Ever since I can remember I have been an “artsy,” “political,” “talkative,” kid. People always thought that I was either going to be an artist, or some kind of political figure. I was always drawing, painting, dancing, playing music or singing. I also had a passion for social justice instilled in me at a young age by my mother, who had been an activist for much of her adult life. I saw her advocate tirelessly for the rights of my younger brother, who has a significant case of autism. I also have always loved meeting new people and exploring new places. I developed an ability to adapt to different cultures during the time I spent abroad as an exchange student in high school. This skill was brought to a whole new level when I studied in India and completed the MSID program. It challenged my communication skills in an interesting way as I was forced to move beyond languages with which I was familiar and communicate in different ways. Although I struggled with Hindi, and the local dialect Marwari, I easily bonded with both children and adults in the village through drumming, drawing, and singing.

At the University of Minnesota, I immersed myself in activist and community work. I was exposed to the complexities of police brutality right in our own neighborhoods through my work with Communities United Against Police Brutality as well as the complicated matrix of globalization and development through my study with MSID and my work with Witness for Peace. My “political” leanings became more than simply the ability to argue politics for hours on end, my values of social justice began to shape the way I viewed the world. My Social Justice classes enhanced and deepened my passion for social justice and my belief that social change through the power of community is possible.

Through my Bachelor of Individualized Studies degree I will explore the complexities of globalization and global movements for social change as well as the importance of expression and communication through the arts. No matter where you live on earth, art and music are universal forms of communication. Art has the ability to communicate across cultures when words are not enough. Cross-cultural communication is even more important in today’s globalized world than ever before because it is not enough to combat injustice only within the borders of our own nations. It is imperative that as global citizens we come together to fight injustice because all of our struggles are interconnected.
Through my studies and investigations within these concentrations I will gain a comprehensive understanding of
the interrelatedness between global citizenship, cross cultural communication, social justice, and the role of the arts.
This understanding will further my knowledge and ability to create change in a way that is thoughtful and positive.

Art

Art is a discipline that is broad and always changing. I will study a variety of approaches to this
discipline; my courses will allow me to explore new and different conceptions of art as well as more traditional art
forms. This concentration will allow me to focus on the arts as a venue for cross cultural communication and
understanding as well as enhancing my own technical skill set and encouraging me to think critically about art’s
role in society and globalization.

ArtH 3014W- Art of India gave me a historical background for much of what I was going to be studying
when I went to India as well as enriching my knowledge of the importance of imagery in narrative, especially
imagery’s role in story telling and historical accounts in South Asia. In addition it provided me with insights into
the general discipline of art history, which is an important base from which to build when studying art in an
academic setting.

Arts 3101- Intermediate Drawing allowed me to take my studies in drawing a step further through
developing my technique past the beginner’s level. Expressing myself through drawing is one of the best ways
that I can express my emotions and intermediate drawing helped me learn to translate what I observed in the
world to a unique image on paper.

Cola 3950- Topics in Collaborative Arts: Minneapolis Art on Wheels gave me experience in planning art
events in conjunction with the community. It was the first time I was involved in art that would be considered
public art. As a result I learned a lot about the liabilities, complications, and factors involved in displaying public
art. Through the art disseminating bike units that we built in the class, I performed shadow puppets in various
locations in Minneapolis, and projected them onto buildings and screens for people who came to watch or simply
passerbys.
Arts 3403- *Images of Women and Women’s Images*, a mix of women’s studies, art history, and studio art, gives me inspiration to connect on a deeper level with other women artists that have come before me. It examines how sexism throughout history and today is paralleled in the art world, and asks us as students to challenge this reality. Also, because this class is partially studio based, I am able to explore my responses to this material in a non-traditional way that I find much more engaging and thought provoking than simply writing papers.

ARTS 3702- *Photography: The Extended Image* will allow me to explore a variety of materials and darkroom techniques to advance my knowledge of photography as an art-making and story telling process. The assignments are intended to explore thematic topics that connect to how to use photography to create narrative, alternative photographic processes, and connecting these topics to traditional photographic practice in a contemporary and innovative way. I will learn about the history of photography as a discipline and also the contemporary aspects of monochrome film photography.

