

# MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (M.A.)

## Master of Arts Program

Program Code: MA-GR

Major Code: MUL

Academic Affairs Office

Cleveland Hall 519

(716) 878-5902

The Multidisciplinary Studies Program Individualized Track is designed for individuals with unique professional and educational objectives not readily met by traditional master's degree programs. Through advisement and within certain guidelines students design their own degree program by selecting graduate courses from select academic departments at the college or from other accredited institutions.

Upon satisfactory completion of an approved course of study, a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree is awarded.

## Individualized Track

Dr. Kimberly J. Jackson, *Director*

Through advisement and within certain guidelines, the Individualized track allows students to design their own programs by selecting graduate courses from any department at the college or from other accredited institutions.

## Guidelines for Designing a Multidisciplinary Studies Curriculum

A variety of curriculum options, depending upon student interest may be used to design a curriculum. The first step is for students to select graduate course work from a variety of academic areas at Buffalo State which may include, but not limited to: Adult Education, Applied Economics, Biology, Business Management, Computer Information Systems, Creativity and Change Leadership, Criminal Justice, Data Science and Analytics, Design, Education, English, Fine Arts, Great Lakes Environmental Science, Health, Nutrition and Dietetics, Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration, History, Mathematics, Public Administration in Public and Nonprofit Management, Public Relations, and Social and Psychological Foundations. Only graduate course work may be included in the Multidisciplinary Studies master's program.

When designing a curriculum, it is important to select a specific content area for which your main course work and cumulating experience (Master's Thesis) will reside. Once content courses have been determined, the student must seek out a graduate faculty member (with graduate faculty status designation) from a department directory (<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/faculty-roster/>) to work

with. A copy of the Statement of Intent and the Principal Adviser Consent Form (<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/supplemental-application-materials/>) must be provided to the identified faculty member who has agreed to work with the student. Students who need assistance identifying a principal adviser should contact the director in the Academic Affairs Office.

In addition to content course work, elective courses must also be included the curriculum. Elective courses may vary and should complement the student's educational and professional objectives. Elective course options can be found in the course description section (<http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/graduate/courses/>) of the Graduate Catalog.

The flexibility of the Multidisciplinary Studies program allows for up to 15 credit hours of transfer work based upon the approval of the principal adviser and advisory committee (if required). See Transfer Credit Policy (<http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/graduate/academic-requirements/transfer-credit/>) for guidelines.

See Program Requirements (<http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/graduate/graduate-programs/multidisciplinary-studies-ma/#programrequirementstext>) for additional information and guidelines for designing a Multidisciplinary Studies Curriculum.

## Advisement

After completing the statement of intent and meeting with the program coordinator, students identify a principal adviser.

The principal adviser reviews the statement of intent and eventually approves a plan of study and agrees to serve as thesis adviser. A detailed plan of study, including specific courses, may be required.

When a principal adviser has been secured the Principal Adviser Consent Form must be completed.

The principal adviser also enumerates any additional requirements the student must complete before being permitted to advance to candidacy, including but not limited to requiring that the student must identify a second adviser to support the course of study and read the eventual thesis.

The principal adviser is charged with working closely with the student throughout the plan of the study and with service as a point of contact with the Graduate Studies Office to support and advise the student. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and maintain contact and ongoing communication with the principal adviser.

## Admission Requirements

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 (4.0 scale).
2. A two- to three-page statement of intent (essay) that includes the following:
  - a. educational and professional objectives;
  - b. an explanation of the reasons for interest in a nontraditional study format; and
  - c. a detailed outline of the proposed plan of study, including specific courses.
3. Identification and consent of a principal adviser (<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/supplemental-application-materials/>). Information regarding advisement can be found in the Overview section (<http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/graduate/graduate-programs/multidisciplinary-studies-ma/#text>). (Those students who need assistance identifying a principal adviser should contact the director in the Academic Affairs Office).
4. After the completed application is received the student will be contacted to set up an appointment for an interview with the director.

In addition, all applicants must review the Admission to a Graduate Program (<http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/graduate/admission-graduate-program/>) section in this catalog

## Program Requirements

1. Completion of a minimum of 30 credit hours, comprising at least 15 hours of 600- and 700-level courses, including the master's thesis.
2. A maximum of 18 credit hours may be taken in a discipline that offers a master's degree when the student does a master's thesis (6 credits).
3. A maximum of 18 credit hours may be taken in a discipline that does not offer a master's degree.
4. A maximum of 15 credit hours may be taken at another accredited institution. This coursework must conform to the limitations stated in 2 and 3 (above), meet the requirements of the Transfer Credit policy (<http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/graduate/academic-requirements/transfer-credit/>), and have the prior approval of the principal adviser.
5. Only grades of B or better will be accepted as transfer credit. An official transcript showing transfer credit must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office.
6. Coursework (including transfer credit) must be completed within the six-year period immediately preceding the date of completion of the program.
7. A maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study may be included in the program.
8. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (4.0 scale).
9. Master of Arts candidates must complete a thesis approved by the principal adviser and a second reader. Individual principal advisers may impose further requirements on candidates based on practices and policies of their home department (third reader or oral defense, for example). These must be specified in writing at the outset of the degree program on the completed Principal Adviser Consent Form.

10. A Degree Candidacy Application Form (<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/candidacy-forms/>), approved by the student's principal, secondary, and tertiary (if required) must be submitted to the director before the completion of 12 credit hours at Buffalo State.
11. Students completing degree requirements each spring semester are requested to submit designated assignments/artifacts in Taskstream by the close of the semester for the Multidisciplinary Studies Program Assessment. See Assessment Process for additional information and guidelines.

Students will:

1. Demonstrate effective and appropriate communication skills through coherent and well-organized written presentations.
2. Demonstrate effective and appropriate communication skills through coherent and well-organized oral and visual presentations.
3. Demonstrate the ability to creatively use information, concepts, analytical approaches, and critical thinking skills in one or more disciplines. Competency in making connections that will synthesize and transfer learning to new and complex situations.
4. Ethically identify, access, critically evaluate, and apply information throughout collections of work.
5. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of research design, methodology, and measurement strategies that addresses a problem in the field.
6. Demonstrate analytical skills through self-reflection to assess individual performances or collections of work. Show evidence of personal, professional, and civic engagement/development.