This requirement is waived for graduates of the Rice MIS program.
- Two letters of recommendation, each accompanied by a complete Letter of Recommendation form.
- Application interview

Applications are accepted for fall admission only, with a deadline of May 15. Completed applications are forwarded to the Faculty Steering Committee for final review and decision.

Program Structure

The Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) program requires 30 credit hours, structured as follows:

- Content Coursework (24 hours):
  - Begins with INDS 750 Introduction to Diploma Research
- Followed by seven graduate-level courses selected from the Interdisciplinary Studies catalog, including:
  - Three advanced courses in each of the two chosen academic focus disciplines to build depth and disciplinary expertise
  - One additional graduate elective that supports the student's interdisciplinary goals
  - Students may include up to two advanced independent readings (directed study courses) as part of these requirements, with approval from their faculty advisory committee
- Research Coursework (6 hours):

- INDS 798 Diploma Project I
- INDS 799 Diploma Project II
- Completed under the direction of a three-member faculty advisory committee

The program culminates in a Diploma Project, which may take the form of an interdisciplinary thesis, concluding with a public defense. Details and guidance will be provided by the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director.

Diploma in Liberal Studies Plan of Study

For general university requirements, see Diploma Programs. Students pursuing the Diploma in Liberal Studies must complete:

COURSE	TITLE	HRS
CORE	Required for all new DLS students	
INDS 750	Introduction to Diploma Research	3
ELECTIVES	All core courses must be completed before enrolling in Electives	
INDS 501-698		3
INDS 501-698		3
INDS 501-698		3
INDS 501-698		3
INDS 501-698		3
INDS 501-698 or INDS 797 Advanced Independent Readings		3
INDS 501-698 or INDS 797 Advanced Independent Readings		3
PROJECT	All DLS courses must be completed before enrolling in the Diploma Project.	
INDS 798	Diploma Project I	3
INDS 799	Diploma Project II	3
	TOTAL HOURS:	**30**

- The Diploma in Liberal Studies program consists of 30 credit hours.
- Students must take INDS 750 Introduction to Diploma Research in their entering semester, before taking any other DLS courses.
- Students must maintain a 3.0 (B) grade point average (GPA), and all courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better to count toward the degree.
- INDS 750 must be completed with a grade of B or better.
- Students must maintain continuous enrollment in the program and are expected to successfully complete at least two courses per academic year and be enrolled in at least two semesters of the academic year unless granted an official leave of absence.
- Students may take only one course, INDS 750 Introduction to Diploma Research, in their entering term. Afterwards, students may take up to two courses per term.
- With respect to the two main disciplines chosen by the student for interdisciplinary work in completing the diploma project, the primary focus discipline and the secondary focus discipline, a student must complete a minimum of three courses in each before taking the two diploma project courses. An additional course or courses are recommended in any intended focus discipline where the student begins DLS study without much prior foundation in the focus discipline. A student may petition to have post-baccalaureate courses taken before entering the DLS program considered as a partial satisfaction of this requirement. An undergraduate degree in one of the disciplines could similarly serve as the basis of a petition.
- Diploma students are allowed to take up to seven years to complete the degree.
- Students must successfully complete all content coursework before taking the research coursework of INDS 798 and INDS 799.

DLS Advanced Independent Readings

INDS 797 is an independent study course open only to Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS) students and conducted under faculty supervision. Its primary purpose is to allow focused study relevant to a student's two chosen disciplines that are not otherwise covered by existing Interdisciplinary Studies courses. Interdisciplinary Studies faculty typically serve as independent study advisors, though other Rice faculty with relevant expertise may also serve with approval.

Key guidelines

- Assignments and evaluation are developed in advance in consultation with the program, the faculty advisor, and the student, and documented in writing.
- Periodic meetings between the student and the faculty advisor are expected.
- Extensive reading is required, and the final product will be a formal research paper.

Independent Readings Proposal Deadlines

- Fall semester: June 1
- Spring semester: November 1
- Summer semester: March 1

The independent study proposal is submitted online at https://gscs.formstack.com/forms/dls_independent_readings and must include the following:

- The Independent Study Advisor's name and confirmation of agreement to supervise
- A description of the specific topics or disciplines, the type of research to be conducted, the proposed final product, the assessment plan, and a timeline of meetings and deliverables

The proposal will be reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director to ensure it meets all independent study requirements. The student will be notified by email once approved.

Final papers are due to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office on the last day of the semester in which the course is taken.

