



NEWS | FACULTY | STUDENT STORIES

A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR KEVIN FOSKIN

First off, I'd like to welcome both Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts majors and Interdisciplinary Legal Studies minors back to campus after what I hope was a fulfilling summer for everyone. I do realize that summer means different things to many of us. For some of us, travel or study abroad programs. Others of us take summer classes. And still, others of us take on jobs or internships.

As I usually do, I spent most of my summer working (and doing my scholarly research) from Dublin, Ireland, my other home country. We had a proper Irish summer (e.g., chilly, rainy, and breezy) this year, although friends from there have told me late August was as gorgeous as any they've seen in years. However, we did manage a few stunningly beautiful evenings. I'll include here a photo I took on such an evening as I was walking the East Pier of Dún Laoghaire (pronounced Dunleary) Harbour, a huge art-



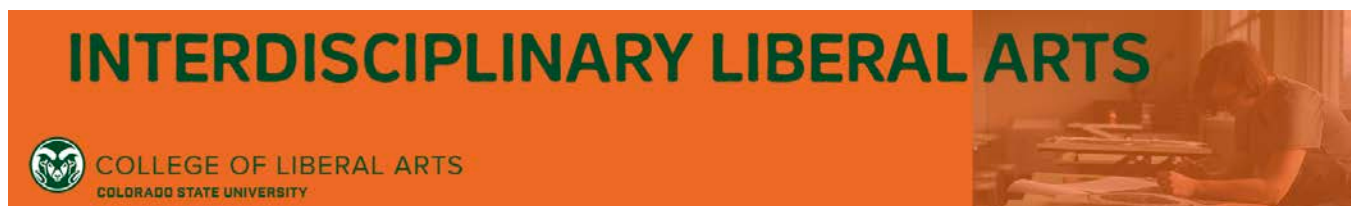
south Dublin Bay, completed in the 1820s, to create a safe shelter for ships making the passage from England in times of fierce storms battering the Irish Sea. An incident one December in 1807, where 400 lives were lost when strong seas swept two vessels onto the rocky shores, spoke exactly to this need.

Interdisciplinarity is the heart of our major (and minor). Its main premise (and purpose) is to work with a diversity of different academic perspectives (e.g., disciplines) to gain a larger, more comprehensive understanding of some 'object of interdisciplinary study', be this a topic, an issue, a problem, or—more importantly—simply an interest. Yes, interest is often quite absent in so many conversations regarding interdisciplinarity and how it can be useful as an intellectual and academic process. Yes, interest is the best starting point for a stronger interdisciplinary project, we believe. And, yes, we can employ interdisciplinarity, say, in our study of Shakespeare, just as much as we might employ it to look at huge contemporary issues such as climate change or democracy in the age of social media. One assumption we see as a first principle for Interdisciplinarity is thus: where we begin is going to determine where we end up. Beginning with a topic that we are keenly interested in is always going to lead us to an ending that is equally as exciting but incredibly more satisfying, for it's a product of our interest.

Along with interest, Interdisciplinarity also works with a particular kind of problem, one perfectly suited for acting as a vehicle for exploring a keen interest of ours. Our kind of problem isn't so much about something that needs to be fixed—although it certainly could be—but, rather, the problem of not knowing enough yet about some interest that is very important to us that we want to learn more about it. We'd argue that every problem, no matter how ordinary (i.e., figuring out where to go for dinner tonight) or huge (i.e., how might we begin to address climate change) is first and foremost always a problem of not knowing enough yet to solve whatever we are faced with. So, when working with Interdisciplinarity, think about what interests you and then *go for it*.

RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW (NOTES FROM THE ILA ASC)

As many of you know, Sherri Frye—your ILA ASC—has moved on to a new CSU position as the Assistant Director of The Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities (UERU). Housed at CSU, UERU (formerly the Reinvention Collaborative) is a Boyer-inspired consortium that brings together research-university leaders with expertise in the theory and practice of undergraduate education. The work of UERU and the Boyer 2030 Commission blueprint, "The Equity-Excellence Imperative," informs CSU's student success activities. We will miss Sherri and hate to see her go—she's done such a tremendous job for us—but we also wish her all the best in her new position. However, ILA feels equally fortunate that Caitlin Kotnick will be coming to ILA—from Theatre—as our new Academic Success Coordinator at the beginning of the Spring 25 term. So, ILA welcomes her. We feel she is a great choice and worthy of being Sherri's successor. In the meantime, if you have questions about Spring 25 registration or anything else, do contact the CLA Advising Center (<https://advising.libarts.colostate.edu/advisors/>). They can help you with whatever questions you have.



A MESSAGE FROM CINDY MURILLO

As a faculty member deeply engaged in interdisciplinary studies within the liberal arts, I've seen firsthand how crossing traditional academic boundaries enriches both teaching and learning. My own experiences have been shaped by exploring the intersections of fields like history, philosophy, women's studies, and the arts, where I am encouraged to think beyond a single disciplinary lens. This approach fosters creativity, critical thinking, and the ability to synthesize diverse perspectives—skills that are essential in addressing today's complex global challenges. I love working with faculty and students in our department—the collaborative environment of interdisciplinary studies is truly transformative, equipping all of us to become more adaptable and innovative thinkers.

In my own work, I've experienced how interdisciplinary collaboration opens up new intellectual possibilities. For example, my research on the author Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Feminist Gothic has greatly benefited from incorporating insights from fields like psychology, cultural studies, and even environmental science. This blend of perspectives has not only broadened my academic approach but also enriched my teaching. In the classroom, I regularly draw on different fields to show students how an issue can be approached from various theoretical and practical viewpoints. These kinds of discussions push students to think critically and reflect on the limits of single-discipline approaches. By exposing them to a variety of methodologies and perspectives, Interdisciplinary Studies cultivates intellectual flexibility, which is a crucial skill in both academic and real-world contexts. I am thrilled that we have so many great students this semester!



In my experience, teaching courses that bridge multiple fields often leads to dynamic discussions where students bring their unique perspectives into the conversation. This not only enhances peer learning but also mirrors the collaborative nature of contemporary research and problem-solving in the professional world. As a faculty member, I, too, benefit from this environment; working across disciplines keeps us engaged with evolving ideas and helps us continuously refine our approaches to teaching and scholarship. The liberal arts, with its emphasis on interdisciplinary inquiry, will prepare you for a lifetime of learning and adaptability, helping you to become well-rounded thinkers capable of thriving in a complex, interconnected world.

ALPHA IOTA SIGMA

Calling all Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Majors! Join the Interdisciplinary Honor Society, Alpha Iota Sigma, at Colorado State University and expand your academic horizons!



This society offers students a unique opportunity to explore the intersection of multiple fields, collaborate with peers from diverse disciplines, and tackle real-world problems with innovative, cross-disciplinary solutions. Whether you're passionate about science, the arts, humanities, or liberal arts, the Interdisciplinary Honor Society empowers you to think beyond boundaries, develop critical thinking skills, and prepare for leadership roles in a rapidly changing world. Discover how diverse perspectives can fuel creativity, innovation, and meaningful impact—be part of a community where curiosity knows no limits!

In addition to academic enrichment, the Interdisciplinary Honor Society provides exclusive access to workshops, seminars, and networking opportunities with faculty and industry leaders. You'll engage in dynamic discussions, participate in hands-on projects, and collaborate on initiatives that address global challenges. With mentorship, leadership development, and a strong sense of community, this society is the perfect environment to cultivate your intellectual curiosity and prepare for success in both your academic and professional journey.

Make lasting connections, broaden your perspective, and take the next step in your academic career by joining the Interdisciplinary Honor Society at Colorado State University! We will have a short informational meeting soon, so keep your eye out for an email.



