

# BIS/IDIM PROPOSAL OUTLINE



**The overall purpose of the proposal statement is to demonstrate how your interests, strengths and experiences connect to the academic goals you hope to achieve in your BIS or IDIM program. The proposal should explain and justify your program by presenting why your areas of study and/or theme interest you and why they are of value to you; the coherence and function of each of your concentrations and/or theme; and the contribution which each course makes to the overall concentration. You should follow this outline while drafting your statement.**

## **I. Introduction and background material (approximately 1 page)**

Describe your experiences and interests as they relate to the academic program you are proposing. Refer to the BIS or IDIM worksheet for ideas about specific content. Present the intellectual goals you plan to achieve with these areas of study as you introduce the elements of your program. For BIS, introduce your concentration areas and how they relate to your interests and strengths. For IDIM, present a clear and rigorous explanation of the program theme, explaining how it relates to the areas of concentration and how the concentrations themselves are interrelated.

The focus of the statement should be your academic goals as an undergraduate, although it may be relevant to include the source of your interest in a particular field or subject by talking **BREIFLY** about your post-graduation plans (e.g., medical school or a career in business). You should present the experiences or activities that explain your academic interests and then connect them with the content of your BIS or IDIM, thereby giving specific reasons why you are interested in the areas you have chosen.

## **II. Description of areas of concentration (approximately 3-4 pages)**

The second part of your proposal statement should describe your concentration areas in detail. Discuss each concentration in turn, following the order in which they are listed on your Course Worksheet. ***Non-CLA concentrations should be described last.*** You should first describe the concentration itself by offering a definition of the discipline, field or theme. For the IDIM, you should explain how the area of concentration contributes to an understanding of the overall theme.

Within each concentration description, discuss each course. (Please note: You will probably not stress each course equally, but ***every course in your proposed program must be discussed.***) Your descriptions should be the same order as they appear on your Course Worksheet. Explain how each course contributes to your theoretical and practical understanding of this concentration area—does the course provide methodology, theory, history, research experience? Why is this approach valuable? Why is this course important for your understanding of the overall discipline concentration area or specific academic goals? How might this course better prepare you to take other courses? How does this course stimulate your interest in specific related issues? For each course, be sure to describe the **CONTENT** of the course and the **VALUE/IMPORTANCE** of the course for your overall understanding of the area and/or for your goals. It is important to emphasize the overall coherence of the concentration – how each of your course selections makes sense in terms of the overall concentration.

## **III. Conclusion (approximately 1 -2 paragraphs)**

Briefly summarize the strengths of your proposed program and demonstrate how your areas of study enable you to meet your academic goals. Explain how your plans for the future (career, graduate school, post-college plans) relate to your chosen course of study in an individualized degree program.

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### **IMPORTANT: INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR COURSE WORKSHEET!**

Be sure that the Worksheet lists all course designators and numbers, course titles, number of credits, and grades for completed courses. Your Worksheet should only contain the courses that are in your program (there is a space at the end of the sheet to list prerequisite courses). BIS students should therefore only list courses at the 3/4/5xxx level in the gridded concentration areas. It is the **student's responsibility** to report accurately the course credits and add up correctly the number of credits in the program. To access the Course Worksheet, go to <http://idp.class.umn.edu> and click on Writing the Proposal.