



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Note: Enter "NA" wherever data are not applicable or not available for the program under review.

Program Characteristics
<u>Academic Program Name:</u> Interdisciplinary Studies
<u>Degree:</u> Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
<u>Program CIP Code:</u> 30.0000
<u>School and Department:</u> School of Arts and Sciences, Department of Communication, Performing Arts, and Foreign Language
<u>Time frame for this review:</u> Fall 2018 – Summer 2023
<u>Date of last internal review:</u> November 2018 (for 2013-2018)
<u>Current date program reviewed for this report:</u> December 2023

Program Goal Statement and Student Learning Outcomes
Program goal statement:
The Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies offers students an intellectually diversified, multidisciplinary course of study as an alternative to the traditional single-discipline major, lending students with a range of academic interests the curricular flexibility to satisfy their learning goals or career objectives.
Program outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students will gain acceptance into graduate or professional schools or find or continue employment related to their degrees.2. Students will express satisfaction with the quality of their program of study.3. Students will agree that their critical thinking, written communication, oral communication, and research and technology skills increased as a result of their program of study. (This program outcome was not spelled out in the WEAVE assessments, but all the reports during this time frame include the findings.)
Student learning outcomes:



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

1. Students will design an interdisciplinary program of study in which selected discipline-based courses contribute in a purposeful and well-reasoned manner, articulating an intellectual interest or career objective that justifies the plan of study.
2. Students will successfully design and implement an interdisciplinary research project culminating with a written report or portfolio.
3. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to think critically through their research and writing.
4. Students will demonstrate competence in written communication, producing well-organized writing that meets conventional standards of correctness and presents substantial material.
5. Students will demonstrate an ability to use research and technology effectively in communication and scholarship.

Note: In April 2023, all programs revised their program student learning outcomes. These are the student learning outcomes for the Interdisciplinary Studies program from 2018-2023.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Brief Assessment of Previous Program Review

Outcome of previous program review (brief narrative statement).

The previous Comprehensive Program Review document states under the heading “Evidence of Program Viability.”

“The key question here is whether the program is meeting the goals for which it was created (cited on page one) . . . the program has met the University System’s guidelines for program viability by graduating 10 students each year for the past two years. Due to the nature of the interdisciplinary studies major, that is, a self-determined and self-designed type of curriculum in the liberal arts, an advisory board of employer stakeholders is not really feasible. However, further study with graduates in terms of employer satisfaction, salary, and graduate job satisfaction would help direct the program in the future. The Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies is a viable degree program. It does not incur many costs to the college as there is only one purely interdisciplinary studies class required (the INTS 4999 capstone). No faculty are employed specifically to support this program. There are no accreditation costs, and students choose their classes from already existing offerings rather than specialized courses, thus improving course density in a wide variety of upper-level Liberal Arts offerings. In addition, the program may be attractive to adult students who have stopped or dropped out of college since the degree offers curricular flexibility and ways to maximize previously earned credits.”

The strengths noted were graduates’ indicated satisfaction with the program and their ability to find their desired employment. Weaknesses noted were campus knowledge of the program, variation in student motivation and clear plans of completion, less than ideal advising consistency, and diminishing average GPAs.

What improvements have occurred since the last program review or assessment?

Improvement 1: The addition of INTS 4000 Interdisciplinary Internship in 2019 to allow students to earn experiential learning credit.

To this point (Fall 2023), four students have utilized this option. The course requires 150 hours per semester on site, evaluations during midterm and finals week from the supervisor, a contract, a final reflective paper referencing relevant class content, and a formal presentation. We added this course to be consistent with other majors and to respond to feedback from graduates so that the program could address career issues more.

Improvement 2: Adding the requirements of a CV or resume submission in the INTS 4999 course; additionally, requiring students to connect with the professor and/or Department Chair through LinkedIn.

Improvement 3: The ability of students to take INTS 4999, the capstone course, in online modality. Also, it is now taught every semester in a classroom format. When the program started, the capstone was taught as an independent study by the advisors in the Department of CPAFL (unpaid), and standards were inconsistent. Students now may also attempt a career-focused project in lieu of a formal conference paper, with the same research, paper, and presentation requirements. For example, a student in 2021 created a documentary film on the lives of new secondary school teachers who spent their first year of teaching during the pandemic. In completing this project, he met the requirements for research and used the IRB process to conduct it ethically and correctly, and at the same time used his film skills gained from past study at the



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Georgia Film Academy.

There have been continued attempts to publicize the program on campus through informing the Athletic Department, attending career and majors fairs, and discussing the major with advisors.

We have sought to improve advising and the ability of Degreeworks to “shuffle” the classes correctly and consistently, with help from the Registrar and Assistant Registrar. Course substitutions, mostly for transfer students, are very common. Four faculty members in the CPAFL Department advise for Interdisciplinary Studies: Dr. Ellie Jenkins, Dr. Clint Kinkead, Mr. Jerry Drye, and Dr. Barbara Tucker. Interdisciplinary Studies is a difficult major for advisors because of the often excessive numbers of transfer credits, students’ desire to graduate rather than create a cohesive program, and other motivational challenges on the part of the students.

What changes or revisions have been made to the program, its curriculum, or its program/student learning outcomes since the last program review? Please include a follow-up discussion of the previous review's action plan.

Curricular changes in the one common class, INTS 4999, are provided in the answer above. There were no changes to the program’s requirements or student learning outcomes during 2018-2023. In the Spring of 2023, in response to SACSCOC’s revised Principles of Accreditation in 2018 and the College’s site visit in Fall of 2024, all programs at Dalton State College revised program student learning outcomes. Those of the B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies were revised as well, but not substantially changed in focus. The program outcomes (based on satisfaction surveys and post-graduation employment or education) remain the same.

