The Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIS) promotes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary teaching at the College. It seeks to be a catalyst for innovation and experimentation through the promotion of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary courses and broader curricular programs. The Center's programs focus on multidisciplinary academic curricular programs, such as the student-designed multidisciplinary majors and minors program, and the multidisciplinary concentrations, all of which enable students to address important issues with the methods and perspectives of multiple disciplines.

CIS has the mission to bring to the College curriculum innovative courses and courses in support of its programs that are not offered by the disciplinary departments.

Lorelle Semley, Ph.D., Director
Susan M. Cunningham, Ph.D., Associate Director
Gary P. DeAngelis, Ph.D., Associate Director
Nadine Knight, Ph.D., Director, Africana Studies
Ara Francis, Ph.D., Director, Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies
Juan Ramos, Ph.D., Director, Latin American, Latinx, and Caribbean Studies
Alo Basu, Ph.D., Advisor, Neuroscience Program
Jeffrey Dixon, Ph.D., Director, Peace and Conflict Studies
David Karmon, Ph.D., Advisor, Architectural Studies
Claudia Ross, Ph.D., Advisor, Deaf Studies Program
Sylvia Schmitz-Burgard, Ph.D., Advisor, German Studies
Susan Amatangelo, Ph.D., Advisor, Italian Studies
Daniel DiCenso, Ph.D., Advisor, Medieval-Renaissance Studies
Sahar Bazzaz, Ph.D., Advisor, Middle Eastern Studies

**Academic Plans within the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies**

- Africana Studies Concentration ([https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/africana-studies-concentration](https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/africana-studies-concentration))
- Gender, Sexuality & Womens Studies Concentration ([https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/gender-sexuality-womens-studies-concentration](https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/gender-sexuality-womens-studies-concentration))
- Latin American, Latinx, and Caribbean Studies Concentration ([https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/latin-american-latinx-caribbean-studies-concentration](https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/latin-american-latinx-caribbean-studies-concentration))
- Peace and Conflict Studies Concentration ([https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/peace-conflict-studies-concentration](https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/peace-conflict-studies-concentration))
- Student-Designed Majors and Minors ([https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/student-designed-majors-minors](https://hccatalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/student-designed-majors-minors))

**Regular CIS Course Offerings**

**CISS 110 — Introduction to Neuroscience** Course count: 1

Students who have taken PSYC 221 or 235 may not enroll in this course.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Natural Science

**CISS 111 — Intro to Africana Philosophy** Course count: 1

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

**CISS 112 — Capitalism in Context** Course count: 1

Capitalism in Context will introduce students to the intellectual foundations and principles of capitalism, detailing how these intersect with ideas about individual liberty, social responsibility and human flourishing. Capitalism itself is a contested term, and we will explore some of the many capitalisms that have arisen, always with an eye to normative questions about which accord best with the demands of morality and justice. Additional topics to be addressed may include, but are not limited to: debates about regulation and the proper relationship between the state and the market; theories of corporate social responsibility and the evolution of corporate governance; the challenges posed by the increasing focus on finance rather than industrial production as the main source of profit making; and the social, political and technological changes that have accompanied this shift.

GPA units: 1

**CISS 200 — Worcester and Its People** Course count: 1

Worcester and Its People is a study of the history of Worcester and the people who have lived here from the time of European settlement in the late 17th Century to the present. The course's principal focus is on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a period in which Worcester became one of America's leading industrial centers and the magnet for thousands of immigrants. Worcester's history reflects most of the major concerns and issues in the history of the nation, providing a microcosm for their study. One unit.

GPA units: 1

**CISS 201 — Legal Reasoning & Rhetoric** Course count: 1

A course in reading, writing, and presentation of case law material. Students apply American Trial Association rules of argument and evidence in preparing for mock trial competitions. Working in small groups and working alone on detailed arguments are both required. One unit.

GPA units: 1

**CISS 203 — Community Engagement and Social Responsibility** Course count: 1

Consistent with the mission of Holy Cross and the vision of Jesuit higher education outlined by Fr. General Kolvenbach, this course offers CBL scholars and SPUD interns the opportunity to engage in the "gritty reality of the world" in order to reflect meaningfully upon the question of what responsibility each of us has towards creating a more just society and how each of us can use our individual gifts and talents to contribute toward this aim. In order to address these questions effectively, the course will utilize texts, articles, websites, movie excerpts, and community engagement experiences to enable a deeper understanding of social problems; to analyze how social problems directly impact individuals within our society; to consider questions of equity and social justice; and to reflect upon what influence our personal choices have on social problems. One unit.

