

INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS

SPRING 2017 I-LA BROADSIDE

NEWS, EXTRAS, REGISTRATION INFO, PLANS & CURRICULUM UPDATES

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The origin of the English word pioneer is borrowed from the middle French word pionnier, which means, according to the OED, 'any labourer employed in digging.' Its formal meaning today is: 'of an infantry group going with or ahead of an army or regiment to dig trenches, repair roads and clear terrain in readiness for the main body of troops.' What concerns us, though, is its more colloquial or more familiar cultural meanings. These meanings are historically derivative and more to our modern usage: 'a labourer or porter' or 'a person who is amongst the first to explore or settle a new country, territory, or region; an early colonist or settler.' In Ireland, pioneer (as slang) means a teetotaler. Here, in the American west, the word pioneer symbolizes something a bit more grand: our forefathers and foremothers, hardy individuals—usually immigrants—moving west to stake their claim on the American life. This image looms large in our cultural imaginations and has been a staple of Hollywood film-making for most of the the 20th century. Hardy individuals crossing some unexpected boundary and forging a new life on the frontier. Again, such characterizations stand as representative features of our American sense of exceptionalism, bolstered by familiar key attributes: rugged individualism, skillful innovation, willful hardiness and a fierce curiosity for the unknown. A pioneer can wield an ax, tame horses, plot a course, cultivate crops, build canals, railroads, cities, skyscrapers, industries and eventually go into unclaimed space. its contemporary meaning encompasses something of all these earlier meanings but also adds an additional quality to it, one captured in the verb form (pioneering) meaning 'innovative; that is a forerunner in its field,' and original, being out in front of others.



A famous passage from American literature conjures up this image of American uniqueness. Walt Whitman, in his *Leaves of Grass*, writes, "All the past we leave behind; We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world, Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march, Pioneers! O pioneers." Key ideas here that seem most relevant to our major—and what makes it a unique and different academic experience than those offered in a typical liberal arts department—are easily found: 'leaving the past behind,' 'embarking on newer, mightier, varied worlds,' 'or seizing new worlds.' And, especially the verb 'debouch,' which means emerging from a narrow or confined space into a wide open area. All of these ideas could easily stand in for what we strive to achieve in our major. Boundaries are the entry point to new frontiers. New frontiers exist as much in our minds as they do in actual historical

geographies. New frontiers are endless and only limited by the boundaries we create and maintain within our own thinking.

So, one way in which you might begin to visualize your interdisciplinary liberal arts experience is to think of knowledge and understanding as a frontier landscape. Knowledge possesses distinct topographies. And the various classes we take or the ideas/topics we encounter are simply the unique localities or places we visit during our time here as interdisciplinary liberal arts majors. If we think of the American Great Plains/West as a metaphor for a vast region of knowledge and understanding, something akin to the vast vistas those coming west must have seen, we can begin to understand something of the experience (and potential) you can have as an Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts major. Two types of individual stand prominent in our mythic American story: immigrants and pioneers. Those who leave a homeland in search of a new land and those who cross boundaries into a land of uncertainty but also of great potential. We are somewhat the descendants of both. Always, new worlds to be encountered.

COMMENTS FROM JESSIE, YOUR ASC

I have been thinking about and using the word "curious" a lot more lately. I like the word, the way it sounds, and that it seems to be a more playful way to note inquisitiveness. In the role of the advisor for this major, I get to talk with students who are delightfully curious. Interdisciplinary approaches make up the variety of modalities in our robust and interesting lives. We enjoy discussing music, entertainment, politics, societal issues, advertisements, and news events (just to name a few) with others on a regular basis. The humanities, the arts: these are the areas we hang out in, the areas that enrich us. Think of all the pleasure you get reading, viewing, investigating, listening, or making something new; there is a connection to the liberal arts with all of these activities. The liberal arts student is one who craves diversity in ideas and subject matter, believes there is always more than one answer to a challenging problem, and is willing to try open to other perspectives. This school year, I have seen a record number of students add this major. I have also noticed an increase in meetings with students and parents at CSU Visit Days who already know about the major and want to join. Most say something like, "I like too many things," or, "I'm interested in multiple subjects and I don't want to choose just one." Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts is the home for these students. Having curiosity and talents in many areas are celebrated in this major. Students who choose this major have the freedom to take classes in a range of departments while still graduating in a timely manner. The willingness to expand and grow interests is part of the makeup of a well-rounded and dynamic person. The university is a place to get curious, where your curiosity is valued. More students are learning about this major and recognizing that it fits their needs because it is always being tailored for changing and evolving interests. It is an exciting and welcoming place to be.