The revised outcomes (2023), measures and targets are as follows:

Program Learning Outcome #1: Students will reflect on and explain an interdisciplinary program of study that leads to a career goal.

Assessment Plan

Measure #1

The student will write and submit an essay reflecting on how the Interdisciplinary Studies program helped them achieve their career, personal, and educational goals. This essay is submitted in their INTS 4999 course and is part of the final grade calculation.

Target

100% of students enrolled in INTS 4999 will earn 80% on the essay, using a rubric designed and approved by the INTS faculty.

(INTS faculty are those who teach the capstone course on rotating basis.)

Program Learning Outcome #2: Students will design and implement an interdisciplinary research project.

Assessment Plan

Measure #1

The student will create a proposal for their interdisciplinary project that includes preliminary bibliography, methodology, and rationale to the project. It will be assessed with a rubric and completed in the INTS 4999 (capstone) course.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Target

80% of students/graduates will achieve 80% or better on the proposal, scored with the rubric designed and approved by the INTS faculty.

Program Learning Outcome #3: Students will evaluate, choose, and incorporate appropriate source materials in interdisciplinary research.

Measure #1

The student will use primary published sources and/or primary research methodology for their interdisciplinary capstone project in INTS 4999.

Note: Primary sources/methodologies may include quantitative (e.g., surveys with statistical analysis), qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups), scholarly sources (e.g., original peer-reviewed research of others), and literary text to be analyzed (e.g., poems, novels, journals).

Target

80% of students/graduates will achieve 80% or better on their use of primary sources and/or primary research methodology utilizing a rubric designed and approved by INTS faculty.

Program Learning Outcome #4: Students will effectively communicate interdisciplinary research through oral and written formats.

Assessment Plan

Measure #1

The student will produce a conference-level paper, or artifact and supporting research and reflection, that represents the work of their research project in the INTS 4999 (capstone) course.

Target

80% of graduates/students will achieve 80% or better on the interdisciplinary capstone project using a rubric designed and approved by the INTS faculty.

Measure #2

The student will present a 10- to 12-minute oral presentation, with slides, to faculty, students, and/or stakeholders about their INTS 4999 interdisciplinary capstone project. This presentation will be given in a public forum, such as at the Undergraduate Research Symposium or another instructor-approved event.

Target

80% of graduates/students will achieve 80% or better on their oral presentation using a rubric designed and approved by the INTS faculty.

These revised outcomes are essentially the same as the previous ones because (1) they focus on the capstone course, and (2) require assessment of an extensive research primary research and writing process, along with public demonstration of competence through a presentation. They also continue to assess a reflective paper on the value of the program for the student. These outcomes are superior in that measures and targets are more specifically stated and rubrics are required.

There has been one additional elective course introduced into the Interdisciplinary Studies program. Since 2020, students may choose to complete an internship in Interdisciplinary Studies, INTS 4000. This is a three-hour



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

course patterned after the COMM 4000 course in the B.A. in Communication program. Students should complete 8-10 hours per week in a future-career-related position; their supervisor completes three documents (a contract, midterm evaluation, and final evaluation), and after the semester, the intern presents their internship to the faculty and completes an eight-page reflective paper, in both cases tying their internship learning to courses. So far four students have completed this course, three of those in the 2018-2023 cycle.

Spring 2021: Student worked in Georgia state government with child advocacy in foster care.

Spring 2022: Student worked in film production.

Fall 2022: Student worked at a local television station.

Fall 2023: Student worked for DSC Athletics Communication Director.

Spring 2024: Student will work in communication for Engineered Flooring.

In discussing a version of the INTS program as a cohort experience for adult learners, the possibility of a revised curriculum has been proposed. Discussions along this line are in process but not relevant to this report. Dr. Tucker and Mr. Drye presented a Weekender/Cohort program variation of the INTS major on more than one occasion in the last five years when discussions of improving adult learning opportunities arose.

Regarding the question, **“Please include a follow-up discussion of the previous review's action plan,”**

In 2018, the following four actions were projected:

1. Design a flyer for the interdisciplinary studies program.
2. Send a flyer to Liberal Arts and Wright School of Business faculty and professional advisors explaining the major and how it might benefit some of their nontraditional students.
3. Starting Spring 2019, assign any new Interdisciplinary Studies majors to only two advisors, yet to be named.
4. Conduct outreach for research on graduates' employment and income in January 2019 for inclusion in the annual program assessment.

The completion date was set for Spring 2019.

#1 and #2 were completed. Although athletes still represent the plurality of our students, students are transferring from other majors for various reasons, usually facilitation of graduation. Less than a handful of students over the years have chosen the major as first-year students (two female athletes). Theoretically, a student can acquire as many as 45 upper-division hours in a liberal arts discipline while still finishing an INTS major.

As to #3, we still apportion the INTS majors to four faculty advisors, Mr. Drye, Dr. Kinkead, Dr. Jenkins, and Dr. Tucker, along with other students in the Communication, Performing Arts, and Foreign Language Department (CPAFL). CPAFL faculty advise for two AA General Studies pathway programs and the B.A. Communication programs, typically giving each faculty member about between 15 and 20 advisees. The INTS advisors, therefore, also advise for other majors. If INTS is used for a cohort program for adult learners, a specified professional advisor should be engaged. Starting in 2024, the Department Chair plans to engage Dr. Min and any newly hired faculty member in advising INTS students.