Diploma Project

The Diploma Project is the culminating academic experience of the DLS program, allowing students to integrate and apply their advanced interdisciplinary learning through a substantial, original research project. Working closely with a three-member faculty advisory committee, students design, execute, and defend an interdisciplinary thesis that demonstrates their ability to think critically, synthesize complex ideas, and contribute meaningfully to scholarly or professional conversations.

Students complete the Diploma Project over two semesters (INDS 798 and INDS 799) as independent study, guided by regular consultation with their advisors. The project involves developing a focused research question, reviewing relevant literature, selecting appropriate interdisciplinary methods, and producing a well-organized, high-quality written document that meets Rice University's graduate thesis standards.

Key requirements include:

- Completion of at least three graduate-level courses in each of the two focus disciplines prior to enrolling in the Diploma Project
- Successful completion of all content coursework (24 credit hours) with a minimum 3.0 GPA

- Submission of a Diploma Project proposal by the posted deadlines, with advisor approvals
- Regular collaboration with the faculty committee to develop and refine the project
- Demonstration of critical thinking, originality, and interdisciplinary integration
- An oral defense of the completed project to faculty, peers, and invited guests

Students are expected to meet all academic deadlines, maintain high standards of academic integrity, and engage actively with their faculty advisors and the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director throughout the project.

Students have up to seven years to complete the DLS program, with the Diploma Project normally defended before the end of the sixth year of enrollment.

For complete requirements, proposal instructions, and formatting guidelines, students must refer to the DLS Project Packet.

Diploma Project Archive

Diploma Project documents, including final papers, presentation PowerPoints, and defense videos, are archived in RiceBox and made available to current students and alumni. Students may access the archive folder at https://rice.box.com/v/DLSprojects.

Additionally, the Diploma Project paper will be uploaded to the Rice University Digital Scholarship Archive on the Fondren Library website.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES IN DUAL CREDIT TEACHER CREDENTIALING

The Interdisciplinary Studies Program offers two Graduate Certificates in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing, designed specifically for practicing secondary teachers in English or History who want to meet credential requirements for teaching dual credit or community college courses.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Dual credit courses allow Texas high school students to earn college credit — and even complete an associate degree — before setting foot on a college campus. These courses challenge students with rigorous, college-level curricula and give them a valuable jumpstart on their higher education goals. Texas public colleges and universities are required to accept dual credit, increasing college affordability and access across the state.

To be eligible to teach dual credit courses, Texas teachers must have a master's degree plus at least 18 hours of graduate coursework in the subject they teach. Teachers who meet these requirements are in high demand and can help expand college opportunities for their students while advancing their own professional growth.

Qualified teachers with these credentials can increase their earning potential, enhance their teaching skills, and help their school districts meet critical staffing needs. These graduate certificate options are designed for certified secondary teachers of English or History who want to make a meaningful difference in their students' futures.

These graduate certificates are designed for certified secondary teachers of English or History who want to make a meaningful difference in their students' futures.

Certificate Options

1. Graduate Certificate for Teachers Who Already Hold a Master's Degree
   - For teachers who have a master's degree in any field but lack the required 18 graduate hours in English or History
   - This standalone certificate helps teachers efficiently earn the graduate-level coursework they need to meet dual credit credentialing requirements in their content area

2. Graduate Certificate Combined with a Master's Degree
   - For teachers who need both a master's degree and dual credit credentials
   - Allows students to earn the Graduate Certificate while completing the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) degree
   - The MIS plan of study supports specialized coursework in English or History to fulfill credentialing requirements

ADMISSION

Admission to the Graduate Certificate in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing (DCTC) program is open to currently admitted MIS students as well as qualified Graduate Certificate applicants who already hold a master's degree from an accredited college or university. Applicants must meet the same admission standards as those for the MIS program. A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is expected, although the admissions committee also considers postgraduate experience and recent professional accomplishments.

