



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

Dear BDP Student,

Welcome to the Bridging Disciplines Programs! On behalf of the BDP staff and faculty, I want to congratulate you on your admission to the program. We are excited that you've chosen to pursue a BDP certificate, and we're looking forward to getting to know you as you progress through the program.

One of my favorite parts of working with BDP students is seeing how much students are able to grow and accomplish through the program. If there's one lesson I would hope that you, as a new BDP student, would take from the students who have preceded you, it would be that the possibilities for what you can achieve during your time at UT are endless. BDP students have done research all over the world, they've interned everywhere from the US Congress to non-profits in Austin to the United Nations, and they've participated in research with many of UT's most distinguished faculty members. What you take from your BDP experience is limited only by what you put into it, and I would encourage you to take advantage of the resources the BDPs offer to help you not only achieve your goals, but exceed them.

In becoming a BDP student, you are not only choosing to pursue a certificate, but you are also joining a community of students and scholars. The relationships you build through your BDP experience—whether with faculty who mentor you in connecting experiences, with your BDP advisor, or with other BDP students—can be just as rewarding as your individual accomplishments. I hope you will take advantage of this community and participate actively in the social, professional, and academic events the BDP sponsors to help you get to know other students and faculty. As you will learn in moving through the program, part of being an interdisciplinary student is listening to and learning from others who bring different perspectives, knowledge, and skills to the topic or problem you are considering. Being part of the BDP community will help you learn not just from your classes, but also from your peers.

This handbook and your BDP orientation session will provide you with much more information about how to be a successful BDP student and take advantage of the resources available to you. The BDP advisors and staff are here to help you make the most of this experience. I hope you'll consider the BDP office one of your homes on campus—we're always happy to see you!

Sincerely,

Jeanette Herman
Director, Bridging Disciplines Programs



Contact Information

BDP Office

Bridging Disciplines Programs
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Office Hours and Location

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Please call 232-7564 if you need an appointment with your advisor!

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Interdisciplinary Studies: A Short Introduction

As the name “Bridging Disciplines Programs” suggests, one of the central goals of the BDPs is to teach you how to approach complex subjects from interdisciplinary perspectives. At a surface level, the interdisciplinary structure of the BDPs is the reason why you can’t fulfill your BDP requirements by taking courses from just one department. We want you to broaden your view of your BDP topic by finding out what different disciplines have to say about it.

At a deeper level, however, the BDP should help you develop more sophisticated ways of thinking about complex problems by integrating the different forms of knowledge, the different perspectives, and the different methodologies and tools offered by multiple disciplines. The purpose of this introduction is to get you started thinking across disciplines and to define some key concepts that will help you as you pursue your BDP.

WHAT IS A DISCIPLINE?

In order to understand what it means to be interdisciplinary, it’s important to first have an understanding of what a discipline is and how disciplines have structured the way we approach the creation of knowledge in higher education. Here are some basic definitions of a discipline:

- A discipline is a branch of knowledge or study.
- Disciplines are often seen as subjects or majors. Many of the departments that structure the university today are disciplines in this sense—Sociology, Biology, etc.
- **Disciplines help shape the way their practitioners see the world.**

“The term discipline signifies the tools, methods, procedures, exempla, concepts, and theories that account coherently for a set of objects or subjects. Over time they are shaped and reshaped by external contingencies and internal intellectual demands. In this manner a discipline comes to organize and concentrate experience into a particular ‘world view.’ Taken together, related claims within a specific material field put limits on the kinds of questions practitioners ask about their material, the methods and concepts they use, the answers they believe, and their criteria for truth and validity.” (Julie Thompson Klein, *Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, Practice*, 1990)

“It is easy for students ... to be confused about the disciplines. They are often seen simply as ‘subjects’: courses to take with discrete texts and teachers, in order to pass certain requirements. To the extent that disciplines are simply presented as sets of facts, concepts, or even theories to be committed to memory, students may remain innocent of their powers. After all, facts themselves are discipline neutral: they acquire their disciplinary colors only when they have been pieced together in a certain way and placed in the service of a particular theory.

For the disciplines inhere not primarily in the specific facts and concepts that make up textbook glossaries and indexes ... and all too often, weekly tests. Rather, the disciplines inhere in the ways of thinking, developed by their practitioners, that allow those practitioners to make sense of the world in quite specific and largely nonintuitive ways. Indeed, once mastered and internalized, the disciplines **become** the ways ... in which experts construe the phenomena of their world.” (Howard Gardner, *The Disciplined Mind*, 2000)

WHAT ARE INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES?

“Interdisciplinary studies may be defined as a process of answering a question, solving a problem, or addressing a topic too broad or complex to be dealt with adequately by a single discipline or profession ... [Interdisciplinary studies] draws on disciplinary perspectives and integrates their insights through construction of a more comprehensive perspective. In this manner, interdisciplinary study is not a simple supplement but is complementary to and corrective of the disciplines.” (Klein and Newell, “Advancing Interdisciplinary Studies,” 1998)



“Now consider the ... figure of the young-old woman.... The old woman is looking down and to the left. The young woman is looking away from the viewer and to the left.... Notice how ... what is focal for one interpretation becomes tacit for another. Note too how the cognitive concept seems to give meaning to the lines or parts of the drawings rather than the other way around. Imagine what it would be like to be a member of an interdisciplinary group discussing a problem in which the young-old woman, or something analogous, played a part. What would happen if your discipline allowed you to see the young woman, while another’s discipline interpreted it as an old woman and you didn’t realize the difference? Would you be tempted to retreat to your own narrow discipline and categorize those other folks as just silly? My suggestion here is quite simple. It often happens that when different disciplines look at the same thing (the same lines on the paper) they *observe* different things. Thus, it is necessary for people engaged in interdisciplinary work to understand each others’ observational categories.” (Hugh Petrie, “Do You See What I See? The Epistemology of Interdisciplinary Inquiry,” 1976)

“Interdisciplinary study should be understood to start with the confrontation of the interdisciplinarian with the world, be it a problem, event, or even a painting. Out of that phenomenological confrontation comes a question, one which is too broad to be answered by any single discipline. The strategy of the interdisciplinarian is to bring the relevant disciplines (or schools of thought) to bear upon the question, one at a time, letting each illuminate that aspect of the question which is amenable to treatment by the characteristic concepts, theories, and methods of the respective disciplines. Out of the resulting disciplinary insights, the interdisciplinarian fashions a response to the question that would ideally be a complete answer but which at the least leads to a greater appreciation of the nature and complexity of the question. What distinguishes interdisciplinary study from simple eclecticism is that disciplines provide much more than pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that the interdisciplinarian need merely arrange in proper order. Disciplinary insights are often conflicting, and when the disciplines are chosen from more than one area, such as the natural sciences and the humanities, their insights are of a qualitatively different nature as well.... The interdisciplinarian, then, may not simply combine disciplinary insights; rather, each world view and its assumptions underlying those insights must be illuminated and then evaluated in the context of the question at hand, before an interdisciplinary answer can be attempted.” (William H. Newell, “The Case for Interdisciplinary Studies,” 1983)

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERDISCIPLINARIANS

“Students of interdisciplinary studies are marked by their willingness not simply to challenge, but also to cross, traditional disciplinary boundaries.” (Giles Gunn, 1992)

“Of course, successful people [in interdisciplinary endeavors] are very much like successful people in any endeavor, but several characteristics, attitudes, and motivations stand out. The person must, first of all, be secure in his or her original endeavors. Interdisciplinary efforts seldom work if the participants are not fully competent in their own fields. Second, the participants must have a taste for adventure into the unknown and unfamiliar, i.e., they must not be tied too closely to their secure home base.... Third, their interests must be fairly broad, if not in terms of their spheres of competence, at least in terms of what they feel is of importance.” (Hugh G. Petrie, “Do You See What I See? The Epistemology of Interdisciplinary Inquiry,” 1976)

Some characteristics of interdisciplinarians:

- Flexibility
- Patience
- Resilience
- Sensitivity to others
- Risk-taking
- Having a thick skin/strong sense of self
- Preference for diversity
- Preference for new social roles
- Initiative and assertiveness
- Tolerance for ambiguity

What employers like about interdisciplinary studies students:

- Ability of students to think conceptually
- Ability to identify and solve problems
- Ability to understand other value systems
- Ability to evaluate alternatives
- Ability to decide on a course of action
- Ability to change one’s opinion in the light of facts
- Effective written and oral communication skills
- Effective skills in working collaboratively with a team
- Ethical sensitivity
- Ability to respond constructively to criticism

(Both lists adapted from Tanya Augsburg, *Becoming Interdisciplinary*, 2005)

Learning Objectives for the BDPs

The BDPs are designed to teach you not only about the specific BDP topic you choose to study, but also more broadly about how to think about complex topics through an interdisciplinary, hands-on approach. As you progress through the BDPs, we expect you to demonstrate the following learning objectives:

Disciplinary Awareness. Before you can successfully apply an interdisciplinary perspective, you must first understand what it means to study a topic through disciplinary perspectives. Demonstrating disciplinary awareness involves referring to disciplines relevant to the topic you're addressing and accurately applying the perspectives, methodologies, and knowledge offered by those disciplines.

Interdisciplinary Awareness. Demonstrating interdisciplinary awareness involves referring to multiple disciplines relevant to a given subject, and demonstrating that you understand the value of the different perspectives, methodologies, and knowledge offered by those disciplines.

Thinking Across Disciplines. Beyond showing that you are aware of multiple disciplinary perspectives, you should be able to demonstrate that you are able to bring these perspectives together in order to come to a more complex or sophisticated understanding of a topic. Demonstrating that you are able to think across disciplines might involve comparing the perspectives, methodologies, or tools offered by different disciplines, or it might involve integrating multiple perspectives for a more complete understanding.

Transferring Knowledge and Skills Across Contexts. You should be able to articulate how knowledge or skills that you have developed in one context have impacted your understanding in another. You might, for example, demonstrate that something you've learned in the classroom has been helpful to you in a research or internship experience, or that something you've learned in a connecting experience has caused you to reevaluate or come to a deeper understanding in the classroom.

Reflecting on Your Interests, Strengths, and Goals. The BDP experience should be one of self-reflection, where you use your experiences to reflect on your interests and strengths and how they might connect to possible intellectual and professional goals for the future.

Developing Understanding of Your BDP Topic. Part of the purpose of the BDP is to allow you to develop a secondary area of expertise over and above your major. By the time you graduate with your BDP certificate, you must be able to demonstrate that you understand the interdisciplinary topic of your BDP.



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Advising Syllabus

BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS ADVISOR INFORMATION

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 noon, 1:00–5:00 p.m.

Students are strongly encouraged to call to make appointments with their advisor. However, advisors may sometimes also be available to see students on a walk-in basis.

One of the benefits of the BDPs is access to individualized advising. The BDP advisors are:

Christine Anderson

canderson@austin.utexas.edu

- Cultural Studies
- Film Studies
- Global Studies
- Human Rights & Social Justice
- Social Inequality, Health & Policy

Rose Mastrangelo

r.mastrangelo@austin.utexas.edu

- Digital Arts & Media
- Environment
- Social Entrepreneurship & Non-profits

Erin Thomas

erin.thomas@austin.utexas.edu

- Children & Society
- Conflict Resolution & Peace Studies
- Ethics & Leadership
- Innovation, Creativity & Entrepreneurship

BDP ADVISING PHILOSOPHY

The BDP advisors practice academic advising that is student-centered and that grows out of a commitment to each student's development as a thoughtful, purposeful, and life-long learner. We use an individualized, proactive approach to advising as we assist students in exploring and articulating their interests, developing meaningful educational plans, exploring opportunities and resources, clarifying academic and career goals, and accomplishing objectives. We see ourselves as student advocates who play an integral role in giving undergraduates the tools they need to creatively shape their college experience. In keeping with the mission of the Bridging Disciplines Programs, we support students in becoming versatile thinkers who are able to bring together the perspectives, tools, and skills of multiple disciplines to come to a more sophisticated understanding of complex issues and questions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF BDP ADVISING

BDP advisors are here to:

- Promote your involvement in interdisciplinary experiences.
- Help you take advantage of university resources, such as working with faculty members, getting involved in research, studying abroad, and participating in internships.
- Help you integrate your degree requirements with your BDP certificate.
- Help you connect your academic interests with your post-graduate plans and goals.
- Promote your ability to identify disciplinary perspectives and understand complex interdisciplinary issues.
- Help you select courses and experiences that will enhance your understanding of your BDP subject area and the benefits of addressing a topic through multiple perspectives.
- Help you draw connections between knowledge and skills learned through coursework and those learned through research and internship experiences.
- Provide you with individualized guidance, support, and advocacy.
- Provide opportunities for community building through events and academic programs.

YOUR ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS AS A BDP STUDENT

As a BDP student, we expect you to:

- Be proactive, take initiative, and own your academic experience
- Identify your interests and career goals, and learn how these connect to academic resources at UT.
- Come prepared for advising sessions by thinking about courses or connecting experiences before your appointment.
- Actively follow up on ideas and/or referrals you and your advisor discuss in an advising appointment.
- Coordinate your BDP requirements with those of your degree plan, and utilize advising in your major or college to work toward completing those requirements.
- Find your place in the BDPs by being part of a community of learners and attending events and activities.
- Use BDP experiences to refine future goals and plans and reflect on these experiences in writing.
- Remember that advisors are available for more than just registration—we are here to assist you in both academic and non-academic advising.

