

**Notice of Intent of a New Degree:
Bachelor of General Studies**

(Notice conforms to draft UW regulation 8-2 for academic program approval)

Name of proposed academic program and mode of delivery: The University of Wyoming's **Bachelor of General Studies (BGS)** is a multidisciplinary degree that bridges academic disciplines and colleges to facilitate degree completion. This degree offers students the opportunity to select two focus areas of study (a primary and a secondary) from a total of 16 focus areas offered across the University. Some focus areas will be available through distance education while others will be available solely on-campus. Each student will be assigned an advisor in the college that fields their primary focus area. This degree is designed for non-traditional students, returning students, students who arrive at UW with significant college credit, and students with complex curricular interests.

Anticipated curriculum and learning outcomes: The BGS is comprised of two curricular focus areas and one 3 credit capstone, which fulfills the University Studies Program (USP) C3 requirement. Each focus area is defined by subject area, fielded by a specific college, and comprised of at least 18 credit hours. Students can choose from a menu of 16 focus areas across the University. Of the 39 credits required for the major, 21 credits must be upper division with a minimum of 6 upper division credits in each focus area. As a University-wide degree, all USP and University-wide requirements must be met. The degree allows students to choose whether they receive a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science.

No course can count toward more than one area of focus. Students must earn a C or better for all credits counting toward the major. One USP "Human Culture" (H) course and one "Physical & Natural World" (PN) course may also count toward the major. No college core applies to the degree. To declare this major, students must have earned 48 credit hours and received intensive advising from the college fielding their primary focus area.

Focus Areas: Each of the focus areas identifies a knowledge domain that includes courses from a range of disciplines within a particular college. Focus areas include *all courses* from each of the disciplinary prefixes/subject areas or programs specified as belonging to the focus area (no course exceptions allowed and no course lists will be maintained). Students should choose courses from within the focus area *thematically* to gain a breadth and depth of knowledge apt to the curricular or professional interest that ties together the two focus areas of the student's major. Students should work with their advisor to ensure that their coursework includes the skills and methods necessary for expertise in the substantive area of interest. Proposed focus areas are listed in the addendum by college.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students completing the Bachelor of General Studies will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge in focus areas
2. Demonstrate the capacity to integrate knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines
3. Demonstrate an ability to think creatively about complex problems in order to construct, evaluate, and implement innovative possible solutions
4. Demonstrate an ability to communicate to academic or professional audiences in written, oral, and digital form as appropriate to specific disciplines and interdisciplinary fields
5. Demonstrate higher-order thinking skills such as interpretation, analysis, evaluation, synthesis, creative generation, and innovation

Academic program's relation to other offerings: The BGS is designed, in part, to replace three distributed majors currently offered by the College of Arts and Sciences. While the A&S distributed majors have met student needs in the past, several problems now exist. Course offerings are largely limited to A&S, the degrees require complex advising and course scheduling which often delay graduation, and they do not meet the learning outcome assessment standards of the Higher Learning Commission. With approval of the BGS, A&S will move to discontinue these degrees and teach out the students currently enrolled in them.

Anticipated enrollment: Specific enrollment numbers are difficult to anticipate. For each college, this degree will meet the needs of a small number of students who are unable to finish their intended major. We also expect that students currently in the A&S distributed majors will gravitate toward the BGS. Each year, UW loses a significant number of seniors eligible to re-enroll due to a variety of factors. We expect this degree will fulfill their needs as well as those of a growing number of students who transfer to UW with high student credit hours. This degree will likely also meet the needs of our site-bound students taking courses online and those at the University of Wyoming, Casper. Taken together, we expect roughly 30-50 majors at the outset, with growing demand as transfer recruitment grows, followed by a plateau in demand as increasing numbers of the resident population's needs are met. Next steps include a market snapshot with EAB or Gray Associates to better identify demand.

Resources: No additional resources are needed for focus area instruction or advising. To begin, each year, UW will offer one, online, capstone course for the degree which will be taught by a current faculty member using the same model as our First Year Seminars. Another section of the capstone could easily be offered if demand warranted it.

