

# MASTER OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (MIS) DEGREE

## Program Learning Outcomes for the MIS Degree

Upon completing the MIS degree, students will be able to:

1. Analyze complex issues through multidisciplinary lenses and synthesize insights to develop innovative, human-centered solutions using both creative and evidence-based approaches. (*Critical, Creative, and Analytical Thinking*)
2. Integrate perspectives and methodologies from the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and arts to examine real-world problems with a nuanced understanding of human culture, behavior, and values. (*Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration*)
3. Apply academic research methods to evaluate critically sources and synthesize information in order to construct clear, well-supported arguments. (*Academic Research and Inquiry*)
4. Communicate interdisciplinary ideas clearly and effectively in both written and oral forms, and collaborate productively across diverse academic and professional contexts. (*Communication, Collaboration, and Leadership*)
5. Engage respectfully with diverse cultures, identities, and viewpoints to foster inclusive and collaborative environments in professional, academic, and community settings. (*Cultural Competency*)
6. Demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning and adapt knowledge and skills in response to evolving societal needs, technological advancements, and global challenges. (*Lifelong Learning and Adaptability*)

## Requirements for the MIS Degree

The MIS degree is a non-thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, see [Non-Thesis Master's Degrees](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/>). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see [All Graduate Students](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/>). Students pursuing the MIS degree must complete:

- A minimum of 12-13 courses (34-37 credit hours) to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 34 credit hours of graduate-level study (graduate semester credit hours, coursework at the 500-level or above).
- A minimum of 28 graduate semester credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum of 24 graduate semester credit hours must be taken in standard or traditional courses (with a course type of lecture, seminar, laboratory, lecture/laboratory).
- A minimum residency enrollment of one fall or spring semester of part-time graduate study at Rice University.
- A maximum of 2 courses (6 graduate semester credit hours) from transfer credit. For additional program guidelines regarding transfer credit, see the [Policies](#) (p. 3) tab.

- A minimum overall GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework.
- A minimum program GPA of 3.00 or higher in all Rice coursework that satisfies requirements for the non-thesis master's degree with a minimum grade of B- (2.67 grade points) in each course.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses not on this official list may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions must be formally applied and entered into Degree Works by the department or program's [Official Certifier](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/) (<https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/>). Additionally, these course substitutions must be approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

### Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the MIS Degree		34-37

### Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
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#### Core Requirements

INDS 500	THE INTERDISCIPLINARY MIND: LIBERAL ARTS AND THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE <sup>1</sup>	3
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Select 1 course from each of the following fields (see course lists below):<sup>2</sup> 9

Humanities
Social Sciences
Natural Science

#### Elective Requirements

Select 6 elective courses from MLSC course offerings at the 500-level or 600-level <sup>3</sup>	18
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#### Capstone

INDS 699	CAPSTONE SEMINAR	1
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Select 1 from the following:<sup>4</sup> 3-6

INDS 700	CAPSTONE I
INDS 701	CAPSTONE II

<b>Total Credit Hours</b>	<b>34-37</b>
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### Footnotes and Additional Information

<sup>1</sup> All students must take INDS 500 in their first semester of study.

<sup>2</sup> The core requirements are designed to acquaint first-year students with contrasting perspectives and methodological approaches that define academic inquiry in the three broad fields of humanities, social sciences, and natural science. Core courses must be completed before courses that satisfy the electives can be taken.

<sup>3</sup> The six (6) electives beyond the core requirements may focus on just 1 field (humanities, social sciences, or natural science) or may be chosen more broadly.

4 The capstone coursework is designed to help students integrate their knowledge through writing an extended paper or completing a project to be presented to MLS faculty and students. Students may take 1 semester (INDS 701) or 2 semesters (INDS 700 and INDS 701) to complete the capstone project.