*Students and Advisors Assume Shared Responsibility for the Advising Process

CONTACT AND COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR BDP ADVISOR

As a BDP student, you need to be an active participant in your education and take responsibility for all that you do in your college career. Your BDP advisors look forward to forming a partnership with you as you work to achieve your goals. In order to work in a collaborative effort and have successful advising sessions, please remember to:

- **Come prepared for your appointment.** This means being knowledgeable about your degree plan and BDP requirements, having ideas about your future coursework and connecting experiences, and being willing to discuss your current and future goals.
- **Keep the advising appointments you have made and be punctual.** If you are late, you may be asked to reschedule. Please notify our office as soon as possible if you need to cancel or reschedule, and we will make sure to reciprocate with the same courtesy.
- BDP advisors are extremely busy certain times of the year. **We ask that you schedule appointments as early as you can and be patient about email responses.**
- Feel free to speak to your BDP advisor about any non-academic issue you may have. Although we are here to advise you for your academic program, we will always work to help you resolve the issue or refer you to other resources when appropriate.
- Visit us often for any reason and consider the BDP office your ‘home base’ on campus. We always enjoy seeing you and hearing about the great things in your life!
- **Keep your email address current and read all correspondence from the BDP office and your BDP advisor.** We will use email to notify you of registration information, progress toward certification, and events within and outside of the BDP. These emails will come in three forms:
 - INFORMATIONAL (for your information)
 - RESPONSE REQUIRED (to RSVP for an event, etc.)
 - ACTION REQUIRED (action needs to be taken on your part as soon as possible).



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BDP Student Requirements

As a BDP student, you are **eligible for a number of benefits** designed to help you progress through your certificate requirements. These benefits include:

- Requesting seats in classes that count toward your certificate requirements.
- Registering for Connecting Experience research and internship credit through BDP course numbers, which are only available to BDP students.
- Applying for Connecting Experience scholarships through the BDP office.

In order to be eligible for these benefits, we expect you to be actively making progress toward completing your certificate. In addition to completing coursework, you are also expected to **fulfill the following requirements**, which are also listed on your progress sheet, as part of your BDP work:

- Attending orientation for new BDP students.
- Coming in for an appointment with your BDP advisor during your first semester in the program.
- During semesters in which you are completing a Connecting Experience, submitting Connecting Experience Check-in 1 information online and attending Connecting Experience Check-in 2. Your Connecting Experience will not be considered complete unless you have satisfied this requirement.
- During semesters in which you are completing a Connecting Experience, submitting a Reflection Essay by the deadline. Your Connecting Experience will not be considered complete unless you have satisfied this requirement.
- Submitting an Integration Essay by the deadline during your final semester in the program.

Please note that if you are not completing each of these requirements, you are not making satisfactory progress toward your certificate, and you therefore will be ineligible for the benefits we provide for BDP students.

University of Texas at Austin Honor Code and Standard of Academic Integrity

As a student in the Bridging Disciplines Programs you are expected to follow the University of Texas at Austin *Honor Code* and *The Standard of Academic Integrity*. Please take time to read them.

Honor Code

The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

The Standard of Academic Integrity

A fundamental principle for any educational institution, academic integrity is highly valued and seriously regarded at The University of Texas at Austin, as emphasized in the standards of conduct. More specifically, you and other students are expected to "maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work" undertaken at the University (Sec. 11–801, Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities). This is a very basic expectation that is further reinforced by the University's Honor Code. At a minimum, you should complete any assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires you to:

- * acknowledge the contributions of other sources to your scholastic efforts;
- * complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- * follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- * avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.

For the official policies on academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty, please refer to Chapter 11 of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities.¹

¹ http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

What is Scholastic Dishonesty?

In promoting a high standard of academic integrity, the University broadly defines scholastic dishonesty—basically, all conduct that violates this standard, including any act designed to give an unfair or undeserved academic advantage, such as:

- * Cheating
- * Plagiarism
- * Unauthorized Collaboration
- * Collusion
- * Falsifying Academic Records
- * Misrepresenting Facts (e.g., providing false information to postpone an exam, obtain an extended deadline for an assignment, or even gain an unearned financial benefit)
- * Any other acts (or attempted acts) that violate the basic standard of academic integrity (e.g., multiple submissions—submitting essentially the same written assignment for two courses without authorization to do so)

Several types of scholastic dishonesty—unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, and multiple submissions—are discussed in more detail on this Web site to correct common misperceptions about these particular offenses and suggest ways to avoid committing them.²

² http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_whatdis.php

Writing Requirements

As part of completing your BDP, you will be required to produce two kinds of writing assignments, in addition to the other writing you produce for your instructors within your classes and connecting experiences. More than just a way of recording what you already know, writing can be a powerful means of developing and refining your understanding of a topic, as well as a tool for self-reflection. Both of the writing assignments you will complete for your BDP will help you with this process of self-reflection, and they will help you draw connections among the different components of your BDP certificate.

1. Reflection Essay

For each of the connecting experiences you complete as part of your BDP experience, you will write a Reflection Essay that will be turned in to the BDP office on the last class day of the semester in which you complete the experience. The Reflection Essay is designed to help you think about your connecting experience in the larger context of your BDP work, your major, and your educational and professional goals.

For additional guidelines on writing your Reflection Essay, please see the Connecting Experience Reflection Essay Guidelines, included in this Handbook and available on the BDP web site.

2. Integration Essay

During your last semester at UT, as you are completing your final requirements for the BDP certificate, you will write an Integration Essay. You might think of your integration essay as the roadmap to your BDP—your opportunity to reflect for yourself and articulate for others how your coursework, your research and internship experiences, and your other experiences on and off campus have together shaped your intellectual and professional interests, accomplishments, and goals. Unlike the Reflection Essay, which focuses on a single connecting experience, your Integration Essay should discuss all of the components of your BDP experience in relation to one another and to your future goals.

For additional guidelines on writing your Integration Essay, please see the Integration Essay Guidelines, included in this Handbook and available on the BDP web site.

BDP Course Petition Form

Student name:		EID:
Email address:		
Major:	Expected Graduation Date:	
BDP:	Strand:	
Proposed course (Please include department, course number, and title):		
Instructor:		Semester:
Please indicate what requirement you are attempting to fill: <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Course <input type="checkbox"/> Strand Course <input type="checkbox"/> Connecting Experience		

1. Attach a copy of the syllabus to this cover sheet.
2. Attach a brief explanation (typed) of why you think this course should count toward your BDP certificate.
3. Please list any completed BDP courses and connecting experiences.
4. Please list any additional courses or connecting experiences that you plan to complete in the future.

For _____ semester, petitions must be received no later than _____.

For Office Use Only
Date received:
Decision: Approved Denied

Sample BDP Course Petition Explanation

Emily Sterne (ECS289)

Ethics and Leadership: Media, Ethics & Public Policy

Course Petition for *CMS 367: Communication Ethics* with Dr. Stroud

I applied to the Media, Ethics & Public Policy strand of the Ethics & Leadership BDP because I am interested in both government and public relations. I am especially interested learning how to communicate political messages effectively and ethically to women and minorities. Upon graduating from UT, I hope to work in public or media relations for a political party or candidate. *CMS 367: Communication Ethics* would be a great Media, Ethics & Public Policy strand course for my certificate because the focus of the course was on the role of ethics in communication. Ethical issues were always at the center of our readings and class discussions for this course, regardless of whether we were exploring political communication, journalism, or public relations. The use of case studies in the class helped to make analysis of the ethical questions more concrete and understandable. I particularly enjoyed learning about the differences in male and female responses to political television broadcasts during the 2006 mid-term elections. I believe the information that I learned from this course will directly benefit me in my long-term goals, and I hope the course can count as a strand course for my certificate.

**Please include entire syllabus with course petition

CMS 367: Communication Ethics
University of Texas at Austin
Spring 2008

Instructor: Dr. Scott R. Stroud
Phone: 512-471-6561
Email: sstroud@mail.utexas.edu
Class Time: MWF 11-12noon
Classroom: CMA A5.136
Class Website: on Blackboard

Office: CMA 7.132
Office Hours: MWF 10-11am, &
by appointment

CourseDescription:

This course examines the ethical issues involved in communication. How ought we to play our part in all of the interactions we are party to? How should the media cover issues of a sensitive or potentially harmful nature? How do new technologies and practices impact the ethical situations in communication? How do our interactions with others reflect and shape who we truly are? We will build our examination of communication ethics from two fundamental premises: (1) we create the sort of person that we are through our actions and inactions, and (2) an ethical communicator is one who acts with integrity. We will examine the ethical theories of a variety of thinkers and consider what they have to say about the selves we are creating through how we communicate with others. We will also see what light they shed on the topic of living and communicating with integrity. Lively discussion will be encouraged by our frequent analysis of case studies. Additionally, students will be able to write a term paper on a topic of their choice in communication ethics.

This course will begin with an examination of some major theorists in normative ethics. We will read selections of important works from Aristotle, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant, John Rawls, and Jürgen Habermas. Additionally, we will read contemporary sources in feminist and pragmatist ethics. We will then take our knowledge of moral decision-making and begin exploring contemporary topics in media and communication ethics. These shall include the topics of free speech, public speaking, political communication and advertising, public relations, blogging, journalism, photo manipulation, and organizational communication. Through our examination of these ethical issues, we will continue to explore the uses and limits of the normative theories analyzed at the beginning of this course. Students are encouraged to determine for themselves which ethical system, if any, largely captures what we think ought to be included in our concept of the person who lives and communicates with integrity.

Required Textbook:

1. A Practical Guide to Ethics: Living and Leading with Integrity, Rita C. Manning & Scott R. Stroud, Westview Press, January 2008, PGE.

ReadingHandouts(CourseReaderavailable atJenn's Copy):

1. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I, Hackett Edition.
2. Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, (1781), Chps 1, 4, & 5.
3. John Stuart Mill, "What Utilitarianism is," from *Utilitarianism* (1861).
4. Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 1785, selections from Sections I & II.
5. Rita C. Manning, "Just Caring," from *Speaking from the Heart*, Rowman & Littlefield, 1992.

Writing about Your BDP Experiences

The experiences you have in the BDP contribute to how you present yourself to other audiences, especially when you're applying for future educational and professional opportunities: scholarships, internships, jobs, graduate/professional school programs. This handout offers tips and examples for how to write effectively about your connecting experiences in two formats:

Resumés and CVs
Personal Statements

Resumés and CVs

Both your BDP certificate and your individual connecting experiences should be part of your resumé or your *curriculum vitae* (CV). While the BDP as a whole can demonstrate a secondary area of expertise in addition to your major, your connecting experiences might demonstrate that you have research skills or experience, that you have hands-on professional experience in an organization, or that you've been pursuing opportunities and gaining experience in a field of interest to you.

Listing Your BDP

Your BDP certificate can be listed under the "Education" heading in your resumé or CV. List it as a certificate, underneath your major. It's your choice whether you want to list your strand area as well as the BDP name, and there are several ways you can list the BDP itself, depending on what you want to emphasize.

Example #1:

University of Texas at Austin
Bachelor of Arts, Sociology, *expected May 2011*
Interdisciplinary Certificate, Social Inequality, Health, and Policy, *expected May 2008*
Major GPA 3.6
Cumulative GPA 3.5

Example #2:

University of Texas at Austin
B.S., Biology (Section of Integrative Biology), May 2010
Certificate, Ethics and Leadership (Ethics of Health Care concentration)

Example #3:

University of Texas at Austin, May 2010
Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies
Bridging Disciplines Certificate in Digital Arts and Media

Listing Your Research Experiences

Research experience can be listed on a resumé or CV in a variety of ways, depending on the other kinds of experience you're including and on the form your research experience took.

Example #1: If you have multiple research experiences, you might consider a subheading called "Research Experience."

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Dr. Edward Anderson, Fall 2009–Spring 2010

- Served as a research assistant on a project examining how children adjust to parents' divorce and remarriage.
- Observed videotaped interviews with children and coded responses.
- Helped compile and summarize coded responses.

Independent Research Project in Psychology, Fall 2009

- Designed and conducted research study on emotional development in children.
 - Wrote paper, "Emotional Development in Children," summarizing findings.
-

Example #2: If you only have one research experience, you may wish to combine your research experience with related experience under another subheading, such as "Professional Experience," "Coursework," or "International Experience."

Professional Experience

Research Assistant, Dr. Edward Anderson, Fall 2009–Spring 2010

- Served as a research assistant on a project examining how children adjust to parents' divorce and remarriage.
- Observed videotaped interviews with children and coded responses.
- Helped compile and summarize coded responses.

Selected Coursework

Independent Undergraduate Research Course, UT–Austin, Fall 2009

- Worked with Dr. Chris Bell, Department of Geological Sciences
- Designed/conducted research project on snake habitats in Waller Creek, Austin, TX.
- Wrote a 10–page research paper summarizing findings.

International Experience

Study Abroad in Lizard Island, Australia, May–June 2009

- Conducted ecological research on the aquatic environment in the Great Barrier Reef, working with a class on field research and analysis.
- Designed and completed an independent research project on an endangered plant species on Lizard Island.

2. Personal Statements

How—or even whether—you talk about your connecting experiences or your BDP in a personal statement will depend on your experience, the opportunity you’re applying for, and the extent to which your connecting experience or BDP can demonstrate something you want to convey about yourself. Whether or not your experience is directly connected to your future goals, it can be a powerful means of giving someone who doesn’t know you a picture of who you are.

If your connecting experience or BDP directly relates to the program/opportunity you’re seeking ...

- Play up your experience in your statement! Tell your audience why and how this experience relates to your educational and career goals.
- Use the experience to demonstrate that your interest in the program doesn’t just come out of nowhere, but that you’ve been pursuing this interest during your time as an undergraduate.
- Even if the experience has told you what you *don’t* want to do in the future, telling the story of how the connecting experience helped you refine your goals can be an effective way of conveying who you are and how serious self-reflection has shaped your goals.

If your connecting experience or BDP isn’t directly related to the opportunity you’re seeking ...