#4: A spreadsheet of current employment statuses for graduates is kept with help from LinkedIn and Facebook;



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

all majors are supposed to connect with Dr. Kinkead and/or Dr. Tucker on LinkedIn during the capstone course. We have a reasonably good record of what each has done or is doing professionally (52/78 of total graduates since the beginning of the program in 2013), although not reliable salary information. Like most employees nowadays, people change employment, and their salaries change as well. The Department of CPAFL lacks personnel to keep up consistently with the employment status of all B.A. Communication and B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies graduates, although attempts are made to do so. This CPR was an impetus for improving that spreadsheet.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Student Demographics						
Enrollment	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Headcount	27	30	20	28	32	19%
FTE	5.25	6.91	2.75	6.91	5.41	3%
Enrolled Full-time	19	19	15	17	24	26%
Enrolled Part-time	8	11	5	11	8	0%
Female	8	10	10	15	10	25%
Male	19	20	10	13	22	16%
Alaskan Native/Native American/American Indian				2	2	N/A
Asian, Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander		1				N/A
Black/African American	7	8	6	7	8	14%
Hispanic	3	6	2	6	5	67%
Multi-racial	1		1	1		-100%
Undeclared	1	1	1	4	1	0%
White	15	14	10	8	16	7%
Analysis and comments on student demographics.						
<p>Enrollment figures in the INTS program make it difficult to find significance in trends. Headcount overall has not changed dramatically; the program added five more enrolled students since Fall 2018. The majority continue to be male with far more male students than the College's typical 40%. Minorities are represented although the ratio of Hispanic students to all students is not commensurate with the college's ratio of 35-40%, and the percentage of African American students is much higher than the College's ratio of less than 5%. The majority continue to be full-time students.</p> <p>Because of the nature of the major, attempts to equalize student population related to gender and ethnicity numbers through recruitment do not seem to be necessary at this time.</p>						



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Faculty Indicators of Program Quality	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
School (not Department) faculty teaching in program(excluding Areas A through E)	6	6	7	5	4	-33%
Full-time program faculty	6	6	7	5	4	-33%
Part-time program faculty	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Total program faculty	6	6	7	5	4	-33%
Totals	100	100	100	100	100	0%
Gender (full-time and part-time faculty)	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Male	1	1	1	1	1	0%
Female	5	5	6	4	3	-40%
Race/Ethnicity (full-time and part-time faculty)	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Alaskan Native/Native American/American Indian	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Asian, Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	0	1	1	1	1	N/A
Black/African-American	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Multi-racial	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Undeclared	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
White	6	5	6	4	3	-50%
Tenure Status (full-time faculty)	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Tenured	6	5	6	4	3	-50%
On-tenure track	0	1	1	1	1	N/A
Non-tenure track	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Rank (full-time faculty)	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Professor	1	1	2	1	2	100%
Associate Professor	5	4	4	3	1	-80%
Assistant Professor	0	1	1	1	1	N/A
Instructor/Senior Lecturer/Lecturer	0	0	0	0	0	N/A



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Provide additional details, analysis, and comments regarding faculty indicators of program quality.

Due to the curricular diversity of the program, there is no way to determine the percentage of classes taught by full-time faculty without examining all 47 graduates' schedules over many years. INTS courses are all taught by Dr. Kinkead or Dr. Tucker. ENGL 3000 is taught by Professor Wei Cen, Dr. Lydia Postell, Professor Christy Ayars, Dr. Jennifer Randall, Dr. Leslie Taylor, and in the past, Professor Jane Sample (now retired). The Director of Institutional Effectiveness was able to create the table relative to when each of these faculty taught the classes and align it with their respective status as faculty.

<i>Indicators of Measures of Quality</i>						
Student Input	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Mean ACT score	20.7	20.6	19.3	19.8	19.9	-4%
Mean SAT score	973.8	910	976.7	861.7	924	-5%
If applicable to your degree program, provide any additional external quality assurance data/information or results (e.g., professional accreditation results, National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE], market rankings, etc.).						



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

This section is not applicable. It appears from the preceding chart that Mean ACT and SAT scores have dipped, but the College is no longer requiring these tests for entrance. Additionally, very few students declare Interdisciplinary Studies as a major as an incoming first-year student. It attracts a different group of students, as described elsewhere in this report.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Indicators of Measures of Quality

Student Output	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	% Change
Exit scores on national/state licensure (If applicable)						
Graduating majors' mean GPA	3.08	2.97	3.01	2.81	3.11	1%
Employment rate of graduates (if available)						
Number of students entering graduate/professional programs						

Describe the extent to which students have achieved current program outcomes during this program review cycle (most recent year).

1. Employment: In their responses to the question on the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Exit Survey (and in periodic follow-up contacts continuing through 12 months after graduation) concerning whether they are continuing employment in their current occupation, have found a position related to their degree, or they have gained acceptance into a graduate or professional program, students will report that they are continuing employment in their current occupation, have found a position related to their degree, or are continuing their education.

Expected results: 50% at graduation and 70% 3 to 12 months after graduation.

Results: Graduates of 2022-2023. Of the 11, we have reports that 6 found employment. One is retired and has fulfilled her goal of finishing her degree. Some did not complete the surveys. One will be attending graduate school in Australia, one is working in sales with Verizon, one is employed in HR in a health care facility and will advance with finishing his bachelor's degree, and one is in financial product sales in Florida. From the records we have, the target is at least partially met.

Graduates of 2021-22 AY:

Out of ten graduates that year, one is employed as a media instructor at East Ridge High School. Two others are involved in professional sports and coaching. One is a fraud analyst. Others work in customer service and sales.

2. Satisfaction with the program: Students will express satisfaction with the quality of their program of study.

Measure: Students will complete the Interdisciplinary Studies Program Exit Survey upon completion of the INTS 4999 (capstone) course.

Expected Results: At least 80% of graduating seniors will indicate that their experience met or exceeded their expectations and will rate the quality of instruction as "Good" or "Excellent."

