

GLOBES Interdisciplinary Research Component Interdisciplinary Advisor Role and Responsibilities

The purpose of the GLOBES interdisciplinary research component is to advance novel research on environmental, human health, and sustainability topics as a result of an exchange of ideas and practices across cultural and/or disciplinary boundaries. Examples of interdisciplinary projects are: 1) investigate policy, legal, ethics, or cultural barriers to the application of scientific and technical research, 2) acquire training and employ new research methodologies from a discipline outside of the student's primary field of study, 3) organize or assume a leadership role in an outreach project that engages the public and furthers understanding of environmental and sustainability issues. Depending on home departmental requirements, the final research product may take various forms:

1. A chapter of the dissertation thesis
2. Methodology and content from a second discipline is woven throughout the dissertation thesis
3. Significant authorship of a published manuscript with an interdisciplinary focus
4. Formal presentation at an academic conference outside the student's primary discipline
5. Formal presentation to a policy or management group relevant to the primary research focus

Role of the Interdisciplinary Advisor

GLOBES requires that students identify at least one faculty member or professional expert from outside the primary field of interest to recommend course selection and to mentor students in acquiring a secondary knowledge area and skill set. Our experience from the IGERT training grant has shown that the role of an interdisciplinary advisor naturally evolves when tied to the required interdisciplinary project and the corresponding need for additional expertise and mentoring. The GLOBES Advisor must represent a discipline other than that of the student's primary (home) department. Participation in the GLOBES program as an advisor means that the faculty member understands and supports the interdisciplinary emphasis of the program, is willing to guide the student in developing sufficient interdisciplinary expertise, and helps to evaluate the student's progress. The advisor need not be a voting member of the student's thesis committee. In many cases, the interdisciplinary advisor may be a collaborator of the student's major faculty advisor, reaffirming the cross-disciplinary, collaborative relationship. At the time of the dissertation defense, the interdisciplinary advisor provides a letter of endorsement, describing the interdisciplinary merits and work effort of the student (especially in the case of group or multi-authored research).

Letter of Endorsement* on behalf of GLOBES Certificate student should address (1) below, plus one or more of the other items as they pertain to the student's interdisciplinary research project:

1. Description of relationship with the student and summary of mentoring activities.
2. Evidence of innovative individual research in an interdisciplinary context.
3. Evidence of engagement in building cross-disciplinary collaborations
4. Evidence of attracting support for cross-disciplinary activities
5. Evidence of outreach through application (communications, technology transfer, and community building)
6. Evidence of positive environmental and/or social impacts.

*This letter is required, but may be relatively brief.