- Think about whether the connecting experience or BDP demonstrates something valuable about yourself. Does it show that you have research skills that could be transferable to a different context? Does it demonstrate that you have hands-on experience in a similar field? Does it show that you’re well-rounded? Does it show that you have leadership experience? That you take initiative?
- Think about how much space you want to dedicate to the connecting experience or the BDP. Depending on your goals and your other experience, the connecting experience or BDP certificate could warrant a whole paragraph, or it could be one item in a list of other similar experience you bring to the table.
- Think about what your audience is looking for in an applicant. You might have to explain your connecting experience or BDP in such a way as to convey the information you want to convey.

Consider the part your experience plays in the story you’re telling about yourself

- Your personal statement should tell a story, and the pieces of your experience you choose to describe should contribute to and help flesh out that story.
- You can choose whether to talk about the connecting experience as part of the BDP certificate or by itself. Which approach tells the story you want to tell?
- Is the experience a big part of the story you’re telling, or a smaller part? The amount of space and detail you dedicate to the experience will depend on your answer to this question.
- Did the connecting experience help you discover what you want to do in graduate school? If so, you might think about telling a story of that discovery. Tell about what you did, what you learned about yourself, and how that learning has impacted your plans for further study or future career.
- As with any story you tell, the more well-chosen detail you can supply, the better. Don’t be vague about what you’ve done. Give some detail that will give your readers a concrete sense of what you did and why it’s interesting.
- Don’t get bogged down in explaining terminology: Your audience won’t understand the term “connecting experience,” but they will understand “research” or “internship.” There’s no need to refer to what you’re doing as a connecting experience. Rather, you should describe what you did in terms that will make sense to an outside audience.
- BDP TAs are available to offer individual consultations on personal statements. Contact the BDP office or your advisor for more details.



Connecting Experiences Guide: Part One:

Planning and Preparations

Step One: Plan Ahead!

- **Start Planning Early.** Start thinking about what you want to do in the semester before your experience. Will you complete research, an internship or a creative project? ***Keep in mind that students going abroad have an earlier Connecting Experience deadline; check the Connecting Experience Abroad Timeline for specific deadlines.***
- **Meet with your BDP Advisor.** Your advisor can help you brainstorm what you want to do, refine your project, help you find the right faculty mentor, and help you prepare to contact faculty members or internship sites. Your advisor will also help you understand the forms, requirements, course registration and deadlines.
- **Visit the Study Abroad Office.** Note that if you plan to integrate a connecting experience with a study abroad experience, you may need to plan further ahead to work with study abroad deadlines. The advisors in the Study Abroad Office are familiar with the BDPs, and they can help you find study abroad experiences that could integrate a research or internship component.

Step Two: Self-Assessment*

- **Clarify your interests and objectives for doing a Connecting Experience.**
 - What do you hope to gain from the experience?
 - What type(s) of work/research do you want to do?
 - Where do you want to work or conduct research (geographical location)?
 - For Internships– What type of organization would you like to work for? A non-profit organization, a for-profit company, a government agency, or a school or education institution? A small or large organization?
- **Clarify your BDP connections and objectives.**
 - How does the internship, creative project or research connect to your BDP topic and strand?
 - What do you hope to learn about your BDP topic and strand through this experience?
- **Think about your personality and values.**
 - Are you more comfortable working with a lot of other people or would you prefer to work alone?
 - Would you prefer to work with details, having specific deadlines, or would you feel more comfortable brainstorming new ideas?
 - What is going to make your internship or research a meaningful experience? Making connections with people in your field of interest, working on creative projects, developing leadership skills, etc.?

Step Three: Explore Connecting Experience Opportunities

FOR INTERNSHIPS:

- **Explore.** Check out the BDP Internship Resources Sheet in our office or on our website for links to various sites that post internship opportunities.
- **Search.** Get on the web and search for companies, agencies, or organizations that match your interests. Find out if they have an internship program, or if they are open to having an intern. Students have found internships by contacting an organization and asking whether they might be willing to work with an intern.
- **Get out there!** Go to recruiting events, internship fairs, and other events to make connections with people. Consider conducting an *Informational Interview* to find out more about a company and/or organization. *Informational Interviews* also give you the opportunity to introduce yourself. Many BDP students have found rewarding internships by networking.
- **Link.** Get on the mailing list of your college's career center and or other professional organizations related to your interests.
- **Learn from others.** Go to the BDP web site and read some of our Connecting Experience profiles to find out how other students have found internships and to get ideas about possible internship sites you might not have considered.

FOR RESEARCH:

- **Consider.** Research experiences can be independent projects or research assistant opportunities with a faculty member, so think about what you'd like to do. Research assistant opportunities can be difficult to come by, so be sure to stay connected to your BDP advisor if you are looking for this kind of opportunity.
- **Explore.** Meet with your BDP advisor to brainstorm research ideas.
- **Link.** Get on the mailing list of your college's career center and or other professional organizations related to your interests. Be sure to read the BDP Bulletin and emails from your BDP Advisor. Oftentimes faculty will contact the BDP office about undergraduate research opportunities on campus. Also, be sure to stay up to date on any opportunities offered through your Department.
- **Learn from others.** Go to the BDP web site and read some of our Connecting Experience profiles to find out about previous research experiences BDP students have completed.

****Steps Four and Five relate to Internships Only***

Step Four: Develop Internship Search Skills

- **Resumé.** Most internship sites will ask you to have a resumé, be sure to update it with your most recent information and submit a resumé when you apply. If include your BDP work. For help with your resumé, be sure to check out your college's career center and/or visit the Sanger Learning Center.
- **Cover Letter.** You will want to prepare an individualized cover letter for each internship application you submit. Many times the resume is sent as an attachment and the e-mail messages serves as a cover letter. For help with your cover letter you can also go to your college's career center and/or visit the Sanger Learning Center (SLC).
- **Practice.** Keep in mind that the SLC and many college career offices will help you with interview tips and even set up mock interviews. Be sure to take advantage of these resources.

- **Talk about your BDP.** Mention your BDP certificate when you apply for internships. Check out the *Writing about your BDP Experience* page in your BDP student handbook, or talk to your advisor about how to highlight your BDP experience in your application materials and interviews.

Step Five: Apply for the Internship(s)

- **Deadlines! Deadlines!** Be sure to keep up with internship deadlines. Many of the most competitive internships have early application deadlines, so plan ahead.
- **Follow-up.** Send thank you letters after every interview and be sure to respond to all offers, even if you chose another opportunity.

Step Six: Find a Faculty Mentor

- **Reflect.** Think about faculty you know from a previous class or from another context whose background would be a good match for your Connecting Experience. Your faculty mentor should be someone who can help you make connections between your Connecting Experience and your other academic work, so think about what kind of expertise would help you make these connections.
- **Search.** Visit the EUREKA! website at <http://www.utexas.edu/research/eureka> to search for UT faculty with similar interests.
- **Visit.** You can find more information about faculty panel members and review their profiles on the BDP web site. They may be good mentor options or help connect you to colleagues.
- **Meet.** Make an appointment to meet with your BDP advisor to discuss possible faculty mentors or if you're having trouble finding a mentor.
- **Contact.** Once you have a faculty member in mind, contact that person to set up an appointment.

Follow these tips for contacting faculty members about the possibility of mentorship:

- Review the faculty member's curriculum vitae.
- Find out faculty members' proper titles– Dr. or Professor.
- Be sure to contact only one faculty member at a time and give each person a chance to reply before you move on to other possibilities.
- In one sentence, let the faculty member know why it is that you are interested in having them as a faculty mentor. Do you share academic interests? Have you read an article or book they have written? Did you take their course previously? Did someone recommend them as a mentor?
- Keep the email short! If at all possible, ask to set up an appointment to talk more about your Connecting Experience, your academic interests, and what it would mean for them to be a faculty mentor. You can direct possible mentors to the BDP website for more information about mentoring BDP students.
- Visit the BDP web site and read some sample emails for contacting faculty about BDP Connecting Experience mentorship.
- Ask your BDP advisor to read over your email to the faculty member. Your advisor can give you individualized feedback on contacting faculty members.
- If the faculty member is unable to act as your mentor, ask for recommendations for other colleagues with similar academic interests.

Connecting Experience Sample Emails to Faculty Mentors

Independent Research

Dear Professor Smith,

My name is Ally MacBeal and I am a History Junior as well as a Human Rights & Social Justice student in the Bridging Disciplines Programs. I am very interested in conducting independent research on the history of humanitarian aid in post-conflict Bosnia and Kosovo.

I read your article on humanitarian aid and I found your comparison of governmental and non-governmental aid very interesting. I would like to speak with you about your research and the possibility of having you as a faculty mentor for my independent research project.

Is there a convenient time to stop by your office to speak with you?

Thank you for your time.

Ally MacBeal

Research Assistant

Dear Professor Snape,

My name is Brian Botano and I am a Geography sophomore pursuing an interdisciplinary certificate in Environment through the Bridging Disciplines Programs. I am writing to you today regarding my interest in researching aquatic biology.

Professor Shepard informed me of your current research on aquatic biology in Central Texas watersheds. I would be grateful for the opportunity to speak to you about your research and the possibility of assisting you with your project.

Is there a convenient time I could come to your office and speak with you?

Thanks you for your time.

Brian Botano

Internship

Dear Dr. Sollee,

My name is Alexi Murdoch and I am a Psychology junior pursuing a Bridging Disciplines Certificate in Children & Society. I have secured an Internship with the Office of Family Initiatives in the Office of the Attorney General and was hoping to discuss my upcoming internship with you.

I found your name through the Office of Undergraduate Research's Eureka website and am interested in your research on Public Policy related to children and families. I would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss your academic work and the possibility of having you as a faculty mentor for my internship.

Is there a convenient time I could come to your office to meet with you?

Thank you for your time.

Alexi Murdoch

Internship Listing Resources

AccessUT. AccessUT is a recruiting and job/internship search site for the University of Texas. New internships are posted almost daily and you can search the web site by college, job type, and a variety of other options. **Link:** accessut.utexas.edu

Center for Women's and Gender Studies Internship Blog. This blog lists job and internship postings related to Women's and Gender Studies. **Link:** blogs.utexas.edu/cwgs/category/internshipsjobs

Environmental Science Institute Opportunities for Undergraduates. This site is maintained by the Environmental Science Institute at UT and posts various opportunities for students related to the environment. **Link:** <http://www.esi.utexas.edu/students/overview-student-opportunities/103-opportunities-for-undergraduates>

HireStandards. HireStandards is a career blog created by The UT College of Communications for their students and alumni. By clicking on the Internship tab you can find helpful general information about internships and get linked to Internship Postings. **Link:** hirestandards.wordpress.com

Idealist. Idealist is a web page connecting people with organizations, job openings, volunteer opportunities and internships. They list opportunities with non-profit organizations exclusively and you can search by location, keyword or opportunity type. **Link:** www.idealist.org

Internships.com. This web page list internships offered by businesses and non-profits across the United States. It lets you search by keyword, location and even by a specific company. **Link:** www.internships.com

Internship Site Review on COLA Career Services Website. This College of Liberal Arts Career Center web page lets you click on specific Internship Sites to review descriptions and feedback from UT students who have held internship positions at these sites. **Link:** www.utexas.edu/cola/orgs/lacs/Students/Coaching/SiteReviews.php

LBJ Online Resources for Locating Internships. This web page is a very extensive listing of online resources for locating internships, including links to specific agencies and organizations such as the Smithsonian, Environmental Protection Agency and USAID. **Link:** www.utexas.edu/lbj/internships/links

Making the difference. Making the Difference is a web page of federal job and internship opportunities. The site allows you to search by a variety of filters including location, field of interest and availability. **Link:** www.makingthedifference.org

Serve Here Spotlight. "The Serve Here Spotlight, provides information about opportunities for public service, scholarships, internships, service learning and other ways to connect with the community." **Link:** blogs.utexas.edu/ddcecentral/2011/07/12/the-serve-here-spotlight

Volunteer Match. Volunteer Match connects people with opportunities at non-profit organizations and civic-minded businesses. The web page allows you to search by location and keyword. For example, type Austin and the keyword Internship and you'll get a list of internships in the Austin area! **Link:** www.volunteermatch.org

**For information and links to specific organizations and businesses where BDP students have interned previously check out the BDP webpage for your BDP.*

***Websites subject to change. Please utilize a search engine if the link does not work.*

****If you know of Internship Resources please let Christine Anderson know by emailing her at canderson.austin.utexas.edu.*

Connecting Experiences Guide: Part Two:

Complete Proposal Paperwork and Gather Signatures

Your application deadline date will depend on the location of your experience. For connecting experiences in the U.S. all forms for Fall and Spring connecting experiences are due by the 4th class day of the semester in which you plan to complete the experience; all forms for summer connecting experiences are due on the last day of finals for the spring semester. If you are going abroad, your deadline will be during the semester before your experience. Check out the Connecting Experience Abroad Timeline for exact dates. **Late contracts will not be accepted. Remember that it can take time to get signatures from faculty members and internship supervisors.**

Connecting Experience Paperwork

- **Contract.** Every student completing a Connecting Experience is required to fill out a Contract based on the type of experience; research, creative project or internship.
 - Make sure you and your faculty mentor discuss and agree on a meeting schedule and requirements, expectations, and basis for grading the connecting experience.
 - Keep in mind that your experience cannot count as a Connecting Experience and you cannot be registered for a BDP research or internship course without a completed contract, signed by your faculty mentor.
- **Proposal Statement.** Along with your contract, you need to submit a 1-page statement describing your proposed experience. In your project description, be sure to clearly articulate how your experience relates to your BDP topic and, if applicable, to your strand. Please include information about why you want to work with the specific faculty mentor you have chosen.
- **Internship Supervisor Form. (For Connecting Internship Experiences Only)** This form should be completed by you and your supervisor at the internship site. Keep in mind that your faculty mentor and internship supervisor CANNOT be the same person.
- **Scholarship Form.** If you apply for a Connecting Experiences Scholarship and your experience will take place in the United States, you will be notified on or about the 12th class day whether or not you will receive an award. If you are going abroad, you will be notified within 2 weeks of your application deadline.