Four surveys were returned from the six students who completed INTS 4999 in 2022-23. The four surveys indicated the following levels of satisfaction with the INTS program.

Of the surveys submitted, in the academic year 2022-23, (4 of 6 graduates), 4/4 graduates (100%) expressed satisfaction exceeding the target level. Details are provided below.

1. Overall quality of instruction: Excellent, 3; Very Good, 1

2. Quality of program in meeting personal objectives: Excellent, 3; Very Good, 1



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

3. Critical Thinking Improved: Significantly, 3; Moderately, 1
4. Written Communication Improved: Significantly, 4
5. Oral Communication Improved: Significantly, 3; Moderately, 1
6. Research and Technology Skills Improved: Significantly, 3; Moderately, 1
7. Understanding of requirements, opportunities, & practices in industry or graduate school: Significantly, 3; Moderately, 1

Expectations: Exceeded, 2; Met, 2

The program has met its program outcome regarding graduates' satisfaction in the last year and in all previous years of the review period. In terms of employment attainment, it continues to be difficult to determine employment rates due to difficulty in tracking students after graduation. The 50% standard for employment continued or found at graduation seems to be met, although whether their college degree was necessary for employment is unclear. That number is also based on the total of students who completed the surveys, which is not always 100%.

In November through December 2023, efforts were made to contact graduates from this period for this review. Graduates were contacted through LinkedIn accounts and email to complete a short survey on their employment and education since graduation. These findings are provided under "Indicators of Measures of Quality."

Describe the extent to which students have achieved current student learning outcomes during this program review cycle (most recent year).



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

The following are the results of the 2022-23 annual program assessment report. This chart utilizes the program and student learning outcomes in use from 2018-23. The outcomes were revised in April 2023.

<i>Student Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Measurement Method Used</i>
Students will design an interdisciplinary program of study in which selected discipline-based courses contribute in a purposeful and well-reasoned manner, articulating an intellectual interest or career objective that justifies the plan of study.	Students in INTS 4999 will write a paper in which they analyze the degree to which they believe their program of study successfully contributed to their immediate professional goals, intellectual interests, and long-term career objectives/goals. The paper will also address the strengths and weaknesses of the program as well as what could have been done differently (e.g., courses they would have liked to have taken as a part of the degree program). 6/7 (86%) of students earned 70% or better on the self-evaluation paper.
Students will successfully design and implement an interdisciplinary research project culminating with a written report or portfolio.	Students in INTS 4999 will demonstrate the ability to design an interdisciplinary research project by preparing a three-page research proposal/outline. 6/7 (86%) of students earned 70% or better on the proposal.
Graduates will demonstrate the ability to think critically through their research and writing.	Students in INTS 4999 will be evaluated on their ability to think critically by submitting a ten-page draft of the research proposal, which should include the rationale, literature review, and historical context for the topic they are researching. 6/7 (86%) of students earned 70% or better on the ten-page draft.
Students will demonstrate competence in written communication, producing well-organized writing that meets conventional standards of correctness and presents substantial material.	In INTS 4999 Students' competence in written communication will be measured by the writing component scores on the final draft of the research papers. 6/7 (86%) of students earned 70% or better on the conference-level paper.
Students will demonstrate an ability to use research and technology effectively in communication and scholarship.	In INTS 4999 Students' ability to use research and technology will be demonstrated through an oral presentation of their research findings, during which they must clearly convey what they found and do so using some form of presentation software. 5/7 (71%) of students earned 70% or better on the presentation with slides.

Indicators of Measures of Quality

If available, provide additional information and/or results of other indicators of quality related to student output such as completer satisfaction surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, stakeholder satisfaction surveys, completion and continuation rates, attrition rates, starting salaries of graduates, etc.

The program coordinator/chair sought to contact the 47 graduates from 2018-2023 with germane questions about the major. A survey on Google forms was used. The appendix to this document contains the graphs for this survey. The link to the survey was sent through email (alternative email in Banner), and through Facebook and LinkedIn messaging from mid-November through December 20, 2023. Approximately 40 graduates of the 47 were contacted and asked on 2-3 occasions to complete the survey. Fourteen responses were received, resulting in an approximately 33% response rate. The relevant graphs are included as appendices. They represented all five years of the review, with two each from 2020 and 2021, four from 2019, three each from 2022 and 2018. The three graduates from 2023 did not respond.

Results:

1. What year did you graduate from the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at Dalton State College?
2. What is your current employer and position?
3. Have you pursued graduate education or professional school since graduation?
4. If you answered yes to the previous question, please let us know the school and the subject.
One graduate attended Western Governors' University.
5. What is your current salary range?
6. How satisfied are you with your choice and experience in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program?
7. Please explain your answer to the previous question about your level of satisfaction with the program.
 - *Not using my degree for this career*
 - *I was able to take classes that made sense to me. And we're interesting to me. I wish I could take more.*
 - *My advisor, Jerry Drye is owed my success. Completing my degree at 40, working full time, was intense - it was worth it though.*
 - *It allowed me to understand different areas of study, and all apply to my current job.*
 - *My degree gave me the flexibility that I needed to finish my degree as quickly as possible. My classes were diverse and gave me a well-rounded education.*
 - *This program provides me with different tools that I am using in my personal life, as my professional development in my company.*
 - *The program allowed my transfer credits to work within my own program of study that was centered directly with Film. It also allowed me to graduate earlier because certain classes in other programs were only offered at specific times in the year.*
 - *It allowed me to learn information that is pertinent to my career field.*
 - *I do not use my degree but, I am glad I got it.*
 - *Mrs. Tucker made the program run smoothly.*

- *Not using my degree*
- *The program significantly increased my knowledge and abilities in field research and considerably improved my communication skills.*
- *I'm happy I was able to do this program and go home with a degree within the time I spent in America, rather than a partial degree like all the other programs. I also enjoyed being able to tailor my degree to my specific interests.*

8. Please make any comments about the Interdisciplinary Studies Program that you would wish to make, especially about how it might be improved.