Course Lists to Satisfy Requirements

Core Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Humanities		
Select 1 course from the following:		3
INDS 580	EAST ASIAN FOOD HISTORY	
MLSC 501	THE SHAPING OF WESTERN THOUGHT	
MLSC 505	SHAKESPEARE AND FILM	
MLSC 510	MUSIC AND OTHER ARTS: COLLABORATION AND FUSION	
MLSC 517	MODERN DRAMA ON FILM AND IN PERFORMANCE	
MLSC 526	CONTEMPORARY MORAL ISSUES	
MLSC 533	SELF-DETERMINATION IN ARAB WORLD	
MLSC 536	TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURE AND ITS MODERN LEGACY	
MLSC 537	PROFILES FROM THE PAST: FAMOUS FIGURES IN WESTERN HISTORY	
MLSC 539	IMMIGRATION AND THE STATE: EUROPE AND THE US IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE	
MLSC 541	HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	
MLSC 542	THE EPIC JOURNEY	
MLSC 543	THE CITY IN LITERATURE	
MLSC 543	THE CITY IN LITERATURE	
MLSC 544	WRITING LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN	
MLSC 545	WINDOW TO THE SOUL: EXPLORING RELIGION AND ETHNICITY THROUGH MUSIC	
MLSC 547	PROFILES FROM THE PAST II: FAMOUS FIGURES IN WESTERN HISTORY	
MLSC 548	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY SET IN INTERDISCIPLINARY CONTEXT	
MLSC 549	COMPARATIVE IMPERIAL PLEASURE GARDENS: POWER AND LANDSCAPE	
MLSC 551	PROFILES FROM THE PAST III: FAMOUS FIGURES IN WESTERN HISTORY	
MLSC 554	MY FAVORITE NOVELS - AND GREAT FILMS MADE FROM THEM	
MLSC 555	THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION	
MLSC 556	HEAVEN AND HELL: FROM DANTE TO MILTON AND BEYOND	
MLSC 557	EARLY MODERN ISLAMIC WORLD: ART AND EMPIRE	
MLSC 559	ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE	

MLSC 560	WOMEN IN SOUTHERN LITERATURE
MLSC 561	HISTORY OF SOUTH ASIA: THE ORIGINS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN
MLSC 562	MUSIC AND MEDIEVALISM
MLSC 563	A HISTORY OF TUDOR ENGLAND
MLSC 566	MUSIC IN THE ERA OF THE REFORMATION
MLSC 567	THE HOUSE OF STUART
MLSC 572	BIBLICAL ETHICS
MLSC 573	WOMEN WRITERS AND HEROINES: FROM MYTH TO REALITY
MLSC 574	GREAT LITERATURE, GREAT MUSIC
MLSC 576	THOMAS JEFFERSON AND HIS WORLD, 1740-1830
MLSC 577	LATINA/O/E STORIES FROM THE BORDERLANDS
MLSC 578	INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN LAW

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Social Sciences		
Select 1 course from the following:		3
INDS 534	HUMAN RIGHTS IN WORLD AFFAIRS	
MLSC 509	STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION	
MLSC 519	PSYCHOLOGY OF BELIEFS	
MLSC 523	THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PUNISHMENT	
MLSC 526	CONTEMPORARY MORAL ISSUES	
MLSC 533	SELF-DETERMINATION IN ARAB WORLD	
MLSC 536	TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURE AND ITS MODERN LEGACY	
MLSC 539	IMMIGRATION AND THE STATE: EUROPE AND THE US IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE	
MLSC 541	HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	
MLSC 549	COMPARATIVE IMPERIAL PLEASURE GARDENS: POWER AND LANDSCAPE	
MLSC 555	THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION	
MLSC 557	EARLY MODERN ISLAMIC WORLD: ART AND EMPIRE	
MLSC 561	HISTORY OF SOUTH ASIA: THE ORIGINS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN	
MLSC 564	THE POLITICS OF WORLD WAR TWO IN EUROPE	
MLSC 568	PSYCHOLOGY OF AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE	
MLSC 569	FORESIGHT IN SOCIAL JUSTICE	
MLSC 570	CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS	
MLSC 571	MORAL LEADERSHIP IN ECONOMICS	
MLSC 576	THOMAS JEFFERSON AND HIS WORLD, 1740-1830	