***All contracts will be reviewed immediately after the deadline and you will be notified about approval of your proposal thereafter.**

All Connecting Experience Forms can be found on the BDP web site at:
<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp>

Timeline For Connecting Experiences Within the U.S.

Students who will be completing their Connecting Experiences within the United States need to adhere by the timeline and guidelines below. Please check with your BDP advisor about any questions you may have regarding this process. Check the BDP web site for dates specific to the current semester.

SPRING & FALL Connecting Experiences Process and Timeline

1. 4th class day – Deadline for all spring Connecting Experiences in the U.S.

- a. Paperwork submitted to BDP office should include:
 - i. Completed Connecting Experience contract which includes:
 1. Connecting Experience Contract cover sheet
 2. One-page proposal
 3. Signature of faculty mentor
 4. Internship Supervisor form (if applicable)
 - ii. If applying for a scholarship, completed scholarship application
- b. Soon after the deadline, students will be notified if their connecting experience has been approved or if the BDP office needs additional information from you. At this time BDP advisors will also:
 - i. Confirm registration
 - ii. Send scholarship notifications

2. **12th class day** – All students should be registered for appropriate spring course credit before this date. Those students needing BDP 310/320 or BDP 311/321 credit will be registered by their BDP advisor no later than the 12th class day.
-

SUMMER Connecting Experiences Process and Timeline

1. Last day of spring finals – Deadline for all summer Connecting Experiences in the U.S.

- a. Paperwork submitted to BDP office should include:
 - i. Completed Connecting Experience contract which includes:
 1. Connecting Experience Contract cover sheet
 2. One-page proposal
 3. Signature of faculty mentor
 4. Internship Supervisor form (if applicable)
 - ii. If applying for a scholarship, completed scholarship application
- b. Students will be notified if their connecting experience has been approved. At this time BDP advisors will also:
 - i. Confirm registration
 - ii. Send scholarship notifications

2. **First class day of summer session** – Any student who has not registered will need to register and pay their tuition bill on the 1st class day. Any students needing BDP 310/320 or BDP 311/321 credit will be registered by their BDP advisor on the 1st class day of summer session. Please remember to pay your bill this day, otherwise your registration will be canceled and you may be charged a late fee.

GOING ABROAD?

Please review the following important information AND schedule an appointment with your BDP advisor

Is the place where you are going abroad on the “Restricted Regions” list?

According to University policy, **no student may travel for academic purposes to a location on the “Restricted Regions” list**, maintained by the University International Oversight Committee (IOC), without IOC approval. The Restricted Regions list includes, but is not limited to, all countries with a current Travel Warning issued by the U.S. Department of State, and its purpose is to protect the safety of students, faculty, and staff when traveling abroad on University business.

In keeping with this policy, **the BDP cannot approve any connecting experience proposal that includes travel to a country that appears on this list, unless the student has petitioned and obtained approval from the IOC.** It is important that you meet with your BDP advisor early to discuss your goals and the nature of your petition to travel to a Restricted Region. We hope you understand that this policy is intended only to protect your safety, not to discourage your research or interests in any way. If you think you have a compelling reason to travel to a country that appears on this list, there is an appeals process that you may discuss with your BDP advisor. Information about Restricted Regions can be found here: <http://world.utexas.edu/ioc/>.

Are you receiving credit for BDP 310, 311, 320 or 321 while abroad but you are not enrolled in a UT study abroad program? OR Are you extending your time abroad in order to conduct research independent of your formal study abroad program?

If so, please complete the following *REQUIRED Student Travel and Insurance Policy for International Locations*

In order to support all students traveling to international locations the University has put into place an **Authorization to Travel process REQUIRED for all students going abroad for an internship or research who are NOT participating in an official study abroad program or applying for ISR status** (see below). This requirement is for students enrolled in BDP 320 or 321 or another UT course number in the summer and for those extending their time to intern or conduct research before or after a formal study abroad program.

There is a multi-step process through the Study Abroad Office to obtain Authorization to Travel, including attending a **REQUIRED International Travel Workshop. You can begin this process** through the following website: <http://world.utexas.edu/abroad/itr>
Please begin this process as early as possible.

All students with Authorization to Travel will be automatically enrolled in the **International Insurance Coverage** plan (aka Overseas Insurance) and pay the associated fee (\$19/per week). You may list these costs as part of your itemized budget when applying for a BDP Connecting Experiences Scholarship.

Additional information about this required plan is available on the Study Abroad Office Insurance website: <http://world.utexas.edu/abroad/health/insurance>

Will your Connecting Experience start in the summer but end in the fall and fall is when you will be registered for BDP 310, 311, 320, 321 or another UT course?

You will need to apply for *Independent Study and Research or ISR Status*

When students travel abroad for a connecting experience that is not affiliated with a formal study abroad program, the BDP requires that the student have official student status with the university. For most students, this will mean registering for course credit for their connecting experience during the semester in which they are traveling. **In the unusual event that students are planning their travel in a semester when they cannot be registered for a UT course, they must register for Independent Study and Research (ISR) status** in order for the experience to be approved.

A student enrolled in ISR is considered a full-time student, has an active UT ID card, and is eligible to use UT Austin Libraries, ITS computer support services, and University Health Services. Undergraduates will be registered in ISR 000. There is a one time \$50 fee charged to students who apply for this registration status. Once approved the actual cost of registration per semester is approximately \$400. Please visit the Study Abroad Office Independent Study and Research (ISR) Information Page to request ISR status:

<http://world.utexas.edu/abroad/programs/isr>

Students applying for ISR status do NOT need to complete the Authorization to Travel process as this is part of the ISR application.

Timeline For Connecting Experiences Abroad

Many Bridging Disciplines Programs students choose to complete a Connecting Experience while they are abroad. Their research or internship experience abroad typically occurs in one of the following ways:

- as a component of a study abroad program;
- as an add-on to a study abroad program;
- as an independent research project or internship experience, not linked to a formal study abroad program (See *Going Abroad?* policy).

Planning for your Connecting Experience abroad is much the same as planning for a Connecting Experience in this country. The important difference is that you will want to **begin the planning process much earlier** in order to meet Study Abroad Office deadlines, make the necessary arrangements to prepare for your research or internship experience, and complete BDP contracts and paperwork.

Students who will be completing any part of their Connecting Experience abroad need to adhere to the timeline and guidelines below. Please check with your BDP advisor about any questions you may have regarding this process. Check the BDP web site for dates specific to the current semester.

Spring Connecting Experiences Process and Timeline

1. **Early Fall** – Attend Connecting Experience FAQ/Q&A session for all students interested in going abroad for all or part of their spring connecting experience.
 2. **November 1 – Deadline for all Spring Connecting Experiences Abroad** (*Deadline applies to any student who is doing any part of the connecting experience outside of the United States.*)
 - a. Paperwork submitted to BDP office should include:
 - i. Completed CE contract
 1. Connecting Experience Contract cover sheet
 2. One-page proposal
 3. Signature of faculty mentor
 4. Internship Supervisor form (if applicable)
 - ii. Restricted Regions petition (if applicable—see your BDP advisor if you are uncertain whether this is required for you.)
 - iii. If applying for a scholarship, completed scholarship application
 3. **November 15** – Students will be notified if their Connecting Experience has been approved. At this time BDP advisors will also:
 - a. Confirm registration
 - b. Send scholarship notifications
 - c. Inform students about a mandatory meeting held through the Study Abroad Office later in the fall
 4. **First Class Day of Spring Semester** – Students needing BDP 310/320 or BDP 311/321 credit will be registered by their BDP advisor.
-

Summer Connecting Experiences Process and Timeline

1. **Mid-February** – Attend Connecting Experience FAQ/Q&A session for all students interested in going abroad for all or part of their summer or fall Connecting Experience.
2. **April 1 – Deadline for all Summer Connecting Experiences Abroad** (*Deadline applies to any student who is doing any part of the Connecting Experience outside of the U.S.*)
 - a. Paperwork submitted to BDP office should include:
 - i. Completed Connecting Experience contract
 1. Connecting Experience Contract cover sheet
 2. One-page proposal
 3. Signature of faculty mentor
 4. Internship Supervisor form (if applicable)
 - ii. Restricted Regions petition (if applicable—see your BDP advisor if you are uncertain whether this is required for you.)
 - iii. Signed acknowledgement of summer fees
 - iv. If applying for a scholarship, completed scholarship application
3. **April 15** – Students will be notified if their Connecting Experience has been approved. At this time BDP advisors will also:
 - a. Confirm registration
 - b. Send scholarship notifications
 - c. Inform students about a mandatory meeting held through the Study Abroad Office later in the spring
4. **Mid-April** – Summer & Fall registration begins. Students needing BDP 310/320 or BDP 311/321 credit will be registered by their BDP advisor.

Fall Connecting Experiences Process and Timeline

1. **Mid-February** – Attend Connecting Experience FAQ/Q&A session for all students interested in going abroad for all or part of their summer or fall connecting experience.
2. **August 1 – Deadline for all Fall Connecting Experiences Abroad** (*Deadline applies to any student who is doing any part of the Connecting Experience outside of the U.S.*)
 - a. Paperwork submitted to BDP office should include:
 - i. Completed CE contract
 1. Connecting Experience Contract cover sheet
 2. One-page proposal
 3. Signature of faculty mentor
 4. Internship Supervisor form (if applicable)
 - ii. Restricted Regions petition (if applicable—see your BDP advisor if you are uncertain whether this is required for you.)
3. **August 15** – Students will be notified if their Connecting Experience has been approved. At this time BDP advisors will also:
 - a. Confirm registration
 - b. Inform students about a mandatory meeting held through the Study Abroad Office
4. **First Class Day of Fall Semester** – Students needing BDP 310/320 or BDP 311/321 credit will be registered by their BDP advisor.
5. **Beginning of September**– Scholarship notifications will be sent to students.



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

FAC 338 • 512-232-7564 • <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp>

Connecting Experience Contract: INTERNSHIP

Student name: _____ EID: _____ Email: _____

BDP: _____ Strand: _____

This contract is for an internship experience in _____ Location: _____
(semester/year) (city, state/country)

Title: _____
(placement of internship)

Course number: _____ Unique number: _____ Semester of credit: ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Sum _____
(year)

Faculty mentor name: _____ Faculty dept: _____

Faculty email: _____

Required documentation:

- 1-page statement describing your proposed internship experience. In your project description, be sure to clearly articulate how your proposed Connecting Experience relates to your BDP topic and, if applicable, to your strand, and please explain why you have chosen your faculty mentor.
- Completed *Internship Supervisor Information* form.

Complete the following in collaboration with your faculty mentor:

- Student Requirements:
 - See reverse for requirements of all students in a Connecting Internship Experience.
 - Additional requirements as agreed upon by the faculty mentor and student. **Please Specify Below** (e.g. Reading list, journal entries, etc.)

- Basis for grading for semester:
 - The basis for grading is agreed upon by the professor and student. **Please specify below.** For additional information, see Connecting Experiences expectations and guidelines on the reserve of this page. (If coursework includes a writing assignment, please specify the number of pages.)
 - NOTE: All Connecting Experiences may be graded using the plus/minus grading system.

- Professor/student conferences (e.g. weekly in-person meetings, email contact every other week, etc).
 - Frequency of contact: ☐ weekly ☐ biweekly ☐ other
 - Type of Contact: ☐ in-person meetings ☐ email contact ☐ other

If other, please explain: _____

We have read the Connecting Experience expectations on page 2 and agree to the terms stated above.

Faculty Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

(Faculty mentor must be a currently active faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin.)

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Connecting Internship Experience Expectations and Guidelines

I. Student Requirements:

- 160-180 hours of internship experience
- Attendance at two mandatory Connecting Experience Check-In Meetings (see your BDP advisor or consult the BDP website for details and dates)
- Completion of Reflection Essay submitted to the BDP Office

II. Student Expectations When Completing a BDP Connecting Experience

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the supervising faculty member.

In addition to the Student Requirements listed above, students must meet the expectations stated below.

- Agree on a plan for the semester with the faculty mentor *before* the connecting experience begins. The plan should include academic requirements, the basis for grading the experience, and a plan for student/professor meetings for the semester (frequency of contact; via email, in-person, team meetings, etc).
- Use good communication skills. It is the student's responsibility to report progress and seek guidance when needed. If you encounter a problem or make a mistake, discuss it with your faculty mentor and/or internship supervisor right away. If you have questions about your BDP obligations, contact the BDP office so that issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Be self-motivated. Students are expected to be active and reliable participants in the internship experience. Your supervisor should not have to prompt you to show up for work or finish a project.
- Know the expectation for course credit. Student is responsible for knowing and fulfilling any departmental requirements and for keeping the faculty member supervising the connecting experience informed about their work.
- Follow the University of Texas at Austin *Honor Code* and *Standard of Academic Integrity*.

III. Guidelines for Faculty Supervising BDP INTERNSHIP Connecting Experiences

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the supervising faculty member.

- Meet with student periodically throughout the semester or arrange regular e-mail contact.
- In conjunction with the BDP Coordinator, act as an advocate for the student, ensuring that the internship is educational and meaningful.
- Help student integrate the internship experience with issues and concepts from coursework.
- Encourage student to make connections between the internship experience and methodologies, controversies, and trends in her or his discipline.
- Help student consider new directions and possible career paths.
- Assign final grade or credit. This responsibility may vary depending on the course number and departmental requirements.
- The internship supervisor will be asked at the end of the semester to certify that the student met the minimum hour requirement (160-180 hours) and to provide a brief evaluation of the student's performance. Responses we receive will be provided to the faculty mentor, to help inform the final grade assignment.
- More faculty information is available on the BDP website: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp/faculty>

IV. BDP Specific Requirements

- **Environment BDP:** Students in the Environment BDP who are completing Connecting Internship Experiences are required to write a critical analysis of the experience, which should be at least 5 pages long and be part of the basis for grading.