GPA units: 1
CISS 205 — Architectural Studio Course count: 1
The introductory architectural studio course is intended to introduce students to the study of architecture through a series of lectures, demonstrations, and architectural studio problems. The course explores the process through which the built environment is created and how these buildings affect the lives of their inhabitants. The course is being introduced in order to provide a studio course for students who are interested in architecture. It is designed to meet the learning needs of a variety of students, from those interested to exploring architecture as a possible future profession to those interested in learning more about architecture. One unit.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only
GPA units: 1

CISS 207 — Mediation: Theory & Practice Course count: 1
GPA units: 1

CISS 208 — Entrepreneurship Course count: 1
Entrepreneurship begins with a vision. This course focuses on the foundations of entrepreneurship and is appropriate for students from any major. It is designed to introduce students to the entrepreneurial process so that they may begin to shape their own entrepreneurial vision. Course objectives include an introduction to the challenges of entrepreneurship, an understanding of the ethical environment in which entrepreneurs operate, the skills to think critically and work toward the ability to evaluate opportunities in the business. This is a course that includes project-based entrepreneurial activities where students work to test and validate ideas. Due to the project-based nature of the class, the beginning of the week we will focus on learning the concepts, whereas the lab will be time to do fieldwork, peer-to-peer feedback, and building of venture. In addition to classes, faculty will hold periodic mentor meetings with teams. One unit.

GPA units: 1

CISS 250 — Intro to Global Health Course count: 1
It is recognized that poverty plays a central role in many preventable diseases. With the development of nations have come improvements in health. The linkages between health and development can only be understood within the broader context of socio-political and economic factors. In the landscape of globalization and international development there has emerged a vast international health regime. This course focuses on these linkages in the context of this international political economy of health. Key aspects are critically examined including the concepts and architecture of global health, the global burden and epidemiology of disease, health and development of nations, and political-economic determinants of health and development. This foundational course in global health will use a variety of analytical perspectives including political, legal, economic and epidemiological. The course focuses on developing countries. One unit.

GPA units: 1

CISS 255 — Critical Issues/Global Health Course count: 1
GPA units: 1

CISS 275 — Create Lab Course count: 1
CreateLab: Community. Liberate yourself from traditional assumptions about course structure; in this non-hierarchical environment students will play an active role in identifying learning goals, choosing paths of inquiry, and determining the creative research methods we ultimately engage. This class will help you develop strengths transferable to any other kind of work, academic or professional. One unit.

GPA units: 1
Common Area: Arts, Social Science

CISS 310 — Seeking Justice Course count: 1
The Holy Cross mission statement concludes with the hope that all members of the Holy Cross community will seek justice within and beyond the Holy Cross community. What does it mean to seek justice? How does this ideal connect to the broader mission of Jesuit higher education? How can one discover a personal path to seeking justice that utilizes one’s unique gifts and talents? How has Holy Cross provided a foundation for a lifelong pursuit of justice? This course will provide seniors the opportunity to integrate the wide variety of experiences they have had at Holy Cross and reflect upon how these experiences have informed their answers to these questions.

GPA units: 1
Common Area: Historical Studies

CISS 392 — The Holocaust Course count: 1
This seminar deals with the historical, social, political and cultural forces, ideas and events leading up to the Holocaust, the attempted annihilation of all Jews and the almost complete destruction of the European Jewish communities. Using an interdisciplinary approach, the course offers a detailed study of this genocide across victims, perpetrators, bystanders and rescuers drawing upon historical documentation, first-person testimonies, photography, visual arts and music. One unit.

GPA units: 1
Common Area: Historical Studies

CISS 400 — Tutorial Course count: 1
For students who may not be associated with CISS programs, but who choose to do independent interdisciplinary study that might not be permitted under their major department’s tutorial option. One unit.

GPA units: 1

CISS 490 — American Studies Course count: 1
Selected students take a seminar at the world-renowned American Antiquarian Society taught by visiting scholars. Seminar topics vary with the fields of the scholars. One unit.

GPA units: 1

CISS 496 — Special Project Course count: 1
For third and fourth year students who wish to do unique independent work that falls outside of disciplinary offerings. One unit.