- *Nothing I got this degree just to finish because college was the worst experience I have ever had. It was a waste of time and money.*
- *The program was fantastic! I wouldn't change a thing.*
- *N/A*
- *I enjoyed how personal the program was. Smaller cohorts led to a better understanding of the type of programs we were making within this program. I was able to choose the classes that would benefit me the most in college and post-graduation.*
- *Always have unconditional support for the students.*
- *I loved the research-driven program and had an excellent advisor who helped guide me through my journey.*
- *I think everything was done well. The aspects of the course that I was uncomfortable with during the course are things that have helped me in a real workplace setting. For example, presentations translate directly in my workplace when I have to conduct health and safety meetings for my crew. I wouldn't change anything about this course.*

Employer Satisfaction

An attempt was made to reach employers of graduates about their satisfaction with the graduates' work performance. As is usually the case, responses were difficult to obtain. The reviewer set a reasonable goal of obtaining ten employer responses and was able to contact fifteen through phone calls and email, garnering ten replies. This constitutes about a 25% response rate (based on the graduates for whom we have reliable contact information). Details are given below.

Fifteen employers were contacted by email or phone call. The following are the findings of the attempts, with the response about their satisfaction highlighted. The goal was to obtain at least ten positive responses; nine positive and eight very positive were obtained.

- H.H., working for Georgia Department of Corrections as a librarian: **Yes** (however, this graduate had left this organization in July 2023).
- R.D., coaching middle school basketball at a large private school in Atlanta: **Enthusiastic Yes.**
- D.M.V., financial product salesperson in Florida: **Enthusiastic Yes.**
- C.A., fifth grade teacher in Catoosa County, GA: **Enthusiastic Yes.**

- E.H., golf pro at local well known course, **Enthusiastic Yes.**
- M.S., account manager in logistics in Chattanooga: contacted twice, did not receive a response.
- A.O., media teacher at a Chattanooga high school: **Enthusiastic Yes.**
- V.R., Athletic Manager, Dalton Parks and Recreation: **Enthusiastic Yes.**
- L.M., working in fraud analysis in a Chattanooga firm. **Reserved Yes.** The employer was kind in his assessment but did say the graduate had left the company a month before, “just walking out.” She had conflicts with her supervisor, trouble with understanding authority, and had made public statements on social media about this supervisor. This is very concerning because the graduate had taken classes where such behavior was discussed as unacceptable. She has a history of personal struggles.
- M.T., a local nonprofit with a mission for environmental issues: The employer contacted, but the graduate had left the organization recently although the graduate claimed to still be working there on the survey. There was no response as to the organization’s satisfaction with the employee because I spoke with an assistant who verified employment. I corresponded with the graduate, who said they had moved back to Dalton for personal reasons but did not explain their employment situation.
- M.B., elementary school teacher in Shelby, NC, area: School contacted, but no response. I think the graduate left that for a career in law enforcement but could not follow up.
- K.S-B., logistics, company contacted twice, did not receive a response.
- C.V., real estate broker: company contacted once, no reply. This graduate may be retired now.
- R.A., soccer coach. The graduate and reviewer communicated; graduate is currently working as a private soccer coach to take care of their child. Graduate was formerly employed at a local public school as a special education teacher and soccer coach, and HR at the school was contacted. They were **very pleased** with his performance.
- M.W., at a company in Ft. Valley, GA, but they did not know the graduate. However, the contact followed up and found out that the graduate had worked there for a temp agency during college. That is the last information we have on the graduate. They thought well of the student, though.

Comments from supervisors:

“I’m very satisfied with V’s performance within our department. V has moved from PT athletic staff to full-time coordinator and finally to the position of athletic manager, speaks volumes about his dedication and commitment. His skill in handling people, time management skills have contributed to the smooth operation of our department but have also significantly enhanced our team’s overall efficiency. V.’s professionalism and positive attitude make him a valuable asset to our organization, and we look forward to continued success with him at the helm.”

“If you have more like him, send them our way.”

“[Principal] was happy with [graduate’s] performance as a teacher and coach. We would have loved for [them] to have stayed on with the district.”

“[Graduate] has been doing a phenomenal job and has quickly become a key member of our Engineering and Visual Arts pathway at [high school].”

Observations: Generally, the closer the employer to Dalton, the more likely they were to respond. It is likely that the positive responses are due as much to the graduates’ characters as the program.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Describe efforts undertaken to achieve and maintain curricular alignment within the program and currency to the discipline.

I do not believe this area can be addressed directly since the program is interdisciplinary and every student completes a distinct set of courses; the only two courses all students take in common are INTS 4999 and ENGL 3000.

We wish to make the capstone more applicable to their potential career field. Presumably, their upper-division electives and minor courses are chosen with the career field in mind. For example, a student who has accumulated 30 hours in criminal justice should complete a project about criminal justice.

One area of both success and needed improvement is the research process. It might be possible to create an INTS 3000 course, or similar number, that deals with research methods, career development, curricular choices, interdisciplinary theory, and related topics. This would serve the purposes of making the course choices more meaningful, preparing the students for advanced classes, advising, and preparing them for research. This course would also aid students with achieving sufficient in-residence upper-division courses and would fit in the 21-hour group of upper-division liberal arts courses.

Another idea is to develop a STEM variation of the program, or one where the upper-division courses are STEM-based but interdisciplinary. Currently, the INTS students can minor in Biology, and that is probably the closest thing to a STEM-orientation we have.