MLSC 578	INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN LAW	
Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Natural Science</b>		
<i>Select 1 course from the following:</i>		3
MLSC 502	OUR ENVIRONMENT: SCIENCE AND CULTURE	
MLSC 506	THE SOLAR SYSTEM, THE SUN AND THE MIND OF MAN	
MLSC 508	EARTH SYSTEMS DYNAMICS	
MLSC 513	DNA: HUMAN IDENTITY AND ORIGINS	
MLSC 515	SCIENCE IN THE FIRST PERSON	
MLSC 525	PLAGUES AND POPULATIONS	
MLSC 532	THE GRAND DESIGN	
MLSC 538	OUR CHANGING PLANET	
MLSC 540	IS ANYBODY OUT THERE: THE SEARCH FOR LIFE BEYOND EARTH	
MLSC 546	THE ROLE OF CHEMISTRY IN HISTORY	
MLSC 550	MODERN ASTRONOMY AND OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE	
MLSC 552	CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY	
MLSC 553	SOLVING THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	
MLSC 558	EVOLUTION AND SOCIETY	
MLSC 565	PAST AND FUTURE CLIMATE CHANGE: NATURAL VERSUS HUMAN INFLUENCE	
MLSC 575	ALL ABOUT BIRDS - AND MORE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE COURSE	
MLSC 604	EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY IN ANTARCTICA	

## Policies for the MIS Degree

### Department of Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, Interdisciplinary Studies publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: [https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2025\\_26/Interdisciplinary\\_Studies\\_Graduate\\_Handbook.pdf](https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2025_26/Interdisciplinary_Studies_Graduate_Handbook.pdf).

### Admission

Admission to graduate study is open to qualified students holding a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from an accredited university or college. A minimum GPA of 3.00 from the applicant's undergraduate work is expected. Additionally, a statement of purpose, resume, writing samples, letters of recommendation, and work experience will be evaluated as part of the admissions decision.

### Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see [Transfer Credit \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Requests for transfer credit must be approved for Rice equivalency by the appropriate academic department offering the Rice equivalent course (corresponding

to the subject code of the course content) and by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

### Program Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the MIS degree should be aware of the following program-specific transfer credit guideline:

- No more than 2 courses (6 credit hours) of transfer credit from U.S. or international universities of similar standing as Rice may apply towards the degree.

### Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Interdisciplinary Studies website: <https://mis.rice.edu/>.

## Opportunities for the MIS Degree

### Fifth-Year Master's Degree Option for Rice Undergraduate Students

In certain situations and with some terminal master's degree programs, Rice students have an option to pursue a master's degree by adding an additional fifth year to their four years of undergraduate studies.

Advanced Rice undergraduate students in good academic standing typically apply to the master's degree program during their junior or senior year. Upon acceptance, depending on course load, financial aid status, and other variables, they may then start taking some required courses of the master's degree program. A plan of study will need to be approved by the student's undergraduate major advisor and the master's degree program director.

As part of this option and opportunity, Rice undergraduate students:

- must complete the requirements for a bachelor's degree and the master's degree independently of each other (i.e. no course may be counted toward the fulfillment of both degrees).
- should be aware there could be financial aid implications if the conversion of undergraduate coursework to that of graduate level reduces their earned undergraduate credit for any semester below that of full-time status (12 credit hours).
- more information on this *Undergraduate - Graduate Concurrent Enrollment* opportunity, including specific information on the registration process can be found [here \(https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-opportunities/undergraduate-graduate-concurrent-enrollment/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-opportunities/undergraduate-graduate-concurrent-enrollment/).

Rice undergraduate students may have the option to pursue the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies (MIS) degree. For additional information, students should contact their undergraduate major advisor and the MIS program director.

### Association of Graduate Liberal Studies National Honor Society

MIS graduates who earn a 3.75 GPA or higher and have demonstrated leadership in the classroom and in the greater community are eligible for nomination to the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies National Honor Society.

### **Additional Information**

For additional information, please see the Interdisciplinary Studies website: <https://mis.rice.edu/>.