GRADUATION NEWS

Changes are coming in Spring 2025, involving how CSU celebrates and recognizes your graduation. Whereas before each college held its individualized commencement ceremony, the university will be moving to a single commencement ceremony. The benefit of this change—according to the university administration—“will feature a prominent commencement speaker to inspire graduates and will allow more Rams to celebrate together on a day of spirited tradition and celebration, aligning with commencement practices at other leading universities.” More information—they promise—is coming soon. Meanwhile, for Fall 24, the College of Liberal Arts will continue to hold its individualized commencement ceremony on December 14, 2024. 1 pm., Moby Arena. For information regarding Cap & Gown, Ceremony length, Photo Submission, Tickets, etc., see the following link: <https://www.libarts.colostate.edu/students/commencement/>.

A MESSAGE FROM BRYCE O'TIERNEY

My name is Bryce M. O'Tierney (she/her), and I am excited to join Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts as a new Instructor this fall semester! For I-LA, I am teaching 392 and 492 seminars online; I am also an Instructor in the Department of English, where I have taught courses in literature/poetics, creative writing, and composition.



Furthermore, my participation in the CSU climate initiative informs my pedagogy. I am an interdisciplinary artist, originally from Anchorage, Alaska.

My work as a musician, writer, and dancer is scored through exchange: between the nonverbal and verbal, human and greater-than-human, improvised and composed. Previous and forthcoming publications include: *Anchorage Daily News*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, *RHINO Poetry*, *Common Ground Review*, *About Place Journal*, and *Apricity Press*.

I was a poet-participant at the Napa Valley Writers Conference this past summer, and the Orion Environmental Writers' Workshop in 2022. I compose, record, and perform in touring duo *maeve & quinn* with my twin, Maris (commissions with Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Steppenwolf Theatre, Poetry Foundation, Chicago Composers Orchestra, Anchorage Symphony). Tour of our album *another door* continues this October in the Midwest!

A MESSAGE FROM KELLY MCGREGOR



I am an Academic Support Coordinator working with students majoring in International Studies, Languages, Literatures, & Cultures, as well as Political Science. I teach a First Year Seminar Abroad in Ireland, as well as courses for the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Program, including Liberal Arts & Meaningful Work and Senior Capstone Portfolio. For Key Communities, I have also taught *Rebels, Outcasts, & Society*, an interdisciplinary course focused on social change agents, the ethics of rebellion, and representations of good and evil.

I received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and English as well as my Master of Arts in English Literature from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Before becoming an advisor at Colorado State, I worked as a residence hall director for the University of Colorado, where I worked closely with residential academic programs and taught several courses, including *Banned Books and the First Amendment*, *First Year Writing Seminar*, as well as *Comics and the Interpretive Arts*.

I strongly believe that an education in the Liberal Arts trains students to be strong critical thinkers and engaged global citizens. I was born and raised in Fort Collins and love spending time outside in the Colorado sun. Reading fiction, listening to music, skiing, biking, and watching Rockies baseball are just a few of my interests outside of work. Oh, and I'm pretty good at the YoYo.

THE INTERDISCIPLINARITY LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM PROUDLY SUPPORTS THE 10TH ANNUAL ACT HUMAN FILM RIGHTS FESTIVAL

From April 2-6, 2025, ACT will celebrate ten years of uniting arts with activism through film in Fort Collins and at CSU. Each spring, ACT hosts a five-day film festival that showcases an average of 23 films and invites filmmakers to attend in person. Filmmakers, film participants, and activists connect with our campus and community to foster and invigorate conversations around human rights and democracy. Students assist with the festival's production as interns, student workers, and volunteers, and thanks to our sponsorship, we offer free tickets for Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts students to attend. So, attend a film screening or two. The films and cinematic experiences you'll have will amaze and inspire you!



A MESSAGE FROM DEBBIE SWANN

Hello, students! As a Senior Instructor of both Theatre and ILA, I'd like to invite all of you to a project I'm working on that opens next spring. Like so many creative, collaborative projects in the University Center for the Arts, *Paradise Lost* by Erin Shields will be a beautiful, ambitious production to close out our academic year. Adapted from John Milton's epic tale, *Paradise Lost* reimagines a story we think



we know well: the Garden of Eden and fall of humankind due to Satan's trickery as a snake. Shields, however, creatively spins this ancient tale helping audiences see it in a contemporary, relevant way. In the theatrical adaptation, Shields presents Satan as a woman who is spurned and hurt by patriarchal norms in Heaven, becoming the catalyst to humanity's epic fall. The production promises to be a truly interdisciplinary project, comprised of ideas from theology, literature, music, dance, visual design, feminist theory and so much more.