Timeline for implementation: Pending approval by the Board of Trustees, we anticipate opening the degree to student enrollment in AY 18-19.

Information on other required approvals such as accreditation bodies and the Higher Learning Commission: The BGS will allow UW to provide a University-wide degree completion program that conforms to the standards for student learning outcome assessment mandated by the Higher Learning Commission. No separate accreditation is sought.

Evidence of how the new program aligns with the University's mission, strategic plan, and existing academic degree program array:

Alignment with UW's mission: The proposed BGS aligns with UW's stated mission in "Breaking Through: 2017-2022" as it provides students increased opportunities to graduate, with a focus on academic opportunities from many different units across UW's academic frontiers. The unique ability to combine foci from across campus helps to ensure that students have opportunities to engage in scholarship and creative activity in a broad range of fields, with variation that can emerge from such an interdisciplinary degree. Students in the BGS will have the opportunity to pursue their own goals with a flexible plan that is purposefully designed to meet the needs of the burgeoning adult student population. This degree program will also serve to assist in increasing the number of bachelor's degree holders in the state.

Alignment with the strategic plan: The BGS is most closely aligned with Goals 2 and 3 in the University's

2017-2022 strategic plan. Goal 2 is to “Inspire students to pursue a productive, engaged and fulfilling life and prepare them to succeed in a sustainable global economy.” With a focus on providing a bachelor’s degree, particularly for students who may have accrued significant numbers of credit in multiple areas, but have not met specific degree course requirements, this program is designed to ensure that more students complete bachelor’s degrees, which will allow these graduates to obtain employment that requires at least a bachelor’s degree more readily and thus to become a more productive part of the global economy. Goal 3 is to “Improve and enhance the health and well-being of our communities and environments through outreach programs and in collaboration with our constituents and partners.” One aspect of the potential audience for this degree program is students who have left UW without a degree but have amassed significant amounts of course credit. With this audience in mind, this degree is sure to improve the health and well-being of our communities.

Alignment with existing academic degree program array: Outside of the distributed majors offered by A&S and intended for sunseting, there are few UW degrees designed for the specific needs of the student populations identified. The Bachelor of Applied Science-Organizational Leadership offered by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources offers students a flexible degree program that includes choice within a limited set of required courses, but is only offered online. Similarly, the College of Business offers an online only Bachelor of Business Administration particularly suited for site-bound students with an interest in business. There are a number of interdisciplinary degree programs at UW including the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Systems Science and the Bachelor of Science in Environment and Natural Resources (a secondary major only), American Studies, and International Studies. While interdisciplinary, each of these degrees is tailored to students with particular and defined substantive interests. The proposed BGS allows much more flexibility and is supported by units across the University.

Rationale for new program need, including market and student demand. The rationale should include evidence that the program will not produce unnecessary duplication of existing programs. The BGS provides UW students an opportunity to integrate a diverse skill set for a marketable degree. Given Governor Mead’s Executive Order in January 2018 setting the state’s goal for educational credential attainment at 67% by 2025, we must be as proactive as possible in providing flexible, high-quality bachelor’s degrees in Laramie, Casper, and through distance education. This degree option promotes degree completion for adult and transfer students and allows UW to work towards re-enrolling the 80,000 adults in Wyoming with some college and no degree. It provides a viable option to attract students with an associate’s degree in General Studies from our Wyoming community college partners who might not otherwise continue their education. It allows those students who transfer with excess hours to complete a bachelor’s degree prior to exhausting their federal student financial aid availability. There is also a clear pathway to serve our men and women in uniform at FE Warren with this degree through the Community College of the Air Force’s partnership program, the AU-ABC. Finally, the Bachelor of General Studies provides an updated alternative to the current distributed majors in A&S. There is no similar University-wide degree offered at UW.