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

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Request for Information from Internship Sponsor

The Bridging Disciplines Programs (BDPs) provide students at the University of Texas at Austin the opportunity to make connections among multiple fields of study. By promoting cross-disciplinary inquiry into salient social and intellectual issues, the BDPs prepare students to be effective leaders and collaborators. Recognizing the importance of experiential learning, the programs encourage students to make connections beyond the classroom as well. All students in the Bridging Disciplines Programs participate in research experiences and community-based internships related to their program of work, receive course credit for these placements, and are mentored by a UT faculty member throughout the semester of the experience.

Please see reverse of this form for detailed information on BDP internship experiences.

To be completed by BDP student:

Student name: _____ EID: _____ Email: _____

BDP: _____ Strand: _____

Internship experience semester/year: _____ Course abbreviation/number: _____

Faculty mentor name: _____ Faculty dept: _____

Please give a brief description of what you hope to gain from this internship experience.

To be completed by Internship Supervisor:

Name of organization: _____

Internship supervisor name: _____

Supervisor telephone: _____ Supervisor email: _____

Mailing address: _____

Please give a brief description of the kinds of activities in which the intern will participate:

How often will the intern receive feedback on his/her work? _____

Internship supervisors are asked to confirm hours worked by the student and submit a brief evaluation of the student's performance at the end of the internship semester (see reverse for additional information).

☐ I agree to complete an evaluation of this intern at the end of the semester.

Signature of Internship Supervisor: _____ Date: _____



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

512-232-7564

Flawn Academic Center, room 1

BDP Internship Experience Information Sheet

Expectations of Students Completing a BDP Internship Experience

In addition to completing BDP paperwork and meeting deadlines for the semester, students completing an internship experience must meet the expectations stated below.

- Secure an internship placement connected to the BDP topic. While we know the tasks assigned to students during the internship semester will vary depending on the placement and student, we expect that students be given the chance to apply what they've learned in the classroom to hands-on experiences.
- Complete 160-180 hours in the internship over the course of the semester.
- Use good communication skills. It is the student's responsibility to report progress and seek guidance when needed. If you encounter a problem or make a mistake, discuss it with your internship supervisor right away. If you have questions about your BDP obligations, contact the BDP office so that issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Be self-motivated. Students are expected to be active and reliable participants in the internship experience. Your supervisor should not have to prompt you to show up for work or finish a project.
- Know the expectation for course credit. The student is responsible for knowing and fulfilling any departmental requirements and for keeping the faculty member supervising the internship experience informed about their work. Agree on a plan for the semester with the faculty mentor *before* the internship begins. The plan should include academic requirements, the basis for grading the experience, and a plan for student/professor meetings for the semester (frequency of contact; via email, in-person, team meetings, etc).

Information for Internship Supervisors

- Internship activities are at the discretion of the internship supervisor; however, in order for students to receive course credit for the internship, at least part of their duties must be connected to their BDP work. While we know the tasks assigned to students during the internship semester will vary depending on the placement and student, we expect that students will be given the chance to apply what they've learned in the classroom to hands-on experiences related to their BDP topic.
- At the end of the semester, internship supervisors will be asked to provide the following information, which is required in order for students to receive course credit for the internship:
 - Confirm, by email, that the student has met the minimum hour requirement (160-180hrs) for the internship.
 - Provide a brief evaluation of the student's performance in the internship.
 - The information supervisors provide will be shared with the student's faculty mentor.
- BDP Connecting Experience advisors are available to answer questions and assist at any point in the internship process. Please phone 512-232-7564 for assistance.

Thank you for allowing our students the opportunity to gain valuable, "real-world" experience! Whether the internships are paid or unpaid, our undergraduate students gain an invaluable introduction to what it might be like to work in their chosen field. BDP students are encouraged to begin pursuing internships early in their undergraduate careers, and to consider trying more than one internship before they graduate. We appreciate the work you do as internship coordinators to work with full-time college students who may be experiencing the responsibilities of a professional position for the first time.



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

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Connecting Experience Contract: RESEARCH

Student name: _____ EID: _____ Email: _____

BDP: _____ Strand: _____

This contract is for an research experience in _____ Location: _____
(semester/year) (city, state/country)

Title: _____
(brief title of research)

Course number: _____ Unique number: _____ Semester of credit: ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Sum _____
(year)

Faculty mentor name: _____ Faculty dept: _____

Faculty email: _____

Required documentation:

- 1-page statement describing your proposed research experience. In your project description, be sure to clearly articulate how your proposed Connecting Experience relates to your BDP topic and, if applicable, to your strand, and please explain why you have chosen your faculty mentor.

Complete the following in collaboration with your faculty mentor:

- Student Requirements:
 - See reverse for requirements of all students in a Connecting Research Experience.
 - Additional requirements as agreed upon by the faculty mentor and student. **Please specify below.** (Ex: Reading list, research paper, journal entries, etc.)
- Basis for grading for semester:
 - The basis for grading is agreed upon by the professor and student. **Please specify below.** For additional information, see Connecting Experiences expectations and guidelines on the reserve of this page. (If coursework includes a writing assignment, please specify the number of pages.)
 - NOTE: All Connecting Experiences may be graded using the plus/minus grading system.

- Professor/student conferences (e.g. weekly in-person meetings, email contact every other week, etc).
 - Frequency of contact: ☐ weekly ☐ biweekly ☐ other
 - Type of Contact: ☐ in-person meetings ☐ email contact ☐ other

If other, please explain: _____

We have read the Connecting Experience expectations on page 2 and agree to the terms stated above.

Faculty Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
(Faculty mentor must be a currently active faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin.)

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Connecting Research Experience Expectations and Guidelines

I. Student Requirements:

- Attendance at two mandatory Connecting Experience Check-In Meetings (see your BDP advisor or consult the BDP website for details and dates)
- Completion of Reflection Essay submitted to the BDP Office

II. Student Expectations When Completing a BDP Connecting Experience

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the supervising faculty member.

In addition to the Student Requirements listed above, students must meet the expectations stated below.

- Agree on a plan for the semester with the faculty mentor *before* the connecting experience begins. The plan should include academic requirements, the basis for grading the experience, and a plan for student/professor meetings for the semester (frequency of contact; via email, in-person, team meetings, etc).
- Use good communication skills. It is the student's responsibility to report progress and seek guidance when needed. If you encounter a problem or make a mistake, discuss it with your faculty mentor right away. If you have questions about your BDP obligations, contact the BDP office so that issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Be self-motivated. Students are expected to be active and reliable participants in the research experience. Your mentor should not have to prompt you to show up for work or a meeting or to finish a project.
- Know the expectation for course credit. Student is responsible for knowing and fulfilling any departmental requirements and for keeping the faculty member supervising the connecting research experience informed about their work.
- Follow the University of Texas at Austin *Honor Code* and *Standard of Academic Integrity*.

III. Guidelines for Faculty Supervising BDP RESEARCH Connecting Experiences

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the supervising faculty member.

- Meet with student periodically throughout the semester or arrange regular e-mail contact.
- Help student integrate the research experience with issues and concepts from coursework.
- Encourage student to make connections between the research experience and methodologies, controversies, and trends in her or his discipline.
- Help student consider new directions and possible career paths.
- Encourage student to create a poster of his or her research and present the poster at the BDP Poster Session held each spring. Please consider including this as a requirement for a grade.
- Assign final grade or credit. This responsibility may vary depending on the course number and departmental requirements.
- More faculty information is available on the BDP website: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp/faculty>

IV. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Note

If your project uses people as test subjects, or uses data collected from or about people, you may require Institutional Review Board approval prior to conducting your proposed research. For information, contact:

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Office of Research Support, FAC 426
<http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humanresearch/index.html>

Phone: (512) 471-8871
Email: orsc@uts.cc.texas.edu

Please Note: If your project requires IRB approval, you cannot be awarded a scholarship without it.

Funding Your Research Experience

Undergraduate researchers at UT Austin will find many opportunities for funding and recognition. Scholarships and awards for participation in research exist at both at the university-wide level and in the colleges and schools across campus. Selected resources are listed below, but this is not an exhaustive list. Speak with your faculty supervisor when considering funding for your project. You will always want to clear your ideas with you supervisor prior to submitting the funding request. Plus, he or she may have recommendations about additional funding sources and possibilities specific to the discipline.

Requirements and deadlines for each of the opportunities listed below will vary. It is important to refer to the web sites for each of these awards for the most up-to-date information and deadlines. Most funding applications require students to submit *at the very least* a description of the proposed work, a budget, and a letter of recommendation from a faculty member. Start the process of finding funding early!

Scholarships and Funding Resources

- **Bridging Disciplines Programs Connecting Experience Scholarships**
(<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp/current/scholarships.html>)
Bridging Discipline Programs (BDP) students with an approved Connecting Experience can apply for a scholarship through the BDP office. Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis, and both financial need and merit will be considered. All BDP students in Connecting Experiences are encouraged to apply.
- **College of Liberal Arts Research Scholarships**
(<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/scholarships/research/>)
This web page provides a listing of all College of Liberal Arts Research Scholarships. Many are open to undergraduate students conducting research under the supervision of a faculty member.
- **College of Natural Sciences Research Fellowships**
(http://cns.utexas.edu/current_students/research/funding.asp)
The College of Natural Sciences funds and/or administers a number of fellowships for students doing research. Many outside sources of funding for students engaged in research are also listed on this page.
- **National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates**
(<http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/index.jsp>)
The National Science Foundation funds a large number of research opportunities for undergraduate students at universities across the United States. Students apply directly to the program at the host university. To search for available programs, visit the web site listed above. Students selected to participate in these programs are granted stipends and, in many cases, assistance with housing and travel expense. For a listing of the Research Experience for Undergraduates programs hosted on the UT campus, visit:
http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/ugr/2008_srsp_programs.html

- **Senate of College Councils Undergraduate Research Award**
(<http://utsenate.org/undergraduateresearch/>)
This \$1,000 award seeks to encourage students to get involved in research early in their undergraduate experience. Eligible applicants include students assisting a faculty member on that faculty member's research project and students conducting independent research.
- **Study Abroad Office Scholarships**
(http://www.utexas.edu/student/abroad/funding/ut_scholarships.html)
The Study Abroad Office offers a thorough list of scholarships sponsored by UT departments and colleges that are specific to students seeking to study or conduct research abroad.
- **University Co-operative Society Undergraduate Research Fellowship**
(<http://www.utexas.edu/research/vp/awards/>)
Undergraduate Research Fellowships provide support (up to \$1,000) for specific scholarly investigative projects conducted by University of Texas at Austin undergraduates. These fellowships are intended to cover costs associated with academic research projects proposed and written by student applicants and undertaken with the supervision of a University faculty member, lecturer, senior lecturer or full-time Research Scientist or Engineer.

Awards for Undergraduate Research

- **Roy Crane Award in the Arts**
The Roy Crane Award in the Arts is given to a student of The University of Texas at Austin for unique, creative effort in the performing, literary and visual arts.
- **University Co-op / George H. Mitchell Undergraduate Student Awards for Academic Excellence**
(http://www.utexas.edu/provost/initiatives/undergraduate_awards/mitchell/)
The University of Texas at Austin, with the generous support of the University Co-op, annually recognizes nine UT undergraduates for superior scholarly or creative achievement. Five students receive awards of \$2,000 each, three students receive awards of \$5,000 each, and one student is awarded the grand prize of \$20,000.



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

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Connecting Experience Contract: INDEPENDENT CREATIVE PROJECT

Student name: _____ EID: _____ Email: _____

This contract is for a creative project in _____ Location: _____
(semester/year) (city, state/country)

BDP: Digital Arts and Media Project title: _____

Course number: _____ Unique number: _____ Semester of credit: ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Sum _____
(year)

Primary faculty mentor name: _____ Faculty dept: _____

Primary faculty email: _____

Second faculty mentor name: _____ Faculty dept: _____

Second faculty email: _____

Required documentation:

- 1-page statement describing your proposed creative project. In your project description, be sure to clearly articulate how your proposed Connecting Experience relates to your BDP topic, and please describe why you have chosen your faculty mentors.

Complete the following in collaboration with your PRIMARY faculty mentor:

- Student Requirements:
 - See reverse for requirements of all students in an Independent Creative Project Experience.
 - Additional requirements as agreed upon by the primary faculty mentor and student. **Please specify below.** (Ex: Reading list, research paper, journal entries, etc.)

- Basis for grading for semester:
 - The basis for grading is agreed upon by the primary faculty mentor and student. **Please specify below.** For additional information, see Connecting Experiences expectations and guidelines on the reverse of this page. (If coursework includes a writing assignment, please specify the number of pages.)
 - NOTE: All Connecting Experiences may be graded using the plus/minus grading system.

- Professor/student conferences (e.g. weekly in-person meetings, email contact every other week, etc.).
 - Frequency of contact: ☐ weekly ☐ biweekly ☐ other
 - Type of Contact: ☐ in-person meetings ☐ email contact ☐ other

If other, please explain: _____

We have read the Connecting Experience expectations on page 2 and agree to the terms stated above.

Primary Faculty Signature: _____
(Faculty mentor must be a currently active faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin.)

Date: _____

Second Faculty Signature: _____
(Faculty mentor must be a currently active faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin.)

Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Connecting Research Experience Expectations and Guidelines

I. Student Requirements:

- **Attendance at two mandatory Connecting Experience Check-In Meetings (see your BDP advisor or consult the BDP website for dates)**
- **Completion of Reflection Essay submitted online to the BDP Office**

II. Student Expectations When Completing a BDP Connecting Experience

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the supervising faculty members.

In addition to the Student Requirements listed above, students must meet the expectations stated below.