ARTS 3402- *Artist’s Books* will teach me many book binding techniques and materials. The course explores how book arts have been used historically as well as contemporarily. I will be able to use the skills I am learning in this course in my community work, where I will instruct young adults on the art of book binding.

**Global Studies**

The Global Studies concentration will allow me to investigate the complexities of interrelated processes creating today’s increasingly interdependent world. A significant portion of my global studies concentration was completed through the MSID program in India in 2007, where I was able to see first hand the effects of globalization on peoples of the global south. Through theoretical courses and international study, the global studies program exposes me to many different viewpoints regarding global development and global social justice issues.

Glos 3145H- *Global Studies Theories* provided me with the theoretical framework for thinking about the complexities of globalization. Through this course we explored the complexities and challenges of an integrated global economy, debated and challenged the concept of development, and new examined issues in global security.
We also examined these issues in a historical context, studying the history of colonialism and how this has shaped the global north’s domination and repression of the peoples of the global south.

**MSID 4001 - International Development** addressed challenges and debates in the realm of international development. It was particularly insightful to study this in India where I was able to witness first hand the extreme polarity of development in virtually every aspect of day to day life, where I went to living with a well off Bollywood-connected family, to living in a small village in one of the poorest areas of Rajasthan.

**MSID 4002 - Country Analysis: India** allowed me to explore more in depth India’s culture, traditions, history, and current political and economic systems. During this course, we had breakout sessions in which I focused on the development of traditional and fine arts and the educational system in India, through field trips to schools, artist studios, museums, as well as lectures and discussions led by many distinguished guest speakers who could speak first hand about these issues.

**Pol 4410 - Islam and Politics** fostered a deeper understanding of the conflict in the Middle East and how Islamist politics shape the global political climate. It also stressed the role of Islamist politics not only as a major political factor in the Middle East, but as the movement of people across international borders increases, so does Islamist politics as a political force all over the world, even in the west. Through this course I also delved into developments in the “war on terror” and how this shapes international relations policy in the U.S. and in other countries.

**Pol 4485 - International Perspective: Human Rights** exposed me to the rhetoric and the debates surrounding Human Rights Law in the international realm. It explores questions such as what defines human rights, and who has the power to decide what this definition entails”; In addition it explores reconciliation, reparations, and consequences of human rights abuses in different cases across the globe. During this class I focused my research on human rights abuses in the United States by law enforcement officials, social movements against police brutality, and ways to hold law enforcement accountable.
Social Justice

The Social Justice concentration is based around the further investigations of the realities of the globalized system in which we live and how to create positive change on a personal, local, and global scale. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the struggles for liberation and social movements in the past as well as the present. It delves into the ecological, social, and economic problems the world is facing today as well as the concrete steps that people across the world are taking to challenge systems of economic and social oppression. Through the theoretical framework presented in this concentration as well as the opportunity to practice social justice advocacy in a community organization, I am able to learn from not only discussions and activities inside the classroom, but apply what I learn in the classroom to community work.

SW 3501- Theories and Practices of Social Change Organizing challenged me to make invaluable connections between citizenship, democracy, and social action though analyzing social justice organizations and key activists and their strategies. We studied many different movements throughout the 20th and 21st centuries to analyze the strategies and elements to building a successful movement for social change. This class was a service learning course, which provided me with the opportunity to work as an outreach intern at Witness for Peace-Upper Midwest. At this organization I was assigned the task of setting up various speaking events and an evening of art and music to focus on the struggles of campesinos and campesinas to combat free trade agreements in South America and Central America. I learned grant writing skills along with honing my skills in inter-organizational communication and outreach.

SW 3810- Peace Studies encouraged me to critically think about the many forms of violence in the world today and in the past and envision alternatives. In this course we studied the writings of many highly esteemed peace activists such as Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi. We studied the moral dilemmas of war and the psychological effects war has on all of the people involved, soldiers as well as civilians. We also explored the effects of educational violence, or damaging educational systems, as well as violence in popular culture. Through readings and writing assignments I was exposed to a vast world of scholarship and theoretical practice regarding peace and justice studies. This class challenged me to re-evaluate my day to day actions and think about how I can make steps to create a world in which peace prevails over violence.
Pol 3739- *Race, Class, and Ethnicity* focused on three case studies, Cuba, South Africa, and the United States to investigate how issues regarding race, class, and ethnicity intersect with one another. We studied how colonialism shaped racism, classism, and ethnic identities in the three cases. For this class, I researched Brazil, and the unique situation in Brazil regarding race, class, and ethnicity. This course encouraged me to think critically about the ways in which these three issues intersect and how the struggles against poverty and racism are intimately connected.