Another area of concern is the lack of student motivation. This area seems to have exacerbated during and after COVID.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Indicators of Measures of Viability						
Internal Demand for the Program	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	% Change
Number of students enrolled in the degree program	27	30	20	28	32	19%
Number of students who applied to the program (if applicable)	n/a					
Number of students admitted to the program (if applicable)	n/a					
Percent of classes taught by full-time faculty (The number of all classes the students would take in completing the major cannot be determined. However, the two classes all students complete, ENGL 3000 and INTS 4999, are taught solely by full-time faculty, and that is the basis upon which this 100% figure is provided.)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0
Describe additional details as deemed appropriate.						



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Each student takes their own set of courses to fulfill their minor, their essential areas in liberal arts, and 21 upper-division hours on the way to accruing at least 30 residence hours and 39 upper-division hours for graduation. In some cases, fulfilling the 30 residence hours is the minimum taken because the student has transferred in all the remaining hours. Therefore, it would be difficult to determine the percentage of classes taught by full-time faculty. Since fewer upper-division courses are taught by part-time faculty, the assumption would be a majority, but each students' schedules over several years would have to be reviewed to find the specific percentage.

The demand for the major has not changed significantly in real numbers, even though the percentage increase is 19%, which represents five students. This number means, however, that every year students choose the major as an alternative to their previous programs. INTS is not a program presented to first-year students as "career-directed," and this is understandable. However, we do have instances of athletes choosing it as incoming first-year students as flexible for their needs and congruent with the need to complete within the time of eligibility.

A primary question of the Comprehensive Program Review is whether the program is viable. By ordinary measures of graduation rates of students who enter the program as first-year students and graduate in four to six years, INTS is not viable. By the University System measure of an average of ten graduates per year, it has not met that target in AY 2022-23 but did in the previous years of this review period. This AY INTS is on track to graduate 14 majors.

As argued elsewhere, the program's only cost is to pay the professor who teaches INTS 4999 with a lower enrollment than normally expected. The position of the department is that the College has fulfilled its purpose for many students (75) over the years but has not utilized the major for its best purposes.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Indicators of Measures of Productivity

Graduation	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	% Change
Number of degrees conferred	10	11	10	10	6	-40%
Total student credit hours earned	149	135	131	117	73	-51%

Describe any institutional-specific factors impacting time to degree.

In Fall 2022, a former Roadrunner athlete who should have graduated in 2018 re-enrolled in the capstone course. He did not finish and has not contacted the instructor since December 2022. On the other hand, another athlete with transfer credits from three institutions had one year of eligibility at DSC and finished the program in that amount of time. A third former athlete is also far behind on graduation because of a deficient GPA that has not budged upward easily; however, he will finish this Summer 2024. The point of these examples is that the outstanding factor impacting time to degree is student motivation to graduate and begin their post-college career. The athletes in the program usually have a limited time to finish while other adult learners usually desire to finish quickly. There are exceptions, however. Because the curriculum is flexible, students rarely experience delays because of how often classes they want or need are offered. They have many options, and fortunately, criminal justice, psychology, and communication, the favored upper-division liberal arts classes, have few prerequisites that cause delays. They experience delays for personal reasons.

At times, a student's time to degree is impacted by their GPA; that is, they do not have a 2.0 GPA and must remain in school until they reach that threshold.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Evidence of Program Viability

Based on evidence from **ALL of the above** information, data, and analysis, discuss whether continued resources should be devoted to this program. This discussion must be evidence-based. Your comments should consider external factors and address questions such as the following: Are your students getting jobs? What is the job outlook for graduates? Are students prepared for the jobs they get? How is the field changing? Are program faculty members in contact with employers and getting back feedback on graduates' job performance? Do employers state or suggest a need for changes in the program?

Based purely on the number of graduates during this review cycle (47), the program is not technically viable. However, there are more arguments for its continuation than for its deactivation:

1. It serves a purpose in providing a flexible degree option;
2. It serves a segment of the student population;
3. It is helpful for the athletes who transfer in with disparate credits and limited eligibility;
4. It incurs virtually no cost;
5. It is useful and could be of greater use if redesigned and marketed for adult learners.

As shown on pages 15-16 and in appendices/attachments, students find employment in education, sales, management, logistics, business, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and law enforcement, and some other fields if they pursue further study. Students who choose the major (other than athletes) usually have a career goal that allows them to have a flexible degree program rather than a specific disciplinary major. The athletes tend to choose the program as the most flexible and efficient way to graduate within their eligibility period and with their transfer hours. Our research shows that most graduates do find employment. They realize they must find careers based on their ability to develop themselves and "sell" the major and their own skills.

Program Strengths and Weaknesses

Based upon this review, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?

Strengths:

- Flexibility, efficiency, and personal adaptability of the program.
- Low cost to the college.
- Offers opportunity to students to develop their own interests and educational plan.
- High levels of satisfaction reported by graduates.
- Program helps class enrollment numbers.
- We have improved the career-related aspect of the major by creating an internship course, requiring a resume and cover letter in the capstone, and broadening the definition of the capstone project.
- The program has high value for adult learners, possibly even as a cohort model.
- I would say advising is a strength, or at least not a weakness; the four faculty advisors do meet with students and attempt to help with plans. However, improvements could be made to create a more cohesive experience for faculty and students.

