BXA Intercollege Program Courses

Note on Course Numbers
Each Carnegie Mellon course number begins with a two-digit prefix which designates the department offering the course (76-xxx courses are offered by the Department of English, etc.). Although each department maintains its own course numbering practices, typically the first digit after the prefix indicates the class level: xx-1xx courses are freshmen-level, xx-2xx courses are sophomore level, etc. xx-6xx courses may be either undergraduate senior-level or graduate-level, depending on the department. xx-7xx courses and higher are graduate-level. Please consult the Schedule of Classes (https://enr-apps.as.cmu.edu/open/SOC/SOCServlet) each semester for course offerings and for any necessary pre-requisites or co-requisites.

52-190 BXA Freshman Interdisciplinary Seminar
Fall: 9 units
The BXA Freshman Interdisciplinary Seminar introduces first-year students to the field of interdisciplinary work and arts-based research. Students engage with theoretical and practical readings from across the various concentrations, with particular emphasis on aesthetic theory. Guest lectures complement the weekly readings by giving insight into practical implementations of these ideas. Students will conceive, research, and create a final project to be presented at the end of the semester. BXA internal transfer students should register for 52-399 BXA Interdisciplinary Seminar to fulfill the interdisciplinary requirement.

52-290 Literacy Across Disciplines
Intermittent: 5 units
One of the central goals of the BXA program is to help students develop a technical and conceptual literacy that crosses disciplinary boundaries. This kind of literacy requires not just disciplinary knowledge but practice in articulating ideas in ways that effectively reach very different audiences. This course will give you the opportunity to develop skills in identifying and targeting audiences in a variety of rhetorical modes and genres.

52-291 Building BXA: A Project Course
Fall: 9 units
The ultimate goal of Building BXA is to produce, as a class, a communal space that represents BXA and provides a dedicated social space for all students. Over the course of six weeks, this class will propose, plan, and build the space, gaining experience in project management, collaboration, marketing, and budgeting. The details, both large and small, are entirely up to you. BXA will provide help organizing and funding the project, but the rest is in the hands of the class. What kind of space do you want to see? What happens inside that space? How will you design and furnish the space? How will you promote it to the university at large?

52-390 BXA Undergraduate Research Project
Fall and Spring
The BXA Undergraduate Research Project is for students who want to work on a self-designed project with the one-to-one guidance of a faculty advisor. The project should be interdisciplinary in nature, and can be a scholarly and/or creative endeavor. The project may take the form of a written thesis, a compilation of creative works, an outreach project, etc. The project topic must be pre-approved by the faculty member who agrees to supervise the project and assign a letter grade for the course. Projects are to be completed in one semester, may be worth 3, 6, 9, or 12 units of academic credit, and cannot be taken concurrently with the BXA Capstone Project during the senior year. To register, students must submit an "Undergraduate Research Project Proposal Form" signed by both the student and the faculty advisor, along with a proposal, to the BXA Director/Academic Advisor.

52-391 BXA Junior Portfolio Review
Spring
To better assess the progress and accomplishments of BXA students as they enter their final year, students submit a portfolio for review during the spring semester junior year. Students should work with their BXA advisor and concentration faculty advisors to assemble a portfolio that represents their academic and creative accomplishments over the course of their college career. This portfolio should also include a reflective essay in which students evaluate how they integrated their two areas of interest, and how they will extend that integration into the BXA Capstone Project in the senior year. Students should identify their own specific goals for their academic career and how they are fulfilling them in this reflective essay, as well as how they evaluate their performance in light of the programs’ broader pedagogical goals. Students in the BXA program should be working toward being able to: describe the connections between their chosen concentration disciplines and to integrate them into their work; communicate ideas in writing, visual expression, and oral expression; discuss the intersection of history, society, and culture from local and global perspectives; synthesize mathematical theories and experimental work to produce real-world knowledge; and use cognitive, behavioral, and ethical dimensions to make decisions on individual and social levels.

52-399 BXA Interdisciplinary Seminar
Fall and Spring: 9 units
The BXA Interdisciplinary Seminar has been designed primarily for BXA internal transfer students and it is offered in the fall and spring semesters. Using the arts as primary modes of inquiry, this course’s content probes the idiosyncratic field of arts-based research by following the principle that there is no aspect of human life that cannot be studied objectively, quantified and analyzed. Aside from discussing a digest of the latest writings on arts-based research, students will try their own approach to arts-based research by building prismatic artistic and literary constructs inspired by the reading of some of the most relevant contributions to the famed Charles Eliot Norton Lectures delivered at Harvard University. Texts will include excerpts from Italo Calvino’s Six Memos for the Next Millennium, Frank Stella’s Working Space, Umberto Eco’s Six Walks in the Fictional Woods, Jorge Luis Borges’ This Craft of Verse, Luciano Berio’s Remembering the Future, Leonard Bernstein’s The Unanswered Question, and John Cage’s I-V.

