

Nontraditional Degree Programs

Kimberly Sanborn, Ph.D., Director

Nontraditional Degree Programs (NDP) Advisory Council

Sara Aliabadi, Ph.D., Associate Professor

Timothy B. Barnett, Ph.D., Professor

Ruth (Breckie) B. Church, Ph.D., Professor

Joseph Hibdon, Ph.D., Associate Professor

Jin Kim, Ph.D., J.D., Associate Professor

Eleni Makris, Ph.D., Associate Professor

Nancy A. Matthews, Ph.