As students enrolled in 6 or more credits, you get free tickets to all productions at the UCA, so please come check it out!

Want an opportunity to collaborate or get another department in CLA

involved? Reach out! Interdisciplinary curiosity is the recipe for creative success. To learn more or get your tickets, visit the production's website: <https://theatre.colostate.edu/events/paradise-lost-by-john-milton-2025-04-25/>. Hope to see you

there in late April!

A MESSAGE FROM GINA ROBINSON

Greetings. My name is Gina Robinson, and I am in my 7th year at CSU. I teach classes in the Legal Studies minor. I am also the prelaw advisor and the legal studies minor advisor. I am married with four children and enjoy snow skiing, triathlons, paddle-boarding, and travel.

At CSU, we have a legal studies minor. It pairs great with any major. It requires seven classes that are all law classes in many of the departments at CSU. Some of the classes include Constitutional Law, Water Law, Business Ethics, Families in the Legal Environment, and Mock Trial. This minor will help you transition into law school and will give you some great knowledge of the law if you go into any other field. If you are interested in the minor, please reach out to me at gina.robinson@colostate.edu

I teach *Contemporary Legal Studies* year-round (Fall and Spring face-to-face and fall, spring, and summer online). This is a great class I refer to as Law 101. Each week, we study a different area of law. We also talk about law school, learn how to prepare briefs for legal cases, and learn a lot of legal terminology that will help you navigate the first few weeks months in law school.

I teach a *Mock Trial* class every spring. LB205 is the pre-requisite. I give the students a case problem – a murder case – at the beginning of the semester and divide the class into six teams of six. I teach the students how to put on opening statements, closing arguments, direct and cross-examinations, and how to make and respond to objections. For the last five weeks of class, we have a round-robin tournament where the students put on full trials and are judged by local attorneys. If you are interested in law school, this is the hands-on class for you!



INTERDISCIPLINARY REFLECTIONS: DIFFERENCES IN KIND, NOT DEGREE

Too often, in many contemporary discussions surrounding higher education, university degrees are valued and validated increasingly by the standard of a perceived future utility or what is referred to as 'the rate of return.' There are many reasons for this, but one major reason is the ever-increasing cost of a university education. Of course, one presumed measure of this 'rate of return' is the number of well-paying jobs available after graduation specific to one's program of study. In our view, this is a problematic misunderstanding because not every undergraduate degree is the same kind of degree. There are, and always have been, two general types of university degree programs in existence in the history of higher education in the United States: direct-career path degree programs and indirect-career path degree programs. Degree programs such as Interdisciplinary Studies—and most liberal arts degree programs—are not so much designed to prepare you for one specific field or profession. They are designed to give you the knowledge, experience, and career skills (e.g., analytical and communicational) you need to succeed in hundreds of different kinds of jobs or careers, all of which are indirectly associated with what you have learned as an Interdisciplinary Studies major.

For example, an engineering degree mostly prepares you for a career in engineering. A bio-med major prepares you for medicine or medical research. Many STEM fields can be seen as direct career path degree programs; however, it is a misperception to think that STEM majors, on average, are more practical for preparing you for a successful career. A degree in bio-chem offers one no more of a certainty of a career path than any liberal arts major. The only difference is the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts degree opens up hundreds of different career fields, rather than only one. This can also be said of business majors. Like Liberal Arts, Business is a general degree that has many possible applications afterward. The difference between liberal arts and business or biology degrees is the skill set that you gain when taking classes within your chosen major. Yes, there are very few interdisciplinary-specific jobs or careers available now, but there are hundreds if not thousands of jobs and career paths that will utilize the interdisciplinary skills you learned while earning your degree.

So, thinking of the potential value of your degree only in terms of the differences of assumed jobs (promised by your degree) waiting for you after graduation (more or fewer) is assuming there is only one kind of valued degree program.