MSID 4003- *Community Internship* provided me with the opportunity to intern at a small NGO in rural southern Rajasthan. Gandhi Manav Kalayan Society focused on many issues ranging from children’s education and nutrition, to natural resource management, stopping child labor trafficking, to women’s economic development. Initially, I intended to study women’s and children’s development. I began my internship by teaching English and Math as well as shadowing various youth and women’s development programs. After some time, the NGO decided it would be a great opportunity for me to be exposed to their work in the field of natural resource development. Through translators, I conducted interviews with farmers and their families about the diesel lift irrigation systems that Gandhi Manav Kalayan Society helped install. I learned a lot about the role NGO’s in community development in the global south as well as the structure and hierarchies inherent within these organizations. It is near impossible to sum up this experience in one paragraph. This internship challenged most of what I thought I knew about international development as well as challenged me to step outside my comfort zone and find new ways of communication across barriers of language and culture.

SW 4501- *Social Justice Senior Seminar* will be an opportunity for me to continue to explore and examine social movements and strategies for social. In addition I will continue to engage in a community-based learning experience, from which I will able to draw valuable reflections regarding community organizing. This course is discussion based, and facilitates dialogue about many aspects and meanings of social justice, focusing on immigration, white privilege, and terrorism. As a capstone of the social justice program, I will create a final social justice portfolio.
My passion for social justice, exploring the world, and the arts has led me to focus my BIS program in Art, Global Studies, and Social Justice. Through studying art I will develop my skill as an artist. It will also aide me in developing critical thinking skills regarding art, composition, imagery, and how art relates to the world. As I observed during my time in India, art is a plays a powerful role as a tool for community engagement and social change. The Social Justice portion of my B.I.S. is essential because through it I am able to study the fundamentals of community organizing through classroom work and theory as well as service-learning courses, which are a core component of the social justice program. In the social justice program I study the history of movements for social justice, as well as examining and deepening my understanding of the current issues that international social justice movements face today. My Global Studies Concentration allows me to learn how global institutions shape our day-to-day lives as well as our impact as global citizens on the world around us. In addition, the theory and scholarship in the global studies department explores complexities and dangers of a global economy and reasoning behind international relations and human rights rhetoric in the world today. Another reason why I studied global studies is my curiosity about the realities that a huge percentage of the world’s population is facing in the global south. During my studies I focused on South Asia because of its drastically different culture than our own and because it is a prime example of the incredible force that is globalization.

Through this program, I will be able to thoroughly meet my academic goals of understanding the global interconnectedness of our world as well as the importance and value of communication through the arts. The program that I have created balances theory, community engagement, and critical thinking in a way that takes into account the past, the present, and the future. Additionally, my experience as a Community Engagement Scholar will enhance my BIS program. This program is the ideal preparation for the life that I strive to live, centered on values of social justice activism, global interconnectedness, and the importance of the arts.
### BIS/IDIM Program Course Worksheet

**Name:**

**ID#:**

| ArtH 3014W | Art of India | Complete: 4.0 |
| Arts 3101 | Intermediate Drawing | Complete: 4.0 |
| Cola 3950 | Topics in Collaborative Arts | Complete: 3.0 |
| Arts 3403 | Women’s Images and Images of Women | Complete: 3.0 |
| Arts 3402 | Artists Books | Complete: 4.0 |
| Arts 3702 | Photography: The Extended Image | Complete: 4.0 |

**TOTALS:**

- 3/4/5xxx level credits in area: 22
- Total credits in area (IDIM only): 61

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**TOTALS:**

- 3/4/5xxx level credits in area: 18
- Total credits in area (IDIM only): 61

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**TOTALS:**

- 3/4/5xxx level credits in area: 21
- Total credits in area (IDIM only): 61