Weaknesses and concerns:

- Lack of experience on the part of the students with writing lengthy research papers and conducting research into scholarly sources. During the first review cycle we introduced ENGL 3000, WRITING FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES, into the curriculum to address this matter. Their understanding of APA has improved, but we cannot determine how much writing, especially of depth and length, the students do in their other major classes. Added to this weakness is that many, if not most, INTS students take many of their classes at other institutions, meaning we have no idea what their academic backgrounds entailed. This is a contributing reason for the INTS 3001 course that is proposed in the next section.
- Low GPAs of students, which delays graduation.
- Indeterminate time to degree; students create their own educational plans at this point and sometimes have a *laissez-faire* approach.
- Student motivation. The “last resort” or “second/third choice” perception of the degree leads to students focusing on “getting out” rather than learning and academic excellence.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

- Less than adequate assessment practices, including the ability to track graduates (due to lack of support staff and students' not responding to attempts for feedback). This observation on assessment practices follows the revision of SLOs and the SAIRR report and is documented there.
- Probability or possibility that the students do not create a cohesive and educationally meaningful curriculum because of their motivation to "finish" and take any course that facilitates that goal.
- The image, visibility, and campus-wide knowledge of the program.
- Weaknesses in the consistency of advising. A singular advisor for the whole program would be preferable.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Recommendations for Follow-Up and/or Action Plans (if needed)

<p><u>Issue/Concern:</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visibility of major. 2. Tracking Graduates. 3. Increasing enrollment and therefore graduation numbers. 4. Helping INTS majors plan for careers prior to the capstone course. 5. Using the INTS major for a cohort-based, time-sensitive program for adult learners. 6. Improved advising to help students create an educational plan so that the following can be addressed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. cohesive choices of courses (e.g., ideally the electives should be in a discipline, metadiscipline, or thematic arrangement, but often students just take what is available. b. Time to graduation. c. Career planning d. GPA deficiencies that preclude graduation.
<p><u>Specific Actions</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through the work of the Adult Education Committee, progress is being made on having a landing page for the Interdisciplinary Studies program. 2. N/A. As indicated earlier in this review, attempts to reach out to all graduates through social media channels and their listed alternative email addresses in Banner was done in November-December 2023. Some are out of the country, and many are unresponsive. Some did not have alternative email addresses. LinkedIn accounts were often inactive. We have approximately 40/47 for the graduates in this review cycle, and, of course, a majority for those in earlier years. 3. Faculty could suggest students consider the program if they do not get into competitive programs. Faculty would probably be interested in this course of action if the student shows academic skill but the major is not a fit for them. 4. Discuss with faculty and administration a required INTS 3001 course to address career planning, research methodology, and educational planning in the junior year. 5. Continue to work with the Adult Education Committee and other faculty on this plan. Part-time faculty could be used for night and Friday classes. 6. It would probably be best to designate someone in the CPAFL Department as the INTS liaison who works with advising as part of their load, or to designate someone in the Advising Center for this purpose when students change their major. They would need a systematic and consistent onboarding process so that they do not perceive or experience the major as “do whatever you want” but as one that has a philosophy, purpose, and outcome. Currently, a new transfer student who declares the INTS major is advised in the Advising Center, and often the students need a number of course substitutions and “switches” on Degreeworks. (Degreeworks often does not apply classes in the best place.) Other students have gone for advising at the Advising Center instead of the chair or their assigned advisor, and this has caused problems as well.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

<p><u>Expected outcomes:</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase enrollment. 10-20% would be reasonable over the next year after implementation since that is the increase since the last CPR and action plan. That number does not represent many students, so 30% would be preferable. 2. A more complete spreadsheet was completed in the process of this review. There are still blanks due to the graduates' unwillingness to respond to contact efforts. As the program progresses, more specific data on each graduate should be collected. 3. An increase of 10% in students from other majors transferring into the program, in contrast to athletes or transfer students choosing it to expedite graduation. 4. It is unknown how the administration will feel about this course unless we can verify that the enrollment will be better than ten students per year. If a cohort program for adult learners is pursued, it would be a good orientation/onboarding experience for them and would include relevant outcomes to ensure their success in a timely manner. 5. A landing page on the revised website; revised curriculum and addition of INTS 3001 to curriculum being approved by Academic Programs. 6. A designated advisor for INTS would require training and a commitment, as well as at least two new full-time faculty in the CPAFL Department to replace those we have lost.
<p><u>Time frame for achievement:</u></p>	<p><u>May 1, 2025</u></p>
<p><u>Person(s) responsible:</u></p>	<p>Chair of Communication, Performing Arts, and Foreign Language Advisors in INTS program. Associate Deans in School of Arts and Sciences Dean of Arts and Sciences</p>
<p><u>Resources needed:</u></p>	<p>N/A at this time, except for pay for any new full-time or part-time faculty.</p>



DALTON STATE

COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Prepared by: Barbara G. Tucker, Ed.D.

Signature Barbara G. Tucker Date: January 18, 2024

Dean's Approval

Signature: Randall Griffus Date: 01/22/2024

Approval of the Chair of the DSC Comprehensive Program Review Committee:

Signature: Maria McHelms Date: 1/22/24

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) Categorical Summation:

Check any of the following to categorically describe action(s) the institution will take concerning this program.