CO-AUTHORING YOUR ILA MAJOR DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

As you know, the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts program is the most flexible, adaptable, and ‘credit-friendly’ undergraduate degree program on campus today. Arguably, this is one of the major reasons why you have chosen to be an ILA major (or ILA Legal Studies Minor). Numerous times, when we are asked what this ‘awesome flexibility’ means, those asking are presuming that you all simply take whatever classes you want without any larger reasoning or logic behind the choices that you do make. Our answer is always the same: there is much more to it than what you think.

The ILA curriculum is based on a concept of course selection, which we call *Course Clustering*. Here, we encourage you to think in terms of future Career Specialization themes, such as Urban Studies, Pre-Law, Creative Industry, Information Design, etc.. The idea is this: you make for yourself a unique category of skills, intellectual experiences, and specific knowledge that gives you what you need to pursue your self-determined career path. The Course Clustering concept is designed around the following five general principles:

- Part of what makes the ILA Major so unique is the fact that students self-design and self-select a huge majority of their courses. Students choose courses based on their interests, developing career goals in real-time as they grow into themselves.
- Part of what also makes the ILA Major so exciting, impactful, and invaluable is the fact that students can build for themselves a major that is uniquely theirs, a major strategically designed to custom-fit their future career plans, a major consisting of a distinctly tailored skillset, intellectual expertise, and academic experience fine-tuned for the specific career niche you are seeking after graduation.
- Rather than taking courses for a specific career track, students build their coursework and potential skillsets around a personal or professional theme that then can open up potential career destinations they don’t even yet realize. Doing so is what we call **Course Clustering**.
- Combining your coursework into clusters by topic of interest or career focus is not required but it is a flexible way for you to bring FOCUS, COHERENCY, AGENCY, DESIGN, and PURPOSE to your selection of coursework. All students, whether or not you choose to cluster your courses, will receive a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts.
- There is an infinity of different ways you can ‘cluster’ your coursework. The clusters below are just several examples of the INFINITE number of possibilities within the major. There is no limit to what you can imagine for yourself. See below for just the start of thousands of different ways you might cluster your courses in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts.

For an in-depth look at how Course Clustering works or examples of potential Career Specialization Themes, copy and paste the following web link in your browser: <https://libartsmajor.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/58/2017/12/Sample-Course-Clusters-with-CLA-Discipline-Descriptions.pdf>

A NOTE FROM DALJANE GIRON, PRESIDENT OF PRE-LAW CLUB

Colorado State University’s Pre-Law Club is a career-oriented organization designed to help aspiring law students navigate the complexities of preparing for law school and a future profession in the legal field. We serve as a hub for students with an interest in law, including those still uncertain if law school is the right path for them. The Pre-Law Club offers a range of opportunities to engage with legal experts, current law students, and fellow undergraduates who share similar aspirations. By participating, our members can build a solid foundation for their academic and professional goals. From LSAT preparation to networking with legal professionals, the Pre-Law Club is committed to being a valuable resource for student success.

One of the club’s primary initiatives is to provide members with direct access to practicing attorneys and current law students, offering personal insights into the realities of law school and the legal profession. We regularly host guest speakers, including practicing attorneys, law students, admissions ambassadors, and other professionals from various legal backgrounds. These speakers share advice and perspectives from their own legal journeys, giving our members a broader understanding of the profession and what it entails.



profession and what it entails.

In addition to networking and learning opportunities, the club focuses on LSAT preparation. Our LSAT practice nights allow members to sharpen their test-taking skills or serve as an introduction for those unfamiliar with the exam. As the LSAT is a critical component of law school admissions, the club ensures that its members are well-informed about the exam and provides tips, advice, and

even discounts on LSAT preparation materials. We also organize tours of law schools across the Colorado region, where students can interact with admissions officers and learn more about specific programs.

Beyond academic and professional development, the Pre-Law Club is dedicated to community service. Giving back to the community not only fosters personal growth but also enhances a student’s law school application. Members can choose to regularly participate in service projects such as Special Olympics or participate in bigger events such as CSU’s Fall Clean-Up.