Applicants must hold an active State of Texas Standard Secondary Teaching Certificate in English or

History/Social Studies. This requires:

- A bachelor's degree (typically in the subject area to be taught)
- Successful completion of a state-approved educator preparation program (either as part of a bachelor's degree or as a post-baccalaureate student)
- Passing state-required certification exams in the content area (English or History/Social Studies) and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities
- Sufficient college-level coursework and content preparation to meet Texas Education Agency (TEA) and district requirements for teaching dual credit

Admission Requirements and Process

- Completed Application for Admission
- $85 application fee
- Active State of Texas Standard Secondary Teaching Certificate in English or History/Social Studies
- Current resume
- Personal statement outlining academic and/or professional objectives in applying to the Graduate Certificate in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing and various influences that have been important in the applicant's intellectual development.
- Writing sample that demonstrates critical thinking, coherent arguments, and proper citation of sources. Applicants will choose from two provided essay prompts (one in literature and one in the social sciences) and submit a five-page essay.
- Official transcripts from all previous colleges or universities attended
- Two letters of recommendation, each accompanied by a complete Letter of Recommendation form
- Application interview

Currently admitted MIS students may add the Graduate Certificate to their degree program by notifying the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office.

The DCTC Graduate Certificate is offered both as a standalone certificate and as an option within the MIS degree. In some cases, students who complete the standalone certificate may wish to continue into the MIS program. If they apply and are admitted within three years of completing the certificate, they may petition to apply their eligible certificate coursework toward the MIS degree. This creates a "stackable" pathway for teachers who want to pursue both credentials.

Program Structure

Students pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing will complete six graduate-level courses (18 credit hours) drawn from designated INDS offerings. To meet SACS credentialing requirements established by community colleges, these courses must be at the 500-level or above. Through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Houston Community College System, these courses fulfill the SACS requirements for dual credit teachers, with an emphasis on deepening content knowledge in English or History to support high-quality K–12 instruction.

Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing – English Plan of Study

The Graduate Certificate in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing – English supports qualified secondary teachers in meeting the SACS credentialing requirements for teaching dual credit courses in English. For general university requirements, please see Graduate Certificates. For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students.

Upon completion of the certificate, students will be able to demonstrate mastery of scholarship in English, as defined by SACS accreditation standards for dual credit teachers. Graduate Certificate students will build on the content mastery gained through their Texas Teacher credential and apply it within their INDS coursework to achieve this outcome.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this certificate. In certain cases, substitutions may be permitted with approval of the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director.

COURSE	TITLE
Select 6 courses (18 hours) from the following:	
INDS 505	Shakespeare and Film
INDS 517	Modern Drama in Film and Literature
INDS 543	The City in Literature
INDS 554	My Favorite Novels and Films
INDS 556	Heaven and Hell: From Dante to Milton and Beyond
INDS 559	Environmental Literature
INDS 560	Women in Southern Literature
INDS 573	Women Writers and Heroines: From Myth to Reality
INDS 574	Great Literature, Great Music
INDS 577	Latina/o/e Stories from the Borderlands
INDS 617	Creative Nonfiction
INDS 620	Masterpieces of the Poetic Tradition
INDS 624	Advanced Creative Nonfiction
INDS 631	Introduction to Reading and Writing Fiction
INDS 637	The Literature of the Sixties
	TOTAL HOURS: 18

- Graduate Certificate students must maintain a 3.0 (B) grade point average (GPA) and all courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better to count toward the certificate.
- Graduate Certificate students must maintain continuous enrollment in the program and are expected to successfully complete at least two courses an academic year and be enrolled in at least two semesters of the academic year unless granted an official leave of absence.

Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing – History Plan of Study

The Graduate Certificate in Dual Credit Teacher Credentialing – History supports qualified secondary teachers in meeting the SACS credentialing requirements for teaching dual credit courses in History. For general university requirements, please see Graduate Certificates. For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students.

Upon completion of the certificate, students will be able to demonstrate mastery of scholarship in History, as defined by SACS accreditation standards for dual credit teachers. Graduate Certificate students will build on the content mastery gained through their Texas Teacher credential and apply it within their INDS coursework to achieve this outcome.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this certificate. In certain cases, substitutions may be permitted with approval of the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director.

COURSE	TITLE
Select 6 courses (18 hours) from the following:	
INDS 536	Traditional Chinese Culture and Its Modern Legacy
INDS 537	Profiles from the Past: Famous Figures in Western History
INDS 539	Immigration and the State: Europe and the US in Comparative Perspective
INDS 547	Profiles from the Past II: Famous Figures in Western History
INDS 551	Profiles from the Past III: Famous Figures in Western History
INDS 555	Political Philosophy of the American Revolution
INDS 564	The Politics of World War Two in Europe
INDS 576	Jefferson and His World
INDS 640	America Through Foreign Eyes
	TOTAL HOURS: 18

- Graduate Certificate students must maintain a 3.0 (B) grade point average (GPA) and all courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better to count toward the certificate.
- Graduate Certificate students must maintain continuous enrollment in the program and are expected to successfully complete at least two courses an academic year and be enrolled in at least two semesters of the academic year unless granted an official leave of absence.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES ACADEMIC POLICIES

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDY

Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS), Diploma in Liberal Studies (DLS), and Graduate Certificate students must meet the following minimums, deadlines, and course or grade requirements to graduate in good standing from the university. These policies are based on the policies for all Rice graduate students. In case of questions or the need for further details, the student is referred to the policies for graduate students in the General Announcements.