COMMENTS FROM MAGGIE, YOUR I-LA SUPPORT PERSON

My name is Maggie and I offer administrative support to the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts program. I graduated from CSU in 2012, earning a BA in fine art with a concentration in graphic design. Choosing to study at CSU is what brought me to Fort Collins, and I haven't been able to part ways with this wonderful little city-town. Some of my favorite past times in the area include playing tennis and soccer, painting and drawing and viewing galleries, trying new recipes and visiting new restaurants, listening to music as well as enjoying live music, and of course exploring with my pup-Bodhisattva.



Bodhi (for short), is my 2-year-old German Shepherd, Pit-bull, Lab mix whom I rescued from a local shelter called Animal House about year and a half ago. On a whim, I swung by Animal House one sunny afternoon and was instantly magnetized to Bodhi and his gentle yet spirited nature. I took him home that very day and he has been my usher toward enlightenment ever since! Most recently we participated in the Run Fur Fun 5K.

Besides hobbies, a lot of my free time is spent continuing my education and volunteering. I am currently taking social work classes through CSU and volunteer as a homework helper for a local community center. My long-term goal is to blend my two focal areas of interest- art and counseling, and practice as an art therapist. Everyone has a unique path as well as set of passions; after great exploration I am very grateful to have pinpointed my niche! I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience at CSU as a student, and continue to enjoy the climate as a university employee. I hope this note finds you well, and I wish you determination in the pursuit of your calling! Please feel free to stop by the College of Liberal Arts main office and say hello and grab a complimentary ILA pencil.

INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS STAFF STORIES



My name is Julie Pinkston and I may be the first face you see as you walk through the doors of the CLA Dean's office. I am the new Administrative Assistant in the office and I have to tell you how happy I am that I've been offered this great opportunity! CLA is filled with amazing, talented and very welcoming people.

I actually owe my existence to CSU! You see, my parents met during their first week of classes at then, Colorado Agriculture and Mechanical College in 1956. They were both in the Marching Band! My Mom was a music major and played the bell lyre and my Dad played the trombone. My Dad completed his Bachelor of Science degree and graduated in electrical engineering in 1961 as a Colorado State University Ram!

My older brother attended CSU from 1990-1994 and graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration. Growing up, he and I were always pretty competitive so I have to take this limited opportunity to say, I beat him up here to CSU and graduated first! I attended CSU from 1985-1989 and obtained my B.S. in Landscape Horticulture with a concentration in Landscape Design and Construction. Fast forward "several" years and you'll also now find my son attending CSU! Growing up here in Northern Colorado, he truly always has been a Ram at heart, specifically through regularly attending the CSU Sports Camps and supporting all of the Football and Basketball teams through the years. He will graduate this spring obtaining his degree in Business Administration.

What more can I say? CSU is a great tradition in our family! My daughter is next in line! We even name our pets after the great mascot of CSU. CAM the yellow lab even gets to participate in the great tradition of CSU!

Stop in and say "hi" when you have a chance. I'll look forward to meeting and welcoming each and every one of you! Most important is that you know you are in a terrific place!



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INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS STUDENT STORIES

KEITH CHRISTIAN, Senior



My name is Keith Christian and I recently got accepted into medical school. And yes, the previous sentence is still a surreal concept for me. I am writing this article to give a feel of what the medical route is like for all my fellow liberal arts majors who are even considering medical school. To be fair, I also have a major in biochemistry, but if you are thinking of medicine, you don't have to complete a science major! In fact, the number one thing I really noticed as I applied was how useful having something other than a science major was. To get into medical school you have a checklist to complete to make it to the interview. But to get a seat, often times you need something to set you apart. For me, it was my studies outside of the sciences.