Colorado State University’s Pre-Law Club understands that the journey to law school, from navigating the application process to preparing for the LSAT, can be daunting and overwhelming. However, the Pre-Law Club is here to support you every step of the way. Whether through expert guidance, LSAT practice, community service opportunities, or simple advice, we are committed to helping our members succeed. We strive to ensure that every member feels confident and prepared as they pursue their path to law school and a fulfilling legal career.

HEARING FROM ILA MAJORS & LEGAL STUDIES MINORS

ANGEL MUNOZ CALDERA



Before I-LA, I previously changed my major two times. I had originally come to CSU with the plan of doing Landscape Architecture. After my first year, I tried changing to Business Administration but, unfortunately, was ineligible for two years. I was then given the hope that ILA might help me continue my education with a minor in Entrepreneurship & Innovation as well as Real Estate.

Besides being a busy student for the majority of my time, I also take part in the ASCSU senate board. My role is under the Student

Fee Review Board (SFRB), which I then report to the Lory Student Center Governing Board (LSCGB). I also take part in the Latinx Business Association (LBA) and the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM). On the other hand, I work two other jobs, which include working as a leasing agent at an apartment for student housing. I also work at the Lory Student Center Executive Office as a Student Engagement Coordinator, which requires a lot of interaction with students and staff around the Lory Student Center.

What I would like to do after graduation is to hopefully acquire my real estate broker license and start working with a firm to get some mentoring and experience. I also would like to do website designing for local organizations or businesses to start building a portfolio as well. Overall, I would like to acquire and start my own International Real Estate Firm and Marketing Firm as well.

I hope one day to be able to inspire a whole new generation of First-Generation Students and give back to the community and those who are in need. As well as give back to my parents as they have been my number one supporters through my life journey and experiences.

FATEMA ALQALLAF

My name is Fatema, and I'm an international student from Kuwait, currently in my second year of studying Interior Design. I've always been interested in how different subjects connect, which is why I'm drawn to Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts. This approach allows me to explore a variety of fields and understand how they influence one another. I believe that having a broad education across disciplines will help me become a more well-rounded designer and individual.

I find it especially fascinating how design, psychology, and history intersect. As an Interior Design student, I think it's important to understand not only how to create beautiful spaces but also how to make environments that are functional, comfortable, and meaningful. For example, knowing the psychology behind how people feel in different spaces or how historical events have shaped design trends allows me to make more informed decisions in my design work. These connections between disciplines can create deeper, more impactful designs that resonate with people on various levels.

Through studying Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts, I aim to expand my knowledge beyond the technical aspects of design and integrate concepts from multiple fields into my work. By combining ideas from psychology, history, and design, I hope to create spaces that not only look good but also enhance the well-being of the people who use them. My goal is to use this holistic approach to design spaces that are aesthetically pleasing, functional, and thoughtful, making them more meaningful and effective in serving people's needs.



RYAN SHEEHAN



Before I started taking Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts as my major, I didn't know anything about it. My dad suggested I take it after I went through my first year and still didn't find anything that interested me. Now that I am in my third year of taking this major, I am very happy that I did so. I like how Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts allows me to look at a topic and see it through the different disciplines. I think it's very useful to be able to broaden my view, try to find a way around all of the biases and be able to make deductions based on my best understanding. The biggest interest I have for Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts is that it's not so specialized in a specific discipline so there are many options out of school.

My minor is Environmental studies because that's something I have been very interested in, but haven't decided if it is something that I want to spend my life doing, so I have it as my minor. If I do go into environmental work out of college, I would love to work for national parks, really anything where the majority of work is outdoors.

I transferred to CSU from UCCS, I was originally against going to a big school. But now that I'm here studying Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts, I'm very happy with my decision. Most of my family went to CSU which influenced my decision as well to come attend. I work at SmashBurger, like to play basketball, and sometimes rock climb as well as hang out with friends and my roommates.