Addendum

Focus Areas Listed by College

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Biomedical Sciences: Microbiology (MICR), Molecular Biology (MOLB), Pathobiology (PATB), Family and Consumer Science (FCSC), Animal Science (ANSC), Food Science (FDSC)

Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences: Animal Science (ANSC), Ecosystem Science and Management (ESM), Renewable Resources (RNEW), Entomology (ENTO), Soil Science (SOIL), Agroecology (AECL), Plant Sciences (PLNT), Agricultural Economics (AGEC)

Human Sciences and Public Policy: Family and Consumer Sciences (FCSC), Agriculture (AGRI), Agricultural Economics (AGEC), Food Science (FDSC)

College of Arts and Sciences:

Humanities: Art History (ART), English (ENGL), Modern and Classical Languages (LANG), Philosophy (PHIL), Religious Studies (RELI), American Studies (AMST), History (HIST), Anthropology (ANTH), African American Diaspora Studies (AADS), American Indian Studies (AIST), Latina/o Studies (LTST), Gender and Women's Studies (WMST), International Studies (INST), Theatre and Dance (THEA)

Fine Arts: Theatre and Dance (THEA), Music (MUSC), Art and Art History (ART), African American Diaspora Studies (AADS), American Indian Studies (AIST), Latina/o Studies (LTST), Gender and Women's Studies (WMST), Creative Writing (CW), English (ENGL)

Social Sciences: Communications and Journalism (COJO), History (HIST), Anthropology (ANTH), Criminal Justice (CJ), Geography (GEOG), Sociology (SOC), Political Science (POLS), International Studies (INST), American Studies (AMST), Psychology (PSYCH), Statistics (STAT), African American Diaspora Studies (AADS), American Indian Studies (AIST), Latina/o Studies (LTST), Gender and Women's Studies (WMST)

Math & Sciences: Math (MATH), Statistics (STAT), Botany (BOT), LIFE Program (LIFE), Psychology (PSYCH), Zoo/Physiology (ZOO), Chemistry (CHEM), Geology and Geophysics (GEOL), Physics and Astronomy (PHYS), Anthropology (ANTH), Geography (GEOG)

College of Business

***Management, Marketing, and Decision Science:** Management (MGT), Marketing (MKT), Decision Science (DSCI)

***Accounting and Finance:** Accounting (ACCT), Finance (FIN)

Economics: Economics (ECON)

*Due to accreditation requirements, a student may not choose both the “Management, Marketing, and Decision Science” *and* the “Accounting and Finance” focus areas to comprise their Bachelor of General Studies major.

College of Education:

+**Elementary Education:** Early Childhood (EDEC), Elementary Education (ELED), Curriculum and Instruction (EDCI)

+**Education and Society:** Educational Studies (EDST), Exceptional Children (EDEX), Instructional Technology (ITEC), Curriculum and Instruction (EDCI)

+The Bachelor of General Studies does not satisfy the requirements for teacher licensure through the Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board.

College of Engineering:

◇**Engineering Studies:** Engineering Science (ES), Architectural Engineering (ARE), Civil Engineering (CE), Chemical Engineering (CHE), Electrical Engineering (EE), Energy Systems Engineering (ESE), Mechanical Engineering (ME), Petroleum Engineering (PETE)

◇**Applied Science Studies:** Atmospheric Science (ATSC), Computer Science (COSC)

◇The Bachelor of General Studies does not satisfy the requirements for an ABET/EAC accredited engineering degree or an ABET/CAC accredited computer science degree.

College of Health Sciences:

Community and Public Health: Health Education (HLED), Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND)

Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources

Environment and Natural Resources: Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Environmental Systems Science (ESS)

Bachelor of General Studies Check Sheet

2015 University Studies

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|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Freshman Year Seminar | | |
| Com1 | | |
| Com2 | | or Cojo 1010 and WB _____ |
| Com3 (Capstone Course) | | |
| Quantitative Reasoning | | |
| Physical and Natural World | | |
| Physical and Natural World | | |
| Human Culture | | |
| Human Culture | | |
| US and Wyo Government | | |

General Studies Courses

39 hours

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| <p>Focus Area 1: _____ 18 hours</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____ (upper division)</p> <p>6. _____ (upper division)</p> | <p>Focus Area 2: _____ 18 hours</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____ (upper division)</p> <p>6. _____ (upper division)</p> |
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MAJOR UPPER DIVISION

Upper Division (21 in major/42 total)

OUTSIDE MAJOR UPPER DIVISION

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Capstone Course

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