Now the checklist for a competitive application is lengthy, but is by no means a strict regimen. In general, medical schools want to know you can handle their course load (by taking specific science classes, having a good GPA, and killing the MCAT test), know what you are signing up for (through medical experience and doctor shadowing), and that you will make a good doctor (by demonstrating your sociability, leadership, and critical thinking through extracurricular activities and the medical school interview). Completing even part of this checklist is hard, and you learn real quick that all you can do is give it your all. That's what I did, and you can believe I fell short on quite a few requirements. However I still decided to apply.

Applying was honestly one of the best and most difficult learning experiences of my life because it taught me to have peace in my preparation and in the unknown. There is a lot of turmoil in applying. You don't know if you picked the right schools or applied to enough of them, you don't know if you'll get any interviews, you don't know what will happen after the interviews, you start questioning what gap year plans you should have in case you don't make it in. All of a sudden, checking your email becomes a mini rollercoaster each time. At first it was difficult for me, but I learned with time to have the peace to accept the things I cannot change and the courage to change the things I can.

ELIZABETH MCCOY, Senior

I chose my major based upon the "path of least resistance." I came to CSU as a transfer student in 1991 with an Associate's Degree focused on music and theater. Liberal Arts was the perfect answer because the program accepted most of my credits, while giving me the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of courses to fulfill my degree requirements. I lost my job after my first semester and had to withdraw when faced with the choice to pay my mortgage or tuition. I came back to CSU in 1997 as a single parent and an employee. I chose to raise my son and put my education on hold until he was older. Once my son finished with high school it was finally time for me to finish my degree. I started with German because I planned to visit the home of a German exchange student who had stayed with us the previous year and wanted to speak to them in their own language. Starting with a 5-credit course after a 20-year absence from school was a challenge given also working full time. I found a saying that I clung to "When faced with a challenge, look for a way, not a way out" and was able to finish the course successfully. Afterwards I was hooked on learning. There is something magical about doing something for yourself instead of worrying about the expectations of others. However, trying to balance working full time, going to school and participating in a rewarding personal life is a challenge. Like any student I plan vacations around my course schedule. I also take online courses in the summer because the classroom time commitment conflicts with my work schedule. This degree is a gift I am giving to myself. I will be 62 years old when I graduate, but it will be worth the wait. I took my research methods from Kevin Foskin and plan to take my capstone from him as well. He has been very supportive of my degree process and I am very grateful for his guidance.



NATALIE RUSSELL, Junior

It struck me the other day, while I was holding a human heart in my right hand, that futures never really do go as planned. Mine certainly hasn't. My name is Natalie Russell, I am a junior Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts major with a Biomedical Science minor, and I never expected to end up in an anatomy lab. I began my college career as a pure English literature major at a small liberal arts school in Nashville, TN. By the end of my freshmen year I decided to transfer to CSU to pursue teaching English, only to realize halfway through the semester that I would be one of those teachers who had to repress the desire to duct tape the mouths of noisy children. Closing that door forced me to confront a belief I'd held since high school: I thought that English was the only subject in which I could excel. I began to make list after list of the things I wanted from a career, and really, from life. I brought these lists to the Major and Career Exploration Center here at CSU, and spread them out before Jon, who listened carefully as I explained my conundrum. I was trying to find a career that was challenging, gave me a skill set that allowed me to help others, and at the same time allowed the flexibility to have a family. He absorbed all of this, then said life changing words, "You're a scientist." In that moment, I felt a lie unravel. I began looking into medical professions, finally landing on physician's assistant. It was a career path that fit nicely into my ideals. I continued to pursue my passion for words and stories by becoming an interdisciplinary liberal arts major, but I tacked on a BMS minor to help complete some of the prerequisites for PA school. Then I dove in. Chemistry, physiology and anatomy, oh my!