GRACE ROGERS

I chose Interdisciplinary Studies because I was not sure what I wanted to go into. I wanted to use this degree to help me get a better understanding of what else I could do. I liked how broad the degree is, and that this can help me get into anything I wanted. I chose to do Criminal Justice/Criminology because it has always interested me. I have always loved reading mystery novels. As well as watching and reading true crime, I have always wanted to be the person who helps solve cases. But it would be a hard road to be able to get to that point. I was not sure if I wanted to fully commit to getting that type of degree if I was not going to do anything with it. I wanted to make sure that the degree was open enough so that I could get into what I wanted, without being tied down by doing one thing. Because I have many other interests that I would love to pursue.

I have been working at a circus center since mid-May of this year. I have been coaching and doing front desk duties for the company. I am going to be performing in two gigs that they have going on. Every week on Tuesdays I teach my three classes, and then on the other days, I do the front desk. I stopped doing circus arts after I graduated high school. But then I got back into it and found my love for the art again. It is challenging physically and mentally, which is what I love. As well as getting an adrenaline rush after learning a new trick or drop. Since living up here I have found my passion for circus arts again.



HEARING FROM I-LA MAJORS & LEGAL STUDIES MINORS

DYLAN VASQUEZ

I'm a Business Administration major at Colorado State University with a concentration in Computer Information Systems. However, I have now been growing an interest in interdisciplinary approaches. My main academic focus has been on the intersection of business and technology. However, my curiosity extends beyond this into areas like politics, economics, and social justice.

For example, I've been exploring crime reduction policies in El Salvador and the impacts of Bitcoin adoption in the country as well. What I love about Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts is how it encourages me to look at these issues through different lenses, which has helped me improve my research skills, like mixing technology with social sciences, politics, and even history. I also have a strong interest in finance, which fits naturally with my swing, forex, and futures trading activities and my interest in companies like Fidelity or Charles Schwab to grow financially as well. I enjoy breaking down how technology and data can shape financial decisions, whether that's for businesses or individuals. Working part-time and taking a wide variety of courses has shown me the ability to balance technical knowledge with human elements like understanding culture, society, and the ethical side of innovations. At heart, I'm a problem-solver who values creative and sometimes logical solutions that come from integrating diverse fields. I'm always looking for the bigger picture. My interdisciplinary mindset helps me stay adaptable, analytical, and open to new ways of thinking, with skills that will guide me in both my academic journey and future career.



ALEXANDER BYRD

My name is Alexander Byrd, and I am an Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts major. When I started at CSU, I was undecided about my major. I took some journalism classes and thought I wanted to be a journalism major, in particular sports journalism. After taking many journalism classes, I decided it was not something I wanted to do after all.

After making that decision, I looked at other options. After thinking about what types of classes I enjoyed, I found out about the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts major. After looking at what types of classes were required, I thought it was interesting that I could take the classes I enjoyed, so I declared it as my choice. Plus, many of the classes I took for journalism counted towards my graduation requirements. Choosing this major was good because I can take classes from whatever department I want to as long as they fit within some general criteria. This is basically what I was able to do in high school, and I enjoyed taking a variety of classes. Recently, I have been drawn towards tourism and hospitality-type classes because I enjoy the professor. She is one of my favorites. With a more restrictive major, I would not have been able to take classes from her. I find her classes very interesting as they are in line with what I do for work over the summer. I work at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado. That job is in the tourism field and is what I enjoy doing. I would say that is one of my favorite things to learn about in school.

I also enjoy that I have the chance to try and find my interest in many different classes I took a class called *History of Rock and Roll*, which I enjoyed as I love music. It was one of the most interesting and fun classes I have ever taken in college. I feel very fortunate to be able to pursue an Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts degree. I think it will be a strong foundation for my future.

QUINN RODGERS

Hello, my name is Quinn Rodgers. I became interested in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts when I first came to Colorado State.

I have always had a hard time sticking to a specific discipline. I enjoyed English, History, Math, etc. in school but never had a specific proficiency in one. Rather, I enjoyed the process of learning about different points of view more than anything else.

That passion lends itself well to ILA because it asks that a plural perspective be taken. For instance, when I solve problems, I enjoy hearing out multiple insights and angles to form a more vibrant point of view. I never wanted to be put in a box.

