

Benson and newell essay

[Profession](#), [Student](#)



1. I find that Benson's most convincing argument is that 10 semester hours is not enough time for an interdisciplinary student to get all of the foundations necessary to graduate with a solid foundation. This major is one with great diversity, has a great wealth of different disciplines, and many different resources involved in its studies. This involves the study of many different subject areas. It is not beneficial to just take introductory level classes in all of these subject areas. With only 120 credit hours, one might be able to have an area or two of concentration, but this would not make one a true interdisciplinary studies major. Along the same line, when applying to graduate school, without an in depth knowledge in multiple areas, one is not adequately prepared to continue one's education at the graduate level without more credit hours.

2. I think everyone has had courses that can adequately be described as shallow and lacking rigor. I believe this is more often due to the instructor rather than the course, at least in my limited knowledge. A philosophy course, for example, where only the surface of what has been is read, is shallow. If a student in class wants to get beyond the words and discuss why the words were chosen rather than alternative ones, as is frequently done in literature class, and the instructor refuses to do so, because it is not in the course guidelines, students feel that they are not getting everything they can out of the course. Words are chosen for specific reasons, and other words are not for other reasons. These are valid questions. When people in other sections of the same class are having the same discussions, one has to wonder if it is the instructor.

3. Newell's third argument, Interdisciplinary Study Impedes Essential

Disciplinary Competence has an element in it that I find the most convincing. I do not agree with Newell's whole argument. In this response, however, he implies that interdisciplinary students do have edge on their more traditional counterparts when they are seeking career positions. There is a particular skill that students studying interdisciplinary studies learn to do very well that employers seek, want, demand: the ability to solve problems. There are many college graduates that can solve scientific or mathematical problems. It is the real life, logistical problems that appear every day in the workforce that many people have never been taught to solve. Additionally, many times, these problems need to be figured out by working in team environments, another skill that students in interdisciplinary studies work on in their curriculum. They practice this skill, master it, and have demonstrated that they can become leaders and role models in these situations in the work environment. This is an area where they excel through much practice, an area where many people never learn, despite decades on the job.

4. I do agree with Benson most. Interdisciplinary Studies is a beneficial major, but needs more than 120 credit hours to do it successfully. Newell does make an excellent point that Benson acknowledges that many Interdisciplinary Studies major have an area of expertise, but the major itself implies that there should be many areas where the graduate is fluid. Perhaps the answer lies in changing the ramifications of the major. Physician Assistants and Physical Therapists do not gain their designations without completing graduate school. Those many extra hours and designated years of study are needed. Perhaps Interdisciplinary Studies should be a professional designation that is earned after a graduate program is

completed and there should be several targeted undergraduate programs that are targeted as entry points into the program. Physical Therapists are often biology majors as are Physician Assistants, but they might major in other areas as well. With this scenario, there would be a specialty area upon entry into graduate school, but there would also be additional years of study enabling the student to have time to master several areas of study to become a true Interdisciplinary Study master.