Time to degree

Typically, completing the MIS or DLS degree will take approximately four years if one class is completed every semester. Part-time students are allowed to take up to seven years to complete the degree. Full-time students have five years to complete their degree. Completing the Dual Credit Graduate Certificate will take approximately two years if one class is completed every semester.

Credit for previous degrees or coursework

Because the MIS and DLS are cohesive, interdisciplinary degrees, credits earned in other degree programs at Rice or elsewhere typically will not be counted toward the MIS or DLS degree. Contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office for any exceptions to be made on a case-by-case basis.

Deadlines

Students must observe all university deadlines listed in the Rice Academic Calendar published each semester and the Interdisciplinary Studies Student Handbook published each academic year.

Grades

Instructors are required to report a grade for all students whose names appear on the class list. Faculty grade their students using the following conventional symbols: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F. For any course to count toward the degree requirement, they must be taken for a grade. There is no Pass/Fail or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option with the exception of the INDS 699 Capstone Seminar course. According to policies listed in the Rice General Announcements:

INC ("Incomplete") – Instructors report this designation to the Office of the Registrar when a student fails to complete a course because of verified illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control that occur during the semester. Students must provide independent corroboration of their illness or circumstances, and they are expected to coordinate with the instructor prior to final grades being submitted.

For an INC received in the fall semester, students must complete the work by the end of the first week of the spring semester or an earlier date as defined by the instructor, and instructors must submit a revised grade by the end of the second week. For an INC received in the spring or summer semester, students must complete the work before the start of the fall semester or an earlier date as defined by the instructor, and instructors must submit a revised grade by the end of the first week. If a grade is not submitted by the appropriate deadline, the INC will be automatically converted to a failing grade.

Students with an INC must be certain that tests, papers, and other materials affecting their grade or essential to completing a course requirement are delivered by hand to the appropriate professor or office according to the timeline previously stated, for the instructor to grade the documents and submit the final grade to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline. Loss or lateness because of mail service is not an acceptable excuse for failing to meet academic deadlines.

A student who receives two "incompletes" in a semester may not enroll in the next semester. Students also should be aware that they may be placed on probation or suspension when the "incomplete" is changed to a grade, either by an instructor or by default.

To graduate, MIS and DLS students must achieve at least a B (3.0) grade point average in courses counted toward the degree. Dual Credit Graduate Certificate students must achieve at least a B (3.0) grade point average in courses counted toward the certificate. All courses, with the exception of the capstone course for MIS students and INDS 750 for DLS students, must be completed with a grade of B- or better. Courses for which the grade is below B- will not be counted toward the degree but will be included in the cumulative GPA calculation. If a student chooses to repeat the same course, the record of the first attempt (and grade) remains on the student transcript, and both grades are included in the cumulative GPA; however, the student receives credit for only that course where the grade is a B- or better. MIS students are required to make a B grade or better in the capstone course in order to graduate. DLS students are required to make a B or better on the Diploma Project in order to graduate.

To compute grade point averages, the credits attempted in semester hours for each course and the points for the grade earned (from A+ = 4.33 to F = 0.00) are multiplied, then the products (one for each course) are added together and the sum is divided by the total credits attempted.

Grade Change Petitions

According to the Rice University General Announcements Faculty Grading Guidelines, instructors may not change a semester grade after the grade has been submitted to the Office of the Registrar, except when there is a clerical error in calculating the grade. This is a long-standing university rule of which the faculty are reminded by the Office of the Registrar at the end of each semester. It is designed, in part, to protect the faculty from student pressure for grade changes. All other grade changes, including retroactive change to withdrawal, incomplete, or other, must be approved by the Committee on Examinations and Standing on the basis of a written petition from the student and on information from the instructor.

In the event that a student believes an incorrect grade has been recorded in an INDS course, the student should first consult with the instructor of record to request clarification and review the grade awarded. If, after this consultation, the student still believes an error has occurred, they must submit a written petition to the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director. The petition should clearly explain the reason for the request and include relevant documentation. Petitions will only be considered in cases of clerical or administrative errors as noted above, and not because the student disagrees with or is dissatisfied with the grade.

The Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director will review the petition, consult with the instructor as needed, and make a recommendation. If the petition is approved, the request will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs for approval. If the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director does not approve the petition, the student may submit a single appeal to the Dean of the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies. If the Dean of the Glasscock School approves the appeal, the request will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for approval and then to the Committee on Examinations and Standing.

Note: Grade changes that result from bookkeeping or other genuine errors are exempt from this process and will be corrected administratively.

Continuous Enrollment

Students are expected to complete two to three courses a year unless granted an official leave of absence. The normal expectation is that students will successfully complete at least two courses an

academic year and be enrolled in at least two semesters of the academic year. Students who wish to waive the policy of taking courses in two or more consecutive semesters must submit a Leave of Absence request with the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office. Failure to request leave will result in de facto withdrawal, and students must reapply to continue studying.

Rice has updated its leave and withdrawal policies; therefore, students should become familiar with the Interruptions of Study: Releases, Leaves, and Withdrawals section of the General Announcements for specific details.

Nonenrollment Restrictions

Students may not do degree work at Rice or work involving Rice faculty or facilities during any period of nonenrollment—a leave, separation, or withdrawal.

All nonenrolled students must return their student ID to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. All university keys must be returned to the appropriate offices. Participation in student activities on and off campus and use of Rice facilities, including, but not limited to, the student center, the playing fields, the recreation center, and the computer labs, are limited to enrolled students. In addition, nonenrolled students will lose the benefit of enrolling in student health insurance.

REGISTRATION

Overview

New students are required to attend an orientation session before their first term begins. Orientation covers the Rice Honor Code, course counseling, Interdisciplinary Studies academic policies, and the registration process.

Continuing students will receive email reminders before each semester with instructions on how to register for courses. In special circumstances, students may submit a request via email for registration or registration changes. Please contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office for guidance. Please note that registrations, changes of registration, or course withdrawals will not be accepted by telephone.

A $75 late fee will be charged for registrations completed after the published registration deadline.

Drop/Add

During the first week of classes, students may change their registration without a penalty by adding or dropping courses, provided they have the approval of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office. Adding a course after the first week requires approval from the Program Office, and enrollment is subject to space availability.

No course additions will be permitted after the third week of classes without permission from the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Students should refer to the Rice University Academic Calendar for official drop deadlines and refund schedules.

Auditing Classes

Admitted MIS and DLS students, as well as alumni in good standing with the university, may be allowed to audit Interdisciplinary Studies courses under the following conditions:

- Space is available in the class
- Instructor has granted approval
- Student pays a $1,000 fee per audited course, plus the standard Activity Fee
- Student understands that audited courses **cannot later be taken for credit**

TUITION AND FEES

As part of tuition and fees, students will be issued a campus ID from the campus police, a Rice e-mail account, and Fondren Library privileges.

2026-2027 Tuition and Fees

Master of Interdisciplinary Studies Tuition	$3,795/course
Diploma in Liberal Studies Tuition	$4,200/course
Graduate Certificate Tuition	$3,795/course
MIS Audit Fee	$1,000/course plus Activity fee
DLS Audit Fee	$1,000/course plus Activity fee
Activity Fee	$90/semester
GSA Fee	$22.50/semester ($45/annually)
Health & Wellness Support Fee (FT students only)	$360/semester ($720 annually)
Parking Rates	$109-354/year, lot dependent

Tuition Payment

Tuition is due according to dates published by the university Bursar's Office. Payment plans are available.

Forms of Payment

Tuition is payable only by check, MasterCard, or e-check. There is a $30 returned check fee.

Refund of Tuition and Fees

All tuition refunds are subject to the refund schedule according to the Rice University Academic Calendar.

Billing

After the student's entering semester, tuition statements will be emailed via Esther before each semester and should be paid no later than the date indicated by the Bursar's Office. If tuition is not paid by the due date, a late payment charge of $140 will be added to the tuition bill. Students with a past-due balance are blocked from future registration.

Tuition Reimbursement From Employers

If your employer will pay part or all of your tuition, inform the employer of the date on which your bill is due. Some employers will reimburse students only after successful completion of a course. In this case, students must pay tuition and fees and be reimbursed by the employer later. INDS courses are not eligible for the Rice Staff tuition waiver; however, Rice staff may be eligible for the Tuition Reimbursement program.