- Agree on a plan for the semester with the faculty mentors *before* the connecting experience begins. The plan should include academic requirements, the basis for grading, and a plan for student/professor meetings for the semester (frequency of contact; via email, in-person meetings, etc).
- Use good communication skills. It is your responsibility to report progress and seek guidance when needed. If you encounter a problem or make a mistake, discuss it with your faculty mentors right away. If you have questions, contact the BDP office so that issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Be self-motivated. Students are expected to be active and reliable participants in the project experience. Your mentors should not have to prompt you to show up for a meeting or to finish a project.
- Know expectations for course credit. You are responsible for knowing and fulfilling any departmental requirements and for keeping the connecting experience faculty mentors informed about your work.
- Follow the University of Texas at Austin *Honor Code* and *Standard of Academic Integrity*.

III. Guidelines for Primary Faculty Supervising BDP INDEPENDENT CREATIVE PROJECT Connecting Experiences

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the primary supervising faculty member. The primary mentor should be the student's main point of contact and will assign the grade for the course. You may ask the student to talk with you about feedback offered by the second mentor, and you may choose to consult with the second mentor if you would like feedback on the student's performance to assign the grade.

- *Meet with student periodically throughout the semester or arrange regular e-mail contact.*
- *Help student integrate the creative project with issues, skills, and concepts from coursework.*
- *Encourage student to make connections between the project and methodologies, controversies, and trends related to Digital Arts and Media across disciplines. Help student consider new directions.*
- *Assign final grade or credit. This responsibility may vary depending on the course number and departmental requirements.*

III. Guidelines for Second Faculty Supervising BDP INDEPENDENT CREATIVE PROJECT Connecting Experiences

IMPORTANT: All academic requirements are at the discretion of the primary supervising faculty member. The role of the second mentor is to help the student gain feedback from a second disciplinary perspective. The second mentor does not assign the grade, but you may want to suggest improvements to the student's plan for the project, or to offer feedback that the primary mentor could consider when assigning the final grade.

- *Meet with student periodically throughout the semester or arrange regular e-mail contact.*
- *Help student integrate the creative project with issues, skills, and concepts from coursework.*
- *Encourage student to make connections between the project and methodologies, controversies, and trends related to Digital Arts and Media across disciplines. Help student consider new directions.*



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

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Date received: _____

BDP Connecting Experience Scholarship Application

Student Name: _____ EID: _____

BDP: _____ Strand: _____

Semester of credit: ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Sum _____ Course number: _____
(year)

Have you received a BDP scholarship in the past? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how much? \$ _____

Relationships for Scholarship Applications

State law requires that each student identify any relation to a current member of The University of Texas System Board of Regents. A student who is related to a current member of the U.T. System Board of Regents is prohibited from receiving scholarships unless the scholarship is awarded exclusively based on academic merit or is an athletic scholarship. It is a Class B misdemeanor to file a false statement.

Applicable relationships include one of the following-

1. Regent's- spouse, spouse's child, spouse's parent, child's spouse, parent's spouse;
2. Regent's- spouse's brother or sister, spouse's grandparent, spouse's grandchild, brother's or sister's spouse, grandparent's spouse, grandchild's spouse;
3. Regent's- parent, daughter, son;
4. Regent's-brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild; or
5. Regent's- great-grandparent, great-grandchild, uncle or aunt (brother or sister of parent) nephew or niece (son or daughter of brother or sister).

A list of the current member of the U.T. System Board of Regents is available at <http://www.utsystem.edu/bor/currentRegents.htm>.

Are you related to any member of the U.T. System Board of Regents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify the Board member and the relationship. _____

BDP Scholarship Evaluation Criteria

BDP scholarships are designed to help defray the cost of pursuing a connecting experience; as such financial need is strongly taken into consideration. We take all of the following criteria into consideration as we review scholarship applications:

- Student's financial need
- Quality of the connecting experience
- Connection of the experience to the student's BDP topic and, if applicable, the strand
- Location of the connecting experience

Financial Information

1. Have you completed a FAFSA for 2012-2013? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you did not complete a FAFSA, please explain why you did not:

2. Were you awarded financial aid for the 2012-2013 academic year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please describe any financial need that may not be accurately reflected in your FAFSA (e.g., a parent recently lost a job, unforeseen medical expenses due to recent illness, etc.).

3. Budget chart

The following are expenses that are NOT usually taken into account in the scholarship review process:

- Fall and Spring UT Tuition
- Textbooks for UT courses
- General living expenses (housing and food) if you are in Austin
- Laptops; computer hardware/software that is available in UT labs
- Any travel expenses not directly tied to your Connecting Experience

Please complete the following list of expenses and resources. This information will be taken into consideration by the BDP Scholarship Committee; however, submission of this information is not a guarantee that scholarship funds will be made available.

Cost of Connecting Experience	Cost	Financial resources <i>Please list all sources of funding you receive during the semester or summer of your connecting experience</i>	Amount
Tuition for class <i>(only note this if your connecting experience is in the summer or not part of flat-rate tuition)</i>	\$	Stipend or other wage (received for connecting experience)	\$
Airfare and travel costs _____ _____ _____	\$	Grants	\$
Local transportation expenses <i>(only if CE requires excessive travel in the location)</i> _____ _____	\$	Loans	\$
Supplies & Materials <i>(list each item and cost)</i> _____ _____ _____	\$	Personal savings	\$
Professional meeting <i>(Specific meeting/conference travel and registration fees)</i> _____ _____ _____	\$	Other scholarships you have been awarded <i>(List name and amount of each scholarship)</i> _____ _____ _____	\$
Total lost wages <i>(if unable to work your regular paid position)</i> Hours/week worked _____ x Rate of pay/hour _____ x Weeks of CE _____ = _____ (insert total in cost column)	\$	Total work study wages <i>(if you have a work study position during the semester or summer in which you are completing your connecting experience)</i>	\$
Housing <i>(if not in Austin and you have to pay extra for housing in order to complete your CE)</i>	\$	Expected family contribution towards connecting experience	\$
Program Fee <i>(if there is a separate program fee for your CE)</i> _____ _____	\$	Total financial resources	\$
Study Abroad Expenses <i>(items like passport, visa, insurance*, etc.)</i> _____ _____ _____	\$	* Students completing any part of their CE abroad must obtain Authorization to Travel Abroad from the Study Abroad Office even if you are not traveling on a UT Austin program. All students must obtain travel insurance during this time abroad. You may include the cost of this insurance in your budget if it is not already part of the program fees. More information and the specific costs are available at: http://world.utexas.edu/abroad/itr	
Total costs	\$		

4. Do you typically work?

- ☐ No, I do not work
- ☐ Yes, summer only
- ☐ Yes, long semesters only
- ☐ Yes, all year including summer

If you checked YES in any of the boxes above, please describe what you do for work and how this connecting experience might impact your ability to work:

If you check NO above, you are welcome to describe your situation or any circumstances that prevent you from working:

5. Have you applied for any scholarships for this connecting experience that you have not yet heard back about? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you checked Yes above, list the scholarships you have applied for, their amounts, and when you expect to learn whether you have won an award:

6. Please provide additional information you would like us to know regarding your financial situation:

Important Scholarship Information:

- Please note that scholarship funds are typically awarded after connecting experiences begin. Even if you receive an award, you may need to pay program, travel, or other fees before you receive any funding from the BDP Office. Please make arrangements to pay these costs as there may be several weeks of delay between the time your connecting experience begins and the time you receive your award.
- If you are currently receiving financial aid and you are awarded a BDP scholarship, we recommend that you speak with a counselor in the Office of Student Financial Services to determine whether this connecting experience scholarship will affect your existing aid package.
- If you receive a scholarship, it will be distributed via direct deposit. If you do not have direct deposit set up with UT, any awarded funds will be mailed to your current local address. Please update your address and direct deposit information on UT Direct.

Required Documentation

- This scholarship application must be turned in with your signed and completed BDP Connecting Experience Contract and the 1-page statement where you describe your proposed research, creative project or internship experience.

Student Certification

I certify that all of the information provided in this scholarship application is accurate and complete. I certify that I intend to complete the requirements for the Bridging Disciplines Programs certificate. If awarded a scholarship, my acceptance of the funds confirms my intent to complete this certificate program.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Connecting Experiences Guide: Part Three:

Completing the Connecting Experience

Once you have established your research, creative project, or internship Connecting Experience and all the paperwork has been submitted and approved, you can get to work on the experience. There are a few BDP requirements you will need to fulfill in order to complete the experience.

Attend Two Required Connecting Experiences Check-ins During the Semester

- These check-ins, one online and one in person, give you the opportunity to communicate with advisors and other students about how your experience is going and to troubleshoot any problems you may be having. You'll also learn about writing the required reflection essay, how to build on your experience, and opportunities for sharing your project with others. (see the Calendar on the BDP web site for dates/times)
- For students participating in Connecting Experiences during the summer or outside of Austin in the fall and spring, email contact with your advisor may substitute for attending the meetings.

Write and Turn in Your Reflection Essay

- Students completing a Connecting Experience **MUST** write a reflection essay.
- Please see the BDP web site (<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp/current/forms.html>) for detailed reflection essay guidelines. **Reflection essays are always due on the last class day of the semester.**
- The primary audience for your reflection essay is you, but the BDP advising staff and the faculty panel for your BDP will also review your essay.
- Your reflection essay can help you in the future as you're writing personal statements for graduate school or cover letters for job applications. Getting feedback now from your BDP advisor can prove valuable when you need to talk about your experience later on.
- If you have questions about the reflection essay or would like to discuss the guidelines as they relate to your specific experience, please do not hesitate to call the BDP office and schedule an appointment with your advisor.

Present Your Research or Internship at the BDP Poster Session

- UT's Office of Undergraduate Research works with the BDP office to provide workshops and consultation on how to make a poster to present your research, creative project, or internship.
- All BDP students are strongly encouraged to present your work at the annual BDP Poster Session in the spring semester.

Grade Requirements

- In order for your Connecting Experience to count toward your certificate you must earn at least a C– for the experience.
- Faculty mentors receive email notification about how and when to submit grades. If your faculty mentor has questions about grading, they can contact the BDP office or visit the BDP web site for additional grading resources.
- If you earn an Incomplete for the semester you should contact your BDP advisor and faculty mentor to establish a plan for finishing the experience and earning your grade.

**To make an appointment with your BDP advisor to discuss Connecting Experiences, please call 232-7564 or stop by the BDP main office in FAC 338.*



BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS

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Connecting Experience Reflection Paper

AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

The primary audience for your essay is YOU. This is not a report on what you did, but rather an opportunity for you to reflect on what you have learned, make connections between different parts of your BDP experience, and think about how your experience affects your goals. Your reflection essay is a piece of reflective writing through which you should come to a more sophisticated understanding of what your experience has taught you.

BDP connecting experience advisors read every reflection paper and provide feedback for you. In addition, the BDP faculty panel may also choose to read your essay. **Please keep this audience in mind. We expect you to turn in a clear, thoughtful, well-written, and proofread essay.**

FORMAT

Your essay should be 3–5 pages, typed and double-spaced. **Please be sure to include your name, BDP, strand (if applicable), and the semester of your experience on your essay.** Reflection essays must be submitted online on the BDP website to on the *Reflection Essay Submission* page under [Quick Links & Forms](#).

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING YOUR REFLECTION ESSAY

The following questions are designed to help you think about your connecting experience in the larger context of your BDP work, your major, and your educational and professional goals. **Please make sure that your essay addresses each of the following themes, which are central to placing your connecting experience within the context of your BDP as a learning experience.** The questions within each theme are designed to help you think more deeply about your experience in these terms. Be as specific as possible, and **give examples** to illustrate what you have learned from the experience.

- **DISCIPLINARY AWARENESS.** Your essay should refer to disciplines relevant to your BDP focus, discussing questions or issues that might be addressed through a particular discipline and demonstrating your understanding of those disciplinary perspectives, tools, or methods:
 - What kinds of disciplinary perspectives are relevant to your connecting experience?
 - What did you learn about the conventions and concerns of a discipline in which you were working? (Relevant observations might include research methods, acceptable forms of data, standards of professional communication, or “hot topics” in a particular field, for example.)

- **INTERDISCIPLINARY AWARENESS AND ABILITY TO THINK COMPARATIVELY ACROSS DISCIPLINES.** Your essay should bring together the perspectives offered by more than one discipline relevant to your BDP, and you should reflect on the ways in which the disciplines you discovered in your connecting experience are similar or different:
 - What are you able to understand about your connecting experience by applying an interdisciplinary perspective that you would not be able to understand through only one disciplinary lens?
 - Think about your courses and experiences in other disciplines. What differences and similarities did you observe in terms of research methods, professional communication, topics, key questions, etc. in these different disciplines?
- **TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FROM ONE CONTEXT TO ANOTHER.** Your essay should articulate how knowledge you have gained in one context has affected your understanding in another:
 - What theories, skills, or practices from previous experiences were useful in this connecting experience? How were they useful? Please give examples to illustrate.
 - How did your past coursework inform any of your work during the connecting experience?
 - What new ideas and approaches did you encounter through this experience?
 - Were there any theories, assumptions, or practices that you questioned or reevaluated as you gained more experience and/or encountered new ideas?
- **SELF-REFLECTION.** Your essay should reflect on how your interests and goals have developed through your connecting experience:
 - What did you learn from the positive aspects of your experience and from any challenges you encountered?
 - What have you discovered about yourself—your strengths, your weaknesses, your interests?
 - How has this experience affected your educational or professional goals? Have you identified or ruled out a possible career path? Have you been able to refine a goal you already had?
 - What did you learn about your BDP or strand topic through this connecting experience?
- **UNDERSTANDING OF THE BDP SUBJECT.** Your essay should discuss issues related to questions, knowledge, or skills relevant to the BDP subject, showing how your connecting experience enhanced your understanding of your BDP topic and (if applicable) strand.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.** If your Connecting Experience involved working with a particular community organization or group, your essay should reflect on the community or communities you served, how you collaborated with the community or organization, and your understanding of the impact of your actions.
- **REMEMBER:** Be as specific as possible, and give examples to illustrate what you've learned.

