The interest of most students falls within the confines of existing programs in established departments. In some cases, however, a student may request to have a special committee, consisting of professors from various fields, established to direct his/her study. Such a committee and the program it formulates with the student are referred to as "interdisciplinary." The office of the vice provost and university dean of the graduate school exercises general administrative supervision over all such degree programs, and a separate committee of five members (at least three of whom must be members of the graduate faculty) is formed for each interdisciplinary student.

The student's committee serves both as a committee and, in essence, as a department for the student, helping to prepare and to evaluate the student's program of courses, determine or arrange for determining the student's qualification for candidacy, supervise the thesis or dissertation, and perform other necessary administrative functions. The chairperson of the student's committee will assume the administrative role ordinarily carried by a head of department or director of graduate studies within a department.

The interdisciplinary student is subject to all general rules and requirements of the graduate division. Although the formal requirements are comparable to those of regular graduate programs, the student interested in an interdisciplinary program should be aware that this approach might entail more time and effort.

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Certification: Susan M. Stringer
Executive Assistant to the Board of Trustees and
Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

Date: August 31, 2012

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