

Vision on Teaching and Learning for Interdisciplinary Honours Education

Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies

Talented, inquisitive-minded and motivated students who are eager to look beyond the borders of their own discipline have the option of pursuing an interdisciplinary Honours education. For these students, the IIS offers interesting, challenging and innovative education.

A crucial part of the development of any Honours student is that he or she learns how to relate to the varying perspectives and experiences of others, both within and outside the university. Interdisciplinary Honours education presents a challenging opportunity to exchange points of view, and in doing so, open up new worlds.

The Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies offers interdisciplinary Honours courses at an UvA-wide level each year. To that end, the IIS provides a diverse range of regularly varying topics and teaching methods, with attention for inclusiveness with regard to students and lecturers. The Honours courses can be incorporated into the Honours programmes of the various faculties.

With regard to the selection of the courses offered, the IIS bases its decisions on the following five ambitions. Each of these ambitions is reflected across the entire overview of courses. Within a given course, some of these ambitions may be selected for added emphasis.

1. The IIS Honours courses are interdisciplinary

They offer students new perspectives and alternate points of view. Complex problems serve as practice material for students in order to train their problem-solving and critical thinking abilities. The students are encouraged to ignore the thresholds between humanities, exact sciences and social sciences. In doing so, they are challenged to develop a broader perspective that is not limited by disciplinary boundaries.

2. The IIS Honours courses offer room for experimentation

The education is innovative in terms of form and content, providing both lecturers and students with room for experimentation, for being unafraid to make mistakes and for reflecting on these experiences. It is a testing ground, shaped by lecturers and students together, in which creativity is cherished and encouraged while safeguarding quality at all times.

3. In IIS Honours courses, students can develop themselves on both a personal and academic level

The education provides students with a safe learning environment and an opportunity to develop their talents in small groups. Lecturers give intensive feedback to support students in realising their ambitions on a personal, professional and academic level.

4. The IIS Honours courses offer academic reflection

The Honours courses provide opportunity for academic reflection. This promotes students' ability to think critically and to place scholarship in perspective.

5. In IIS Honours courses, students will address current issues

Current issues, put forth by relevant partners from society and academia, supply valuable learning experiences with an eye to today's urgent challenges. This helps students develop

awareness of their social responsibility while also training them in professional skills such as cooperation.