GPA units: 1

Africana Studies (AFST)

AFST 100-TR — Transfer - 100 Level Course count: 1
GPA units: 1
AFST 110 — Intro To Africana Studies  
Course count: 1  
Interdisciplinary introduction to the study, research, and interpretation of historical, cultural, social and political knowledge of African American, African, and Caribbean peoples examining contemporary black identities, politics, and culture, particularly focusing on the role and place of blacks in modern American cities through exploration of international migrations, race relations, and 20th-century cultural movements, including civil rights, social protest music, art and literature. Addresses the cultural, historical, political, economic, and psychological consequences of the dispersal of Africans from their ancestral continent to the United States and the Caribbean and the impact of the cultures of West and central Africa in the United States and the Caribbean, through oral narratives, music, art, festivals, foodways, clothing, hairstyles, dance, and religious belief systems. Introduces literary and political movements including Pan-Africanism, black feminism, Negritude, Harlem Renaissance, and other activities reflecting shared theories, ideologies and political movements of Africans, African Americans and Caribbean blacks. One unit.

GPA units: 1  
Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

AFST 260 — Black Europe  
Course count: 1  
Although often considered homogenously white, Europe's population is and always has been racially diverse. This diversity is the culmination of centuries of colonialist interventions around the globe, particularly in Africa and the West Indies. This course will explore the history and contemporary reality of this population diversity, with a particular focus on the African diaspora in Europe. Beginning with Europe's simultaneous expulsion of Jews and Muslims and discovery of Caribbean islands in 1492, the students will trace Europe's colonial history in Africa and the West Indies that ultimately resulted in return migration of current and former African colonial subjects to multiple metropoles in Europe. Students will then focus on the experiences of the African Diaspora in Europe, broadly, and in five countries (Britain, France, The Netherlands, Germany, and Italy) before addressing contemporary debates (the racialization of Muslims as the new Blacks in Europe, citizenship laws within and across the EU, and anti-racist movements) and concluding with discussion of the future of race and Africans in Europe.

GPA units: 1  
Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

AFST 300 — Tutorial  
Course count: 1  
GPA units: 1

AFST 400 — Tutorial  
Course count: 1  
GPA units: 1

Gender, Sexuality, and Womens Studies (GSWS)

GSWS 120 — Intro to GSWS  
Course count: 1  
Introduces students to the discipline of Women's and Gender Studies by analyzing women's roles and women's contributions to society and culture from the perspective of recent scholarship on women. Special attention focused on the complex interactions between gender and other social divisions such as race, class, and sexual orientation. The following issues are among those considered: the politics of women's work, the representation of women's bodies in the media, violence against women, healthcare and reproductive rights, global feminism, and the history of feminist movements in the U.S. Deliberately includes in its scope broader constructions of gender, such as concepts of masculinity.

GPA units: 1

GSWS 220 — Global Feminism  
Course count: 1  
Interdisciplinary course examines the intersecting regimes of gender, race, and class as they occur in different historical periods and varying cultures. Students learn to analyze international power relations at the level of everyday politics. Encourages students to find evidence for the ways in which varying local conditions interact with women's agency in order to promote their own (personal and collective) well-being and broader social changes.

GPA units: 1  
Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

GSWS 400 — Tutorial  
Course count: 0  
GPA units: 0

GSWS 497 — Capstone: Women & Gender Studies  
Course count: 1  
Independent Study (tutorial) completed under the guidance of a selected Womens and Gender Studies faculty member. One unit.

GPA units: 1

Latin American, Latinx, and Caribbean Studies (LALC)

LALC 101 — Intro to Latin America  
Course count: 1  
Serves as a general interdisciplinary introduction to Latin America. Students will possibly have the opportunity to travel to a Latin American country during spring vacation. Includes a Community-Based Learning component. One unit.

GPA units: 1  
Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies
LALC 210 — Latina/os & Law in Massachusetts
Course count: 1
The law permeates the daily lives of Latino/as through dealings with police, courts and administrative agencies. This course will observe the interaction of the law with Latino/as at diverse points - language, education, crime and punishment, employment - seeking to understand how the law affects them even as they affect the law and how intellectuals of any ethnicity can become active participants in these developments. The course also focuses on developing students’ writing, advocacy and analytical skills, giving them along the way some practical information about the legal profession and the work of lawyers, while bearing in mind that the course seeks to develop interest in interdisciplinary approaches, not “legal” ones. One unit.

GPA units: 1

LALC 298 — Tutorial
Course count: 1
GPA units: 1

Peace and Conflict Studies (PCON)

PCON 298 — Tutorial
Course count: 1
GPA units: 1