QUESTIONS?

For questions, please contact your advisor:

Christine Anderson: canderson@austin.utexas.edu

Rose Mastrangelo: r.mastrangelo@austin.utexas.edu

Erin Thomas: erin.thomas@austin.utexas.edu

Examples from Reflection Essays

Disciplinary Awareness

“The research I did this summer focused on sorption of cesium and strontium by soils. These two chemicals are commonly found in chemical contaminants... My research also focused on the distribution coefficient which is a measurement of how much of a solvent is [absorbed] by a geologic medium.”

“I found that many of the readings I came across regarding abortion seemed to convey a strong belief in human rights, which was demonstrated by the dichotomy of “pro-choice” versus “pro-life” beliefs. Both of these stances entail issues surrounding a woman’s right to choose when to give birth as well as a fetus’s right to live, which fall under the realm of reproductive rights.”

“The Attorney General can have an impact on public policy when he issues opinions on the legality or constitutionality of proposed or enacted laws. Attorney General Abbott discussed how he established a Cyber Crimes Unit, a Fugitive Unit, and expanded the Medical Fraud Control Unit. He also discussed how he appeared before the Supreme Court in order to defend the constitutionality of the 10 Commandments display on the Texas Capital grounds... The Attorney General can become involved with high-profile public policy, which can leave the office in the public eye.”

Interdisciplinary Awareness

“To understand how a contaminant moves through the soil, you have to understand **geology, mineralogy, environmental engineering**, and a little bit of **nuclear chemistry**. If I did not research the **mineralogy** of my soil sample, I would not have understood what was absorbing the cesium and strontium ions. If I didn’t know some about **nuclear chemistry**, I would have not understood radioactive liquid tracers that are used to measure distribution coefficients. The **engineering** work comes in to play in designing and implicating experiments with the implementation of a solution method after.”

“While I was reading about abortion policies, I was able to apply a **government and international perspective** to my research. I also visited health clinics which allowed me to view this issue from a **healthcare perspective** as well as a **social work perspective** by witnessing the effects and implementation of governmental policies. Finally, in reflecting about my experience, I was able to apply a **women’s studies perspective** that reflected patriarchal ideals which makes accessing healthcare difficult for some women.”

“**Journalism** played a role in my research, because I had to go through many news articles finding relevant materials for my research... **Social Justice** is a very important part of my research, and I found out through this connecting experience that there are many organizations dedicated to the cause of Social Justice and they employ the same scientific methods in seeking out the truth... I learned that most things involve multiple disciplines like my research. For example, for **politics** to reach the people, the **media** has to first organize the information in ways that the people can understand.”

Interdisciplinary Comparison

“A difference that can be observed of different disciplines is their purpose. The **environment** side is trying to keep the planet clean and sustainable. The purpose of **economics** (there are many depending on which side one looks from) can be seen as the study of the human behavior and their consumer habits with respect to monetary values. Despite the differences between the two subjects they intersect since **policies** tend to depend on the **economics**. A common underlying similarity between disciplines is the expansive nature of things. No discipline is one sided, there is always more to what it seems. They all analyze concepts and come to a conclusion, which can be influenced by their moral purpose.”

“The most striking realization I came to was that **sociology** and **psychology** relate to each other in more complex ways than I had thought. Previously, I built on the analogy of the natural sciences to think of **sociology** as the emergent outcome of **psychology**, like biology arises from chemistry, which itself comes from physics. However, in Spain I realized this is an oversimplification. **Psychology**, identity, and (therefore) action, are constructed through relationships with existing **social structures**. Since we are born into societies with existing power and normative relationships, **sociology** influences **psychology** very strongly.”

“Through this research, I saw the connection these three topics had with each other. One aspect of **politics** is the process of making **laws**, and **laws** can be made to ensure **Social Justice**. In the case of my research, one of the bills I was researching was about putting regulations on the payday industry and the industry was giving a lot of campaign contributions to stop this bill.”

Transfer of Knowledge and Skills

“I have some basic coursework in geology which gave me a broad introduction to some of the mineralogy work I performed. My chemical engineering coursework in transport phenomena also gave me some background information in liquid and solid movement.”

“I found that I was also well versed in women’s reproductive health issues, such as pregnancy, contraceptives, and pregnancy because I had just taken a Women’s Reproductive Health course the previous semester that focused on the sociological and biological perspective of these issues. Because I had this background, I felt that I had a strong foundation regarding these issues as I began my research which allowed for a further understanding of these subjects.”

“Knowledge I have gained in previous experiences and courses affected the way I understood my connecting experience with Consumer Protection Division. Previously, I interned with city government and a majority of my work involved Internet research. I learned how to summarize the research, pull out the important points, and present it to my supervisor. All of these skills transferred to my experience with CPD and were further developed with my research on Children’s Online Privacy Protection (COPPA).”

Self-Reflection

“Before my internship I knew I wanted to attend grad school, but I always said I want to work two years then figure it out. My coworkers pushed and poked my brain to really determine what I want to do now. They made me realize how hard it is to start working and go back to grad school. I have now figured out that I want to start my master’s degree the following fall. I have also decided that not only do I want to get my Master’s in Environmental Engineering but I also want to get my Master’s in Business Administration.”

“I discovered that as I continued to learn about the area of reproductive rights, I was drawn to the social work perspective because of my interest in a “hands-on” approach to aiding women accessing these services. I also learned that I am much more interested in the practical application of this research, such as social work practice, rather than performing the actual research. I feel that this experience has furthered my knowledge in women’s reproductive health issues and will be beneficial for me when I apply to intern at a local women’s health clinic in the fall.”

“I have discovered many different aspects of myself through my connecting experience. While working with Children’s Online Privacy Protection (COPPA) I realized that I do have an interest in the laws that regulate the Internet. I enjoyed my assignment and would like to see how the act develops and how it is enforced in the future... Through my connecting experience, I have been able to refine my professional goal of becoming a lawyer. The experience has allowed me to observe the public service career path and now I believe it is a path that I want to take... The experience taught me that I can do both and I do not have to rule out one or the other. The experience also taught me that I want to go into an area of law that allows me to prepare and present cases in court.”

Understanding of Subject

“The whole idea of conservation and sustainability is important to the field of environmentalism. At Environment Texas their mission is to have clean air, clean water and open spaces... There were various bills that Environment Texas was supporting such as an extension to the Clean Water Act that would apply to intermittent water ways, support for a limit on mercury emissions, a push for more electric cars and better building codes. All the campaigns had a common goal of bettering the environment through different means such as more stringent codes and regulation or using more environmental resources.”

“I learned that a social justice view explores the conventions of how local policies reflect issues of morality rather than medical facts about women’s health, and how these policies negatively affect women seeking these services. I observed that these perspectives of human rights and social justice remain relevant within the realm of women’s reproductive health as local policies reflect, or fail to reflect these ideals.”

“Social Justice, Politics, and Law are all relevant disciplinary perspectives to my connecting experience. By interning with the Consumer Protection Division, I actively participated in social justice by aiding the CPD lawyers in protecting Texas consumers and the business community. I quickly learned that consumer complaints formed the basis of many investigations and legal actions that brought companies performing deceptive business practices to justice. One of the activities I participated in included consumer complaint review and analysis.”

Presenting And Publishing Your Work

Communicating your findings to others is a crucial and exciting aspect of research. Undergraduates often present their work in one of the following ways:

- Scholarly poster presented at a conference/symposium
- Oral presentation given at a conference/symposium
- Research paper published in a journal

There are opportunities to present your work both on-campus and at the regional or national level. As a BDP student, you are strongly encouraged to consider presenting your work at the annual BDP Poster Session held each Spring as part of Research Week.

Several other resources are provided below, but keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list. When exploring possibilities, a valuable resource is your faculty supervisor. Ask if there are regional or national conferences or other venues specific to your discipline where you might be able to present your work. Also, make sure to talk to your professors and departmental academic advisors about opportunities in your college or school.

Presenting your Work at a Conference or Symposium

Undergraduates may choose to present their research findings at a conference, symposium, or other research-related event or forum. Typically students communicate and present their work in the form of a scholarly poster or an oral presentation.

Listed below are several undergraduate research events, conferences, and resources. This is not an exhaustive list. There are many opportunities to present your work through departmental and college programs. Make sure to talk to your academic advisors and professors, and search the internet for the latest and most complete offerings.

collaborating with a faculty member or a research team, always clear your proposed ideas with your faculty supervisor. Your supervisor may have recommendations about where you can present your work. Depending on the quality and significance of your work, your supervisor may recommend that you submit it for presentation at a regional or national conference specific to the discipline.

On Campus Undergraduate Research Events and Resources

- Bridging Disciplines Programs Annual Poster Session (<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp>)
- College of Engineering Undergraduate Research Resources (<http://www.engr.utexas.edu/research/undergraduate/>)
- College of Liberal Arts Undergraduate Research Resources and Annual Opportunities for Presentation (http://www.utexas.edu/cola/student_resources/undergraduate_research/)
- College of Natural Sciences Undergraduate Research Resources (http://cns.utexas.edu/current_students/research/)
- College of Natural Sciences Annual Undergraduate Research Forum (http://cns.utexas.edu/current_students/research/forum.asp)
- EUREKA: Web-based Guide to Undergraduate Research Information and Opportunities (<http://www.utexas.edu/research/eureka/index.php>)
- Office of Undergraduate Research Poster Resources (<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/ugr/>)
- Research Week (<http://wwwtest.utexas.edu/ugs/ugr/researchweek/>)

National Conference on Undergraduate Research

- National Conferences on Undergraduate Research (<http://www.ncur.org/>)
The National Conferences on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) is dedicated to promoting undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity in all fields of study by sponsoring an annual conference for students.

Publishing Your Work in a Journal

When your research experience culminates in a paper, you may want to consider submitting it to a journal for publication. Listed below are a number of undergraduate research journals to consider. If you have been collaborating with a faculty member or a research team, be sure to clear your proposed ideas with your faculty supervisor. Your supervisor might have recommendations about where you submit your work. Depending on the quality and significance of your work, your supervisor may recommend you submit it to the professional journal specific to the discipline.

When working on your submission to a journal, remember that the [Undergraduate Writing Center](#) in the Flawn Academic Center 211 (471-6222) offers services for writers on a drop-in basis or by appointment.

UT Undergraduate Research Journals

- *Analecta* (<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/orgs/analecta/>)
Analecta is UT's literary and arts journal, open to undergraduate and graduate students.
- *Ex Nihilo* (http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/philosophy/undergraduate/ex_nihilo/)
Ex Nihilo is a student-run philosophy journal that publishes undergraduate philosophy essays of exceptional quality.
- *Texas Neuroscience Review* (<http://studentorgs.utexas.edu/tnr/index.html>)
The *Texas Neuroscience Review* is a student-run scientific journal published at UT. It is a compilation of review articles highlighting the multidisciplinary nature of the field of neuroscience.
- *University of Texas Undergraduate Research Journal* (<http://www.utexas.edu/research/student/urj/>)
The *University of Texas at Austin Undergraduate Research Journal* is a student-edited and published multidisciplinary journal of undergraduate studies and research.

Other Undergraduate Research Journals (Important Note: This is only a partial list of the existing journals; be sure to search the internet for the most up-to-date and complete listing of opportunities.)

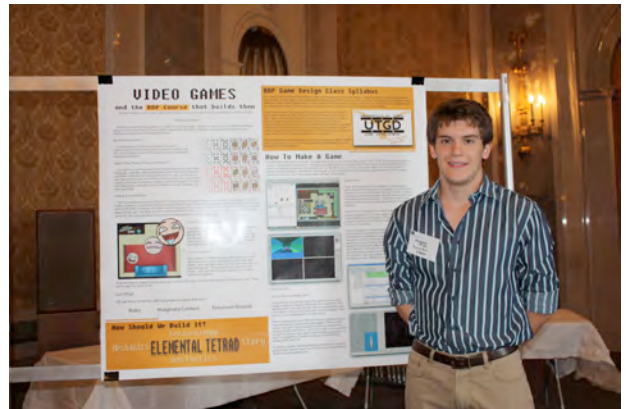
- *The Dualist: Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy* (<http://www.stanford.edu/group/dualist/>)
- *Pittsburgh Undergraduate Review* (<http://136.142.181.181/~pur/index.php>)
- *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research* (<http://www.psichi.org/pubs/journal/>)
- *American Undergraduate Journal of Politics and Government* (<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~psalpha/journal/>)
- *Journal of Young Investigators* (<http://www.jyi.org/about/>)

BDP Poster Session

All BDP students are encouraged to present a poster of their research and/or internship experiences at the annual BDP Poster Session, held each April as part of Research Week.

What is a poster?

A poster is a visual communication tool. It is a large document that allows you to present your research in a clear, concise, graphic format. Posters can be made at any stage of research. Effective posters attract attention, convey information clearly, and initiate conversations.



Why make a poster?

- Communicating your ideas and findings is a critical and exciting step of the research process.
- Participating in a poster session gives you public speaking experience and prepares you for graduate school and/or a career.
- A poster can be created at any stage of the research project. Your project does not need to be complete.
- Unlike traditional oral presentations that create a lecture atmosphere, a poster session allows for discussion of the topic in a more relaxed, informal setting.
- As a BDP student, you will have access to workshops and individual advising to help you through all steps in making the poster.



What happens at the BDP poster session?

The BDP Poster Session is an event where students display the posters they've created about their research and internship experiences. Attendees—including BDP students, faculty, and staff, as well as other invited guests—walk up and down the aisles viewing posters and discussing projects with presenters.

It's also a great opportunity to find out more about other BDP students' Connecting Experiences.

I've never made a poster. How do I begin?

First, speak with your BDP advisor. Let the advisor know you're interested in presenting your work. Your advisor will give you information on the annual poster session and connect you with the resources available to BDP students.