- Program **MEETS** Institution's Criteria
 - Program is critical to the institutional mission and will be retained.
 - Program is critical to the institutional mission and is growing, or a high demand field, and thus will be enhanced
- Program **DOES NOT MEET** Institution's Criteria for continuation
 - Program will be placed on monitoring status.
 - Program will undergo substantive curricular revisions.
 - Program will be deactivated.
 - Program will be voluntarily terminated.
 - Other (Please elaborate):

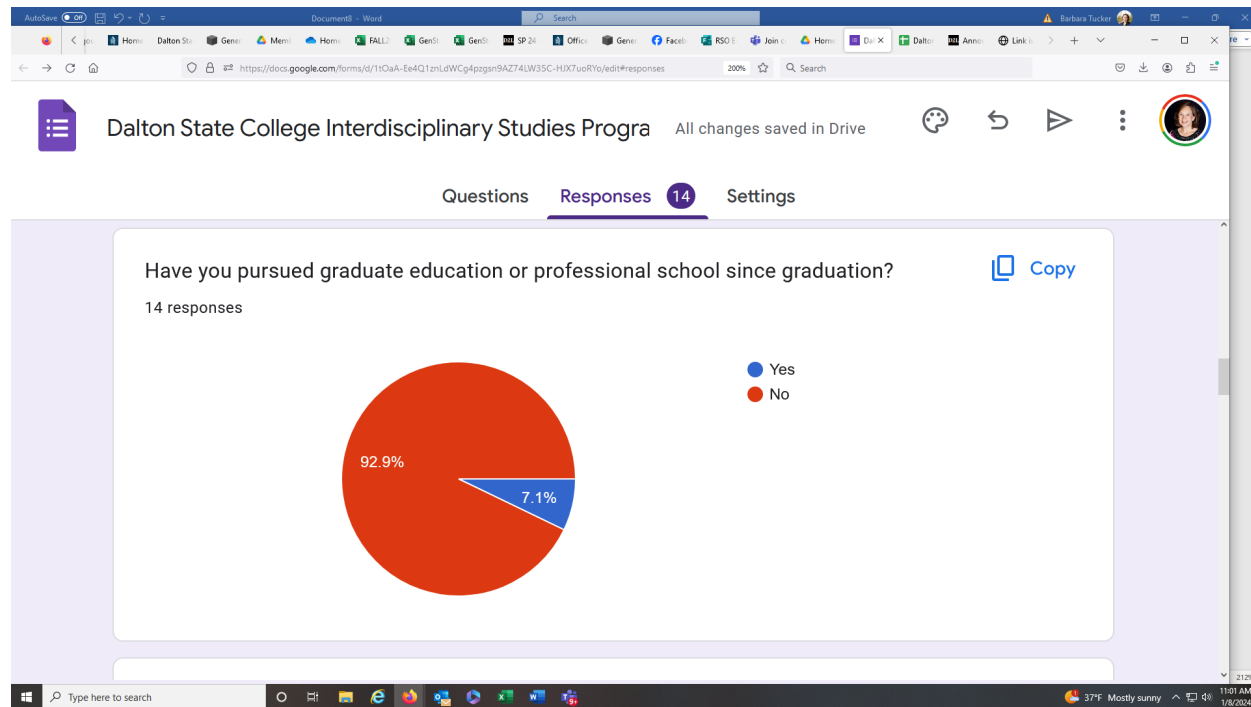
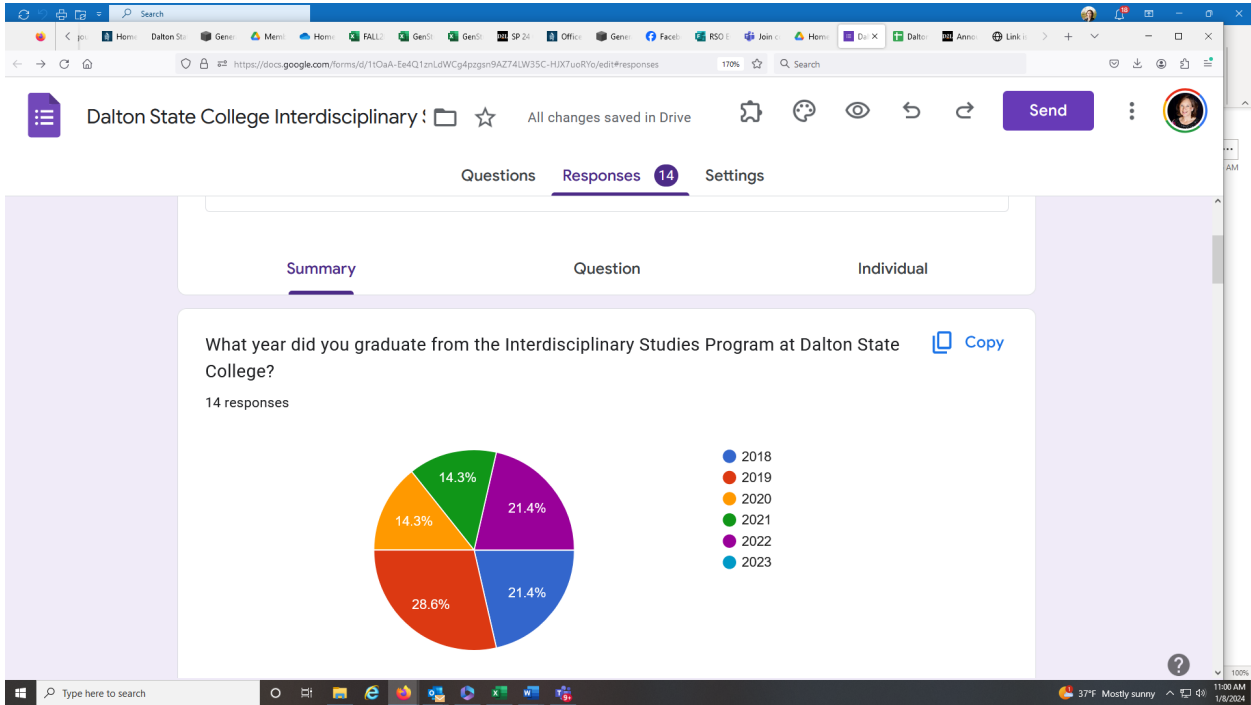
VPAA Signature Bruno Hicks Date: 01/22/2024

Bruno Hicks, Ed.D.
Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
Dalton State College



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Relevant graphs from survey





COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