Discount for Rice Staff

Benefits-eligible Rice staff who demonstrate a financial need may be eligible to receive up to a 50% tuition discount. An application is required. Contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office for information and to apply for this discount.

Discount for K12 Educators
K12 educators who demonstrate a financial need and are currently employed in a Texas public school may be eligible to receive up to a 50% tuition discount. An application is required. Contact the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office for information and to apply for this discount.

Discount for Rice Alumni
Admitted students who are Rice alumni will receive an automatic 10% tuition discount.

ACADEMIC AND JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE

Students should refer to the General Announcements section on Academic and Judicial Discipline for specific university requirements.

Academic Probation and Dismissal
Graduate students are placed on academic probationary status by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies if their overall grade point average falls below 2.67, their semester grade point average falls below 2.33, or they receive an unsatisfactory grade in a research credit course.

The period of probation extends to the end of the next semester in which the student is enrolled. If that probationary semester results in an overall grade point average below 2.67 or a semester grade point average below 2.33, the student may be dismissed without further warning.

Graduate students with a cumulative or overall grade point average below 2.00 may be dismissed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies without a probationary period.

Additionally, students with two unsatisfactory grades in research during their graduate student tenure at Rice may also be dismissed by the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies without further warning.

As a courtesy, students will be notified of their probationary status once final grades have been received and posted to their records.

S/U grades cannot be used to end probationary status for a low overall grade point average. Departments or programs may identify and define in their General Announcements Requirements tab stricter standards than the minimum grade point average for coursework that satisfies their academic program requirements. A program can dismiss a student without a probationary semester by vote of the faculty in the department or degree program. Please also see Dismissal and Disciplinary Probation, Suspension and Expulsion.

Other Disciplinary Sanctions
Additionally, the assistant dean of Student Judicial Programs may place students on probation or suspension for violating the Honor Code or Code of Student Conduct or for other disciplinary reasons. Students on disciplinary suspension (including for an Honor System violation) may not receive their degree even if they have met all academic requirements for graduation. They must leave the university within 48 hours of being informed of the dean's decision. Any tuition refund will be prorated from the official date of suspension, which is determined by the registrar. Students seeking admission after leaving the university because of a sanction imposed by the assistant dean should submit a petition in writing for review by the assistant dean of Student Judicial Programs.

Dispute Resolution
Graduate students may petition for exceptions to academic requirements, regulations, and judgments. A course requirement is an example of an academic requirement. Allowed time to degree is an example of

an academic regulation. Course grades and dismissals from programs are examples of academic judgments. If a petition is denied, one level of appeal is allowed.

Additionally, problems or conflicts may arise during a student's graduate education. Students should take responsibility for informing the appropriate faculty of any such problem. All parties involved should work together amicably with the goal of resolving the problem informally if at all possible. When attempts to resolve a problem informally do not meet with success, the following grievance procedure should be adopted:

The student should submit the grievance in writing to the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director, who will then work to resolve the issue. If the student remains unsatisfied, the problem should be presented to the Dean of the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies for resolution. Both the student and the Interdisciplinary Studies Executive Director should submit a written record of their views to each party named above. If the student remains unsatisfied, the problem will be referred to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and follow the requirements and processes set forth in the Dispute Resolution section of the General Announcements.

RICE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Academic calendars are approved by the Faculty Senate and may be found on the Office of the Registrar's website at https://registrar.rice.edu/calendars.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS

As a student in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program, you are part of a diverse and intellectually engaged community that values integrity, curiosity, and respect. To help create a thriving academic environment, all students are expected to:

- Uphold the Rice Honor Code in all academic and professional activities
- Actively participate in courses, workshops, and advising opportunities
- Communicate proactively with instructors, advisors, and program staff
- Meet deadlines and maintain steady academic progress
- Seek feedback and approach challenges with openness and curiosity
- Support an inclusive, respectful learning environment where diverse perspectives are valued

In return, you can expect the Interdisciplinary Studies Program to:

- Provide engaging, rigorous, and relevant coursework
- Offer faculty mentorship and personalized advising
- Maintain clear and transparent academic policies
- Support your academic and personal growth with responsive staff and resources
- Foster a welcoming community that encourages exploration, innovation, and lifelong learning

The Interdisciplinary Studies Program Office is always here to help you navigate your studies, connect with faculty, and make the most of your experience. Please reach out whenever you have questions or need support.

We wish you every success in your studies and look forward to supporting your academic journey!