TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC)
SUBJECT: Special Major Name Change
PURPOSE: For Action by the Academic Senate

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval by the Senate of a Change in the Name of the B.A., B.S., M.A., and M.S. Special Major Degrees to Interdisciplinary Studies; effective Fall, 2007

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: CIC approved the name change unanimously on Jan. 3, 2005, but through an oversight no document was ever sent on to the Senate.

A survey of the faculty done in 2003-04 found that two-thirds of respondents thought it would be a good idea to change the name to Interdisciplinary Studies. Interdisciplinary Studies is a more descriptive and positive term. “Special Major” may have the connotation of not being quite as good. Some students have worried about how an employer might consider a “Special” Major. “Interdisciplinary Studies” is widely viewed as a more descriptive and positive term.

There is ample precedent for the name change. Of the fifteen graduate special majors in the CSU, twelve use the term Interdisciplinary Studies instead of Special Major; four of the seventeen undergraduate programs in the CSU use the term Interdisciplinary Studies.