





Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) 602

Doing Interdisciplinary Research (Revision 4)

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode: [Grouped study](#)  with [eText](#) 

Credits: 3

Area of study: Arts

Prerequisites: None

Precluded: None

Faculty: [Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Notes:

It is recommended that MAIS 601 and MAIS 602 be completed early in the program.

Students in Group Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Moodle site for the most up-to-date

details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

Overview

MAIS 602: Doing Interdisciplinary Research is the core methods course in the MA-IS Program that will ensure students understand and are able to employ the methods required to carry out and complete interdisciplinary research. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to work across disciplinary boundaries so that their work becomes an interdisciplinary, integrated whole. The course is designed in such a way that students will learn something new, challenge themselves, engage with their peers, and have fun.

The primary goal of MAIS 602 is to support students to 1) think through what constitutes a “good” research question, taking into consideration ethical issues involving power; 2) experiment with how research questions can inform and shape our choice of methods (and vice versa); and 3) emerge from this course with a sound understanding of how to structure a research question as well as an appropriate methodological rationale/proposal. Learners will come out of this course with research design skills that will be utilized and amplified throughout their respective itineraries through the MA-IS Program, and which will support their final projects in MAIS 701 or their capstone papers in MAIS 700 (whichever completion route they choose to pursue).

Outline

- Unit 1 (Week 1): What Is a “Good” Research Question?
- Unit 2 (Weeks 2 and 3): Introduction to Research Ethics
- Unit 3 (Weeks 4–8): The Tried and True—Well-Established Research Methods
- Unit 4 (Weeks 9–13): Pushing the Boundaries—New and Experimental

Methods

- Unit 5 (Weeks 14–15): Activating Your Research

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- follow a series of concrete steps that lead to a decision regarding an area of research,
- critically discuss and define what interdisciplinary research means,
- identify ethical challenges and issues that arise in conducting research (MA-IS program outcome: social relevance),
- explain and critique the process of securing the approval of research ethics boards,
- explain and critically evaluate traditional as well as unorthodox research methodologies (MA-IS program outcome: paradigm challenge),
- produce an interdisciplinary research question/problem for further investigation,
- produce a research proposal that outlines an achievable master's level research project (MA-IS program outcome: integrated learning)

Evaluation


Please note that your work on each assignment will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Your professor will also give you an indication of your strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring improvement for each assignment. This evaluation process is intended to assist you in achieving greater competency as you progress through each stage of the course. Try to focus on your learning, rather than on how that learning is assessed.


The weightings below suggest an approximate percentage of the work in the course that you should devote to each activity. However, this will vary among students.

| Activity | Weight |
|----------|--------|
|----------|--------|



| Activity | Weight |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Participation | 20% |
| Brainstorming Exercise | 10% |
| Reflective Response | 10% |
| Summary/Reflection | 20% |
| Summary/Evaluation | 20% |
| Research Question, Proposal, and Reflection | 20% |
| Total | 100% |

Materials

Lury, C., Fensham, R., Heller-Nicholas, A., Lammes, S., Last, A., Michael, M., & Uprichard, E. (2018). *Routledge handbook of interdisciplinary research methods*. Routledge.  (eBook)

Seale, C. (Ed). (2018). *Researching society and culture* (4th. ed.). SAGE Publications.  (eText)





eText

Registration in this course includes an electronic textbook. For more information on **electronic textbooks** , please refer to our **eText Initiative site** .

Other Materials

All other course materials for MAIS 602 are available online through the course site, including a Course Information manual, a Study Guide, and online readings and audiovisual materials

Important links

- › [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- › [Focus Areas](#) 
- › [Courses](#) 
- › [Fees and Funding](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 4, June 14, 2021

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View [previous revision](#) 