Each spring, the BDP's and Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) host a series of workshops for students interested in presenting a poster. Advisors will work with you through all steps of the poster-making process. To find out more about poster-making, visit the OUR web site at <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/ugr>.

Bridging Disciplines Programs Integration Essay Guidelines

To complete your BDP and earn your certificate, you must write a 3–4 page integration essay that draws together the various parts of your experience.

You might think of your integration essay as the **roadmap** to your BDP—your opportunity to **reflect** for yourself and **articulate** for others how your coursework, your research and internship experiences, and your other experiences on and off campus have together shaped your intellectual and professional interests, accomplishments, and goals.

REFLECT FOR YOURSELF

Writing is not just putting down on paper what you already know; rather, the writing process can be a powerful means of coming to a deeper, more sophisticated understanding of what you know and believe. Your integration essay is a piece of reflective writing through which you should come to a more sophisticated understanding of what your BDP experience has taught you.

You might think of your BDP application essay as the first step in a longer process of defining yourself as an interdisciplinarian. Your integration essay is the culmination of this process, and it should allow you to reflect on how you’ve grown and changed through your experiences in the BDP and at UT.

ARTICULATE FOR OTHERS

The integration essay is very similar to two other kinds of writing you will have to do as you continue in your academic and professional careers: the personal statement you write for graduate school applications, and the cover letter you write for job applications. In all of these types of writing, you have the challenging task of telling an outsider in a short piece of writing not only *what* you have accomplished, but also *who* you are and *how* you will be a valuable addition to the program or organization. Your integration essay should be able to tell someone who doesn’t already know you what you have accomplished in your BDP and what those accomplishments tell about you.

INTEGRATING YOUR BDP EXPERIENCE

As the name suggests, the primary purpose of the integration essay is to integrate, or draw connections among the disparate experiences and disciplinary perspectives that you have brought together through your BDP. Some of the questions you should consider as you write your essay include:

- How has your BDP allowed you to make connections across different disciplinary perspectives?
- What issues, problems, or questions related to your BDP topic have you been able to understand more fully by seeing them from multiple perspectives?
- How have your research and/or internship experiences connected to your BDP coursework? What has this first-hand experience taught you that the coursework could not? And conversely, how has what you’ve learned in class made you a stronger researcher or intern?
- Has your BDP experience impacted your future career goals? How?

- How has your BDP connected to your major? What have you learned through the BDP that you would have missed if you had not had this experience?

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR ESSAY

1. Your integration essay is due to the BDP office no later than the deadline for applying to graduate from the university in your last semester at UT. (Please consult the BDP web site or office for the actual deadline during the semester you plan to graduate.) You may either drop off a hard copy at the front desk in FAC 1, or you may email your essay as a Word (.doc) attachment to bdp@austin.utexas.edu.
2. Your essay will be read by the BDP staff and by members of the faculty panel for your BDP. Please keep in mind that the faculty members are part of your audience.
3. If the faculty panel determines that your essay does not reflect the level of knowledge, understanding, or articulation expected for earning the BDP certificate, you may be asked to revise your essay. The integration essay is a requirement for earning your certificate.
4. We will be reading your essay with the following criteria in mind:
 - ***Essay is well-written.*** Both in terms of structure and organization, and at the sentence level, your essay must be clearly and effectively written for the appropriate audience.
 - ***Essay demonstrates disciplinary awareness.*** Your essay should refer to disciplines relevant to your BDP focus, referring to questions or issues that might be addressed through a particular discipline and demonstrating understanding of disciplinary perspectives, tools, or methods.
 - ***Essay demonstrates interdisciplinary awareness and ability to think comparatively across disciplines.*** Your essay should bring together the perspectives offered by more than one discipline relevant to your BDP focus, demonstrating understanding of the perspectives, methodologies, and knowledge offered by different disciplines related to your subject and showing how awareness of multiple disciplines has helped you to understand the subject in a more sophisticated way.
 - ***Essay demonstrates ability to transfer knowledge and skills from one context to another.*** Your essay should articulate how knowledge you have gained in one context has impacted your understanding in another. You might discuss how what you have learned in the classroom has been useful in your hands-on connecting experiences, or you might describe how your connecting experiences have enlarged your understanding of something learned in the classroom.
 - ***Essay demonstrates self-reflection.*** Your essay should reflect on how your interests have developed through your BDP and other UT experience, including how your experience has helped you shape or refine your goals for the future.
 - ***Essay demonstrates understanding of the BDP subject.*** Your essay should discuss issues related to questions, knowledge, or skills relevant to the BDP subject, showing an understanding of what it means to study the BDP topic.
5. Use examples in your essay to give specificity to your discussion.

BDP Integration Essay

In my Bridging Disciplines application essay I stated that the goal of my participation in the program was to contribute to my pre-medical education something beyond biological systems and infectious diseases. My biology degree and upper-division biology courses to me were excellent preparation for the technical aspect of medicine but lacked “the roundedness of the medical field in general.” I therefore joined the Bridging Disciplines Program in order to understand the complex social, political, and economic issues surrounding the healthcare practitioner. It truly has been amazing how every course, seminar, and research experience I pursued under the BDP Social Inequality, Health, and Policy strand and Public Health area of study has contributed uniquely to my current awareness of health and healthcare, which I continue to explore in my final connecting experience.

The integration of all my BDP experiences must begin with an appreciation for where I started educationally and where I currently stand; the Bridging Disciplines Program gets credit for everything in between. Before joining the BDP, a typical semester consisted predominantly of upper-division natural sciences courses such as developmental biology, organic chemistry, and vertebrate physiology. Although I did enroll in courses outside of the Natural Sciences department, I had never, for example, taken a sociology course. All my research experiences had been in a microbiology lab working with genes, enzymes, and solutions; I knew next to nothing about Medicare and Medicaid.

It has been almost two years since I joined the Bridging Disciplines Program in the fall of 2007, and I am currently finishing my certificate with a connecting experience with the Texas

Department of State Health Services. I work there as an intern and an author on a paper titled *The Systems Dynamics of Teen Pregnancy and STI Risk in Texas: 2005 to 2015* that is being submitted for publication and presentation at the 2009 Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Conference. The paper aims to build a mathematical model that predicts STI and pregnancy rates in Texas using sociological as well as biological variables. It delves into population-specific factors, infectious properties, the ethics of data collection methodology, state and federal-sponsored surveys and programs, etc. It is truly an interdisciplinary undertaking.

I would have undoubtedly been overwhelmed in approaching this project simply as a Dean's Scholars Biology student. However, over the years Bridging Disciplines Program courses and research experiences have contributed greatly to my interdisciplinary education and allowed me to tackle the many complex topics of my current project both individually and holistically. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the BDP was in an area best captured by the title of a BDP-listed course I took my first semester with the program—the Sociology of Illness, with Dr. Marc Musick.

In simple terms, the sociology of illness, or medical sociology, is the study of disease prevalence in specific populations according to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc, and the reasons that specific populations might be affected disproportionately by different diseases. To me these were completely new concepts. As a biology student illnesses and diseases existed within an individual. They were caused by a pathogen. Dr. Musick's class opened me up to population-based study; to the idea that illness is a dynamic, complex concept

consisting of many layers that extend from culturally-based behaviors to bad neighborhoods. It was something that added new dimensions to my understanding of disease and illness. I had never thought of social justice and health insurance as important elements in the health of a population.

The concepts of medical sociology are strongly related to the field of public health. However, the disciplines of public health and medical sociology are themselves an amalgam of many different disciplines. Public health was therefore not an area that I became familiar with through a single course in college. My experiences in BDP 101: Health Inequality in Childhood/Adolescence, SOC 319: Introduction to Sociology, and especially researching the population of aging Hispanics with Dr. Angel provided different perspectives critical to my overall familiarity and understanding of public health.

BDP 101 focused on adolescent populations and how simple illnesses in this sensitive age group could have a ripple effect that expands through adulthood and old-age. Introduction to Sociology provided a perspective on sociology on the international level, such as culturally-directed beliefs in Africa that serve as a barrier to AIDS public health directives. With a more hand-on approach, Dr. Angel helped me apply the concepts I learned in class by providing me with a research project focused on the elderly Hispanic population and physical disability. In addition to exploring first-hand the disparate health conditions of this specific ethnic and age group and the unique factors within this population that give rise to these disparate health conditions, Dr. Angel guided me in adding a legislative layer to my exploration of public health. In exploring state and federal funding to programs such the Area Agencies on Aging and the

services they provide, I realized how the immense task of creating and guiding a public policy that effectively addresses the health needs of all the different groups is handled politically and legislatively. Ultimately, these experiences with social inequality and health policy would be replicated in my current internship and re-applied to sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy.

It's important to note that the BDP contributed to my proficiency in the more subtle areas of my internship as well. The M 316 Statistics course, part of my foundation BDP course requirement, was instrumental in my understanding of survey techniques as well as sampling methods, which were used extensively in data collection and the mathematical model at the heart of the project. Also, the ethical debate surrounding monetary incentives for participants in respondent-driven sampling contained many familiar elements thanks to the special BDP 329 course "Ethics, Law, and Healthcare" presented by Dr. William Winslade. I felt comfortable debating with my supervisor the pros and cons of this sampling method with regards to injection drug-users.

The interdisciplinary connections between all my BDP experiences are indeed too many to include in this essay. Suffice it to say that the completion of my Bridging Disciplines Program certificate has allowed me to understand healthcare on a level I never would have been able to achieve with a simple biology degree. It has led me course by course, experience by experience, from being strictly an academic, biology student to a public health researcher. I am currently in the position to attend UT Southwestern Medical School starting the Fall of 2009 should I not get better offers in the upcoming months. I am honored to have this opportunity and I truly

attribute it to an awareness of health and healthcare that I was able to deliver in my medical school application and interviews. It's an awareness that not only prepares me as a physician for the challenges ahead but also opens my eyes to career opportunities that take my role beyond the operating table and into the community. It's an awareness I owe almost exclusively to the Bridging Disciplines Program.

International Studies BDP
Integration Essay

The Bridging Disciplines Program has been an invaluable part of my college experience, even though I only joined this year. Conceptualizing my classes as part of an International Studies Certificate instead of an assortment of electives has caused me to draw connections between the classes that I would have ordinarily regarded as independent. Not only have I gained a better overview of international studies than I would have otherwise, but I have also been better able to utilize what I have learned by applying my knowledge across various disciplines and hands-on situations.

The interdisciplinary nature of the program showed me the importance of examining an issue from a variety of perspectives. My first two connecting experiences are very different, even though they both explore facets of international trade. While I was studying abroad in Switzerland, I participated in an independent research project that culminated in a 30-page report. I was encouraged to interview leading experts instead of researching China's economic ties to the Middle East in the library. The report included the insights of economists at the Vienna Institute for International Studies, oil market analysts at the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), US State Department officials, and corporate executives. Conversely, my terrorism research project has taken a quantitative approach. I am helping analyze terrorism-related data that will be applied to theories that have previously only been explored qualitatively. Not only have both projects given me a deeper understanding of international trade, but they have also challenged me to use new research methods.

I have synthesized these two methodologies in my third connecting experience, my Plan II thesis. I am examining how China's growing demand for oil impacts US foreign policy considerations. I recognized the benefits of the approaches I had used previously, as well as the limitations of using them independently. For example, when I explored China's oil diplomacy with Iran and the effect that its business deals have on its

UN Security Council votes, I looked at China's voting record and foreign direct investment figures. However, the statistics are misleading by themselves, because they do not show how China has used veto threats or the influence of its Security Council position in diplomatic and economic activities. As a result, I also interviewed an International Atomic Energy Agency official. While his opinion by itself would be considered biased, it was very helpful in painting a fuller picture overall. Therefore, I have incorporated interviews with officials and economic data into my thesis, instead of doing typical library research. I also analyzed primary source documents, like presidential speeches, as a way of showing the changes in foreign policy over time – a skill that I learned in my History of East Asian Relations class. I feel that without my first two connecting experiences, I would have had a much more superficial understanding of my topic area, and that I would not have had the confidence to explore Chinese oil diplomacy in different ways.

I have also used the lessons I have learned through the Bridging Disciplines Program and applied them to activities outside the scope of my certificate. For example, I acquired a scientific understanding of HIV / AIDS in a microbiology class. Instead of writing this class off as a mere general requirement needing to be satisfied, I have used this technical knowledge in a number of situations. While I was studying in Geneva, Switzerland, I had the opportunity to visit a number of trade organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). There, my understanding of the way antiretroviral drugs are developed and work allowed me to see the debate surrounding the agreement on Trade and Intellectual Property Rights from a new angle. My visit to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV / AIDS (UNAIDS) put a face on the AIDS crisis by discussing humanitarian issues, not science or trade statistics. It also highlighted the importance of education and prevention methods in addition to pharmaceutical research. When I returned to the US and participated in a public debate on conditional aid to African

countries, I was better prepared than the other participants because I had a more complete understanding of the issue; I was able draw from my scientific, economic, and humanitarian background knowledge in order to evaluate the impacts that various foreign assistance policies have on African countries fighting AIDS. The Bridging Disciplines Program showed me how to view education as a continuous process that does not stop once the semester is over. This outlook caused all of my experiences to be more rewarding.

My Bridging Disciplines experience has also altered my future plans. My classes and connecting experiences heightened my interest in international law, but my visits to international organizations in Switzerland underscored the need for good leadership and management skills when working with these types of institutions. Since I am also getting a Business Foundations Certificate, I was really intrigued by the role business skills, like negotiation, budgeting and public relations, play in international organizations. As a result, I have decided to work for a year to strengthen some of those skills, instead of jumping straight into law school. As a result of my participation in the program, I might actually be making a difference in the world four years from now, instead of working in an office. Regardless of my individual impact on foreign affairs, though, I am confident that my Bridging Disciplines experience has changed the way I will approach any problem or project.