Ever since I was a kid, I experimented with all sorts of interests ranging from gymnastics to karate to piano to art. It wasn't that I couldn't stick with anything. It's that I valued the process of exploring different perspectives.



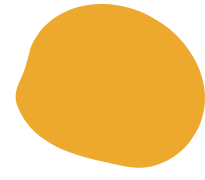
The perspective I have learned to take in ILA equally materializes in my life now. Some of my interests include law, skateboarding, fashion, and film, among others. And while I take my interests very seriously, I find that I am never locked into a single one.

For that reason, I don't need to know everything about skateboarding or every court case. I value what I enjoy for its own sake. The ability to uphold interests simultaneously is made easier through experiencing perspectives rather than forcing just one to uphold my identity.

In other words, I would rather just do lots of things than explain how to do one thing.

ILA mirrored my love of learning for its own sake in the form of a major. All of the disciplines matter, just as all of my interests do.

So, I have found it enticing to experience them all at once. ILA is an opportunity to be proficient in experience rather than being placed in a single discipline. Instead of existing in a box, we may look at all angles of the box.



HEARING FROM I-LA MAJORS & LEGAL STUDIES MINORS

CALEB BONAR

Hi there, my name is Caleb Bonar, and I am in my third year here at Colorado State University. I am from Dayton, Ohio, and I am currently majoring in Psychology but planning to switch to ILA with a minor in Health and Exercise Science soon. I came to CSU to enjoy the plethora of things the state has to offer. I am big on the outdoors, and I love the town of Fort Collins a lot. Some things I enjoy are reading, hiking, music, and going to the gym.

I originally chose to major in Psychology because I love people, and I wanted to get to understand them better. However, Interdisciplinary Studies started to attract my attention when I realized what it was all about. I am somebody who values seeing things from multiple perspectives, and I think it is important to find common ground with things or people you do not particularly understand. A skillset with different tools from different backgrounds is something I want to acquire before going out into the professional world. I am not set on a profession that I am passionate about yet, but I think the switch from Psychology to ILA will help enlighten me to new paths I had never before thought of.

Since I am unsure of my path, it is all the more reason that I believe ILA is the right choice for me. By having the skills and mindset that come with this field of study, I will be able to have many options available to me. I am very excited to be a part of this community, and I cannot wait to see what kinds of new experiences are to come.



GREETINGS FROM ANYA GUTTORMSON NEWSLETTER INTERN

Hi! My name is Anya, and I am the Newsletter Editor for our Fall 2024 issue. I am a third-year student double majoring in Communication Studies and Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts. Within ILA, I've developed professionalism in English writing, film-making, and dance pedagogy. Although these sound unrelated, I am constantly able to challenge my ability to relate to people and strengthen my creative approach to problem-solving. I also work as an RA on campus, as well as a TA for CO300, and I hope to one day work in the film or publishing industries.

I'm a lover of lavender lattes, acoustic music, and cloudy skies. Colorado has been my home for more than half my life, though I also grew up in New Hampshire alongside peachy autumns and elementary school soulmates. I believe in movie marathons and pressed flower petals, as I believe in my mother's smile and snow-capped mountains. And as I'm sure you can tell, I also love poetry.



For me, the ILA program has been a great opportunity for versatility and meaning-making in this ever-changing day and age. I am passionate about helping others and making a difference in our little corner of the world; with ILA, I'm able to expand my perspective to do just that. This program is for the dreamers – we have the unique ability to choose who we're becoming. I believe that the meaning of life is cradled in the palms of human connection. In relating to vast interdisciplinary perspectives, we are empowered by our togetherness. As passionate interdisciplinary power to shape the world and our place



in it as pieces of a larger whole: we are the change-makers of and for generations to come.

Today, I am hopeful. Hopeful that the person I grow up to be will make my younger self proud. Hopeful that the interactions I make today will make the sun shine just a bit brighter for someone who needs it. Hopeful that this newsletter will find you on a beautiful day, surrounded by an undeniable feeling that your place here means something. Thank you for taking part in our wild and remarkable journey.



Footer banner with the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Colorado State University logo on the left and a photograph of a person working in a laboratory or workshop on the right.