



# Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies

## What Distinguishes the College or its Programs?

Fairhaven College is the interdisciplinary, liberal arts college of Western. A small community of about 400 students, Fairhaven emphasizes small seminar classes of 15-20 students, intensive advising, independent and experiential learning, student-designed majors, narrative assessment, and a commitment to social justice. Fairhaven students complete a set of interdisciplinary core curriculum in lieu of Western's General University Requirements (GURs).

Learn more about Fairhaven College: <https://fairhaven.wvu.edu/>

## Recognition and Accreditation

Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies is part of Western Washington University and degrees awarded to Fairhaven students are Western degrees. Fairhaven is one of four colleges praised for embodying the future of higher education in America in the book "Fixing College Education: A New Curriculum for the Twenty-First Century" by Professor Charles Muscatine of the University of California at Berkeley.

## Undergraduate Academic Programs

- Interdisciplinary Concentration, BA
- Interdisciplinary Concentration with Law, Diversity & Justice Emphasis, BA
- Fairhaven Upside-Down Program, BA
- Fairhaven students may also elect to complete a Western Major, BA, BS

With faculty guidance, Fairhaven students may design their own plan of study called an "Interdisciplinary Concentration" which combines coursework from Fairhaven and other Western departments as well as independent study and transferred-in credits, if applicable. Students interested in issues of law and social justice may further focus their studies through the Law, Diversity & Justice Concentration. The Upside-Down program is an option for transfer students who complete a pre-approved two-year technical degree from a Washington state community or technical college and transfer to Western. Upside-Down program students complete the Fairhaven core curriculum and a set of appropriate upper-division coursework to enhance the focus of their previous degree.

## Recent Interdisciplinary Concentrations

- Documentary Filmmaking: Addressing Culture and the Environment
- Film, Fine Art, and Culture in Society
- Queer Magic Through Video Game Storytelling
- Collective Liberation: Black, Gender, Queer Studies and Social Justice Education
- Law, Diversity, & Justice: Native American Studies and Advocacy
- Law, Diversity & Justice: International Studies and Advocacy
- Creative Business and Entrepreneurship
- Bioregional Environmental Education
- Behavioral Anthrozoology: Intersections between Animal Behavior, Conservation, and Ecology
- Food Systems, Politics, and the Living Earth
- Ecogastronomy, Food Policy, and Sustainable Agriculture
- Environmental Science, Sustainable Practice, and Communication
- Migration, Storytelling, and Advocacy
- Embodiment Studies, Psychology and the Art of Writing: Transforming Our World by Healing Ourselves
- Class in the United States and Democracy in Action

## Law, Diversity, & Justice (LDJ) Concentration and Minor

Fairhaven College is home to the Law, Diversity, and Justice Concentration and Minor. The LDJ is for those who desire to effect change using legal knowledge and processes and who have the potential to act as leaders and role models in their community. The LDJ curriculum introduces students to the study of law and is taught as seminars by faculty and local attorneys. Students learn how issues such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability intersect with the legal system. Students build skills such as critical reading and analysis; legal research and writing; and oral communication. Admitted Fairhaven students can complete the LDJ Concentration, and the LDJ minor is open to any Western student. Professor Ceci Lopez, JD, LL.M. directs the Law, Diversity, and Justice program.

## Audio Technology, Music, & Society (ATMS) Minor

Fairhaven College offers the Audio Technology, Music, and Society minor. The minor is available to any Western student, and students admitted to Fairhaven may choose to build an interdisciplinary concentration incorporating the ATMS minor. The most extensive audio technology program in the Pacific Northwest, this hands-on program provides study in audio recording techniques, augmented by the study of music and music's role in our society as entertainment, as cultural representation and as a tool for social critique. Professor Mark Miyake, Ph.D., leads the Audio Technology, Music, and Society minor.

## **Upside-Down B.A. Program**

Graduates of certain Washington State Community and Technical Colleges who hold the A.T.A. (Associate in Technical Arts), A.A.S. (Associate in Applied Sciences), or some other approved technical degree who do NOT bring significant university or college coursework which would otherwise be transferable to Western, may apply for admission to the Fairhaven Upside-Down B.A. Program. This unique program offers graduates the opportunity to use the previous technical degree as their major. Then students complete Fairhaven College's Core curriculum and additional upper division coursework at Fairhaven and Western to enhance the area of their technical degree to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree.

## **Internship, Research, and Extracurricular Engagement**

Strong encouragement and faculty support is available for independent study, experiential learning, and community-based internship learning opportunities that can count toward credits in students' Fairhaven major.

Fairhaven College students have the opportunity to participate in managing the Associated Students Outback Farm and make creative use of the college audio recording studio, video editing, and visual arts facilities.

Students in the Law, Diversity, and Justice programs are encouraged to participate in community engagement opportunities including paid and unpaid internships with law offices, legal aid agencies, and other opportunities to network and be engaged with the local legal community. The LDJ is an experiential program where students learn active case discussion, court presentation through mock trial and moot court, and actively develop critical thinking skills as well as oral and written argumentation.

Faculty-led study abroad programs have offered students the opportunity to learn and contribute in service learning projects in the Dominican Republic, India, Nepal, Germany, Ireland, and other areas of the world. Our ongoing partnership with the Institute for Village Studies offers students study abroad programs annually.