52-400 BXA Capstone Project
Fall and Spring: 9 units
The BXA Capstone Project gives BXA students the opportunity to demonstrate the extent of their interdisciplinary work over the course of their academic career. The Capstone Project should include elements that span the student’s CFA and DC concentrations (for BHA students), CFA and MCS concentrations (for BSA students), CFA and SCS concentrations (for BCSA students). The project can be either a scholarly or creative endeavor, and may take one of many possible forms (e.g., a written thesis, a compilation of creative work or works, an experiment and report, a computer program or animation, etc.). The BXA Capstone sequence covers both semesters of a student’s senior year. In the fall, students are enrolled in 52-401 BXA Capstone Project I (9 units), which meets weekly to discuss strategies for managing research, planning the project, and larger theoretical issues related to interdisciplinary work. At the end of the fall course, students will have produced a Capstone Project proposal, an annotated bibliography, and multiple versions of their project pitch. In the spring, students enroll in 52-402 BXA Capstone Project II (9 units), which has no required classroom time. Instead, students spend the semester doing the research and foundational work necessary for the project, as well as meeting with their faculty and BXA advisors as they create their Capstone Project and prepare to present it at the annual Meeting of the Minds Undergraduate Research Symposium held each May. Students will only be enrolled in 52-400 (9 units) when they are unable to complete a two-semester sequence and need to gain special permission by the BXA Director/Academic Advisor.
52-401 BXA Capstone Project I
Fall: 9 units
The BXA Capstone Project gives BXA students the opportunity to demonstrate the extent of their interdisciplinary work over the course of their academic career. The Capstone Project should include elements that span the student’s CFA and DC concentrations (for BHA students), CFA and MCS concentrations (for BSA students), or CFA and SCS concentrations (for BCSA students). The project can be either a scholarly or creative endeavor, and may take one of many possible forms (e.g., a written thesis, a compilation of creative work or works, an experiment and report, a computer program or animation, etc.). The BXA Capstone sequence covers both semesters of a student’s senior year. In the fall, students are enrolled in 52-401 BXA Capstone Project I (9 units), which meets weekly to discuss strategies for managing research, planning the project, and larger theoretical issues related to interdisciplinary work. At the end of the fall course, students will have produced a Capstone Project proposal, an annotated bibliography, and multiple versions of their project pitch. In the spring, students enroll in 52-402 BXA Capstone Project II (9 units), which has no required classroom time. Instead, students spend the semester doing the research and foundational work necessary for the project, as well as meeting with their faculty and BXA advisors as they create their Capstone Project and prepare to present it at the annual Meeting of the Minds Undergraduate Research Symposium held each May.

52-402 BXA Capstone Project II
Spring: 9 units
The BXA Capstone Project gives BXA students the opportunity to demonstrate the extent of their interdisciplinary work over the course of their academic career. The Capstone Project should include elements that span the student’s CFA and DC concentrations (for BHA students), CFA and MCS concentrations (for BSA students), or CFA and SCS concentrations (for BCSA students). The project can be either a scholarly or creative endeavor, and may take one of many possible forms (e.g., a written thesis, a compilation of creative work or works, an experiment and report, a computer program or animation, etc.). The BXA Capstone sequence covers both semesters of a student’s senior year. In the fall, students are enrolled in 52-401 BXA Capstone Project I (9 units), which meets weekly to discuss strategies for managing research, planning the project, and larger theoretical issues related to interdisciplinary work. At the end of the fall course, students will have produced a Capstone Project proposal, an annotated bibliography, and multiple versions of their project pitch. In the spring, students enroll in 52-402 BXA Capstone Project II (9 units), which has no required classroom time. Instead, students spend the semester doing the research and foundational work necessary for the project, as well as meeting with their faculty and BXA advisors as they create their Capstone Project and prepare to present it at the annual Meeting of the Minds Undergraduate Research Symposium held each May.

52-410 BXA Junior Seminar
Spring: 9 units
Subcultures: Style, Structure, Representation — This seminar will examine contemporary and historical subcultures, particularly youth subcultures, through interdisciplinary modes of analysis, using theory and methodologies from several fields (particularly anthropology, communication studies, cultural studies, feminist theory, history, Marxism, modernism/post-modernism, performance studies, queer theory, sociology, and structuralism/post-structuralism). We will analyze the roots, performances, identities, and representations of subcultures, especially those with rituals and presentations centered on artistic mediums (music, fashion, graphic arts, street art, etc.). Though this course will focus primarily on the American experience, at times we will incorporate transnational perspectives to study the Beats, greasers, Mods, punks, skinheads, b-boys and girls, Goths, and “geek cultures” (comics, cosplay, gaming), among others. This course will pay careful attention to nuances of gender, race, class, and age in understanding the meaning of subcultures—symbolically, politically, and personally. Course requirements may include individual student research and leadership of class discussions.

52-590 BXA Internship
Fall and Spring
An internship is a supervised professional work experience with clear links to a student’s academic goals. BXA students may choose to complete a BXA Internship for elective credit with appropriate individuals or organizations within or outside of Carnegie Mellon University. Junior and senior BXA students in good academic standing are eligible to receive academic credit for one internship. Grading is pass/no pass only. Prior to enrolling in an internship, the student must have a “BXA Internship Agreement Form” signed by their site supervisor and approved by the BXA Director/Academic Advisor.