I've been at this new science life for over a year, and so far, so good! I love the mix of science and literature that fills my days. I can spend hours in the anatomy lab, committing bony landmarks to memory, then read Dave Abrams' *Spell of the Sensuous* for a completely different perspective on his theory of the 'body subject'. In some ways, having my feet in two worlds, science and the interdisciplinary liberal arts, not only deepens my understanding of them individually, but also allows me to see how these two spheres interact and inform the other. I believe the wide and glorious expanse of interdisciplinary liberal arts offers a glimpse into the human condition that is essential to becoming an excellent healthcare provider. While I never anticipated where I would be now, I can earnestly admit that I am excited about where I am going.

INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS STUDENTS EXPLORING ABOUT TOWN & CAMPUS

CLAIRE ANDRUES, Senior

The FoCo Café is a local restaurant serving any and all that walk through the doors with healthy, local food cooked in a volunteer run kitchen. Jeff and Kathleen Baumgardner opened the café in 2014 after Jeff and Kathleen decided to pursue their passions, with the hope of creating a "setting that offered amazing food, a commitment to service and a place where building community for all [was] at its center" (FoCo Café). What makes the café special is the "pay what you can" framework. When eating at the café, you choose from a selection of salads and soups then are given the option to pay a suggested amount, an amount of your choice, or the option to volunteer your time at the café to "pay" for your meal. This allows those of all abilities and earnings to be able to eat healthy local food. When volunteering, you are taught kitchen procedures and cooking skills as well as social skills when interacting with all the guests and other volunteers. The FoCo café is making food accessible and creating a community within Fort Collins that is inclusive and supportive. The FoCo Café can be seen as an enterprising Interdisciplinary juncture where economics, business, sociology, psychology and politics join together for new kind of social and entrepreneurial venture where both profit and community meet.

EMMA HOLT, Senior

Music: for many of us, it's difficult to picture life without it. Love, peace, truth, faith, inspiration, motivation, revolution; these are a few of the many uses humanity has found for music. "The universal language of mankind," music has long accompanied humanity in our collective journey through space and time, and will likely continue to do so for centuries. Why, then, at a time when music is so dynamic and vivacious, do some continue to insist that radio is dead? My guess is that they've never tuned in to their local radio station.

Though radio enjoyed its golden age in the 1930's and 1940's, it has—for a number of reasons—continued to be an incredibly versatile and pervasive medium today. Those who have taken Communication and Popular Culture or JTC 100 know that many historians of media often associate the "death" of the radio with the arrival of MTV in August of 1981; their fittingly titled first song: "Video Killed the Radio Star," by The Buggles. And while radio did fall second to television shortly after its debut, it has not declined into non-existence as some of these scholars may suggest. In fact, I would argue that radio is making a fantastic comeback—thriving, adapting and modifying to meet the needs of a vastly different social, cultural, and technological climate. By drawing on a variety of disciplines and perspectives to increasingly involve its audience, radio has done something truly remarkable as of late: it has set out its own path to conquer the unique and uncertain terrain of the 21st century.



Walk into the office of KCSU and you enter a world of interdisciplinary engagement and collaboration: artists, journalists, musicians, philosophers, biologists, engineers—our DJs and employees come from all walks of life. Though the studio is often seen to be the space of a lonely DJ, it is in fact overflowing with an endless stream of thoughts, experiences, voices, perspectives and ideas. Yes—the radio is home to the DJs—but it is also home to non-profits, live performers, journalists, and creators of all types. What we produce is collaborative in the truest sense, and what we wish to achieve is two fold. Apps like RadioFX, KCSU.com, Facebook, YouTube and our call/text-in feature are designed to increase engagement with local audiences as well as those around the world. Recognizing the power of radio and the potential it has to change a day, a life, or a perspective—we must always consider who is listening in.

Which brings me back to *why* you should tune into your local radio station. While it may be tempting to reach for the AUX cord the next moment you set foot in your car, try setting it to 90.5 FM instead. Dare to push yourself beyond the limits of your musical universe? You might soon discover that it's something you simply can't live without.