The Adventure Learning Grant awards \$25,000 grants for selected Fairhaven students to spend 10 months immersed in a cultural environment different than their own while engaging in a scholarly project of their own design. In recent years, ALG grant recipients have lived and conducted research in Madagascar, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, India, Korea, Thailand, Brazil, and Lebanon.

## Equity and Diversity Initiatives

At Fairhaven, students are challenged to bring what they learn to bear on human concerns and crucial real-world problems, to experiment, to discover and to act. This style of education supports the development of certain values, virtues, and skills: self-discipline, resourcefulness, initiative, self-development, adaptability, reasonable risk-taking, leadership, sensitivity to injustice, and respect for persons and the environment. Fairhaven courses prepare students to listen carefully and engage respectfully in critical discussion, to value and respect different world views and to appreciate multiple voices reflecting the diversity of experiences in our society.

Fairhaven College is committed to interdisciplinary study and serving a diverse student body in terms of age, ethnic background, academic interest, and life experience. The College is committed to a gender-conscious and multicultural approach to topics, resources, and classroom practices. Courses and other learning experiences provide an opportunity to examine the impacts and contemporary and historical roots of race, class and gender relations.

## Successful Alumni

Fairhaven College graduates have distinguished themselves in virtually all fields including business, health, education, the arts, government, journalism, research, medicine, law, ministry, international and public relations, human resources, and more. Notable alumni include: Debora Juarez, Tribal Law expert and former King County Superior Court Judge; Theodore Bestor, professor of Harvard's Anthropology Department; Rabbi Ellen Weinberg Dreyfus; TJ Martin, Oscar-winning director for "Undeclared"; Pulitzer-Prize winning Environmental Journalist William Dietrich; and Judge Cecily Hezzelrigh-Hernandez, WA State Court of Appeals.

Graduate and professional schools throughout the world recognize that Fairhaven students have successfully taken responsibility for the content and direction of their education and are well prepared for graduate study. Recent graduates have been admitted to top programs around the country, including: University of Washington Medical School, UCLA's School of Law; the Public Administration program at Syracuse University; Vancouver Film School; Cornell University's Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology; University of Washington School of Law; Seattle University's School of Law; UW MSW; and UW Public Administration, among others.

## Application Process & Requirements

Fairhaven College accepts applications for fall, winter, and spring quarters on a space-available-rolling admission process. Applicants need to comply with Western application deadlines. Fairhaven may continue to accept applications after the quarterly deadlines listed on Western's admissions website, but we do recommend applying early. Our Enrollment and Orientation Manager is available to answer questions and provide support for this process.

## Required Application Materials

- Brief application: Students can visit the Fairhaven College website to learn more about how to apply, or to start an application.
- Essay describing educational goals and academic interests. (You may use the same essay for Western and Fairhaven.)
- Two letters of recommendation from teachers/professors/instructors, employers or community/volunteer work to [fairhaven.admissions@wwu.edu](mailto:fairhaven.admissions@wwu.edu). One of the letters should be from an academic source. Letters must be written within the past year. (Please, no personal references.)

All information can be found on our website. Students submit all application materials through our website: <https://fairhaven.wwu.edu/apply>

## Interviews and Decisions

When all application materials have been received, students will be invited to schedule an admissions interview with the Fairhaven Enrollment and Orientation Manager. Interviews can be in person at Fairhaven College or by videoconference. Interviews are an opportunity for students to ask questions about Fairhaven and are scheduled for 50 minutes. All students will be notified via email of their Fairhaven College admission status.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Is Fairhaven College separate from Western or a part of Western? Do I have to be accepted to Western in order to attend Fairhaven College?**

Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies is one of the seven academic colleges housed within Western Washington University. Students enrolled in Fairhaven College's program are Western students and have the ability to take advantage of all Western resources. Acceptance to Fairhaven College is contingent on successful admission to Western.

**How do grades work at Fairhaven College?**

Fairhaven College courses use narrative evaluations in lieu of grading on the A-F grading. At the end of the quarter for each course, Fairhaven students evaluate their performance in detail in conjunction with a narrative assessment written by their faculty member. These narrative evaluations comprise an additional Fairhaven transcript. The Western transcript will also indicate a "Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory" mark for each course. Students do receive a letter grade, though, for courses taken in other departments or colleges on campus which will appear on their Western transcript and contribute to their Western GPA.

**How do my classes from the community college transfer?**

Students who have completed a Direct Transfer Agreement Associate of Arts (DTA-AA) Degree from a Washington state community college will have 5 of the Fairhaven Core Curriculum waived (see Core curriculum for specific details). Other students transferring coursework into Fairhaven College's program will receive individual transfer credit evaluations at the time of enrollment to determine if and how their courses may be used towards the Fairhaven Core Curriculum.

**What does a student's diploma look like? How is the degree written?**

A Fairhaven College student's diploma will show that they received a degree from Western Washington University, Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies with a bachelor's degree. Students who graduate with the Interdisciplinary Concentration as their major will have the title of their concentration printed on the diploma. Upside Down graduates' majors are Upside Down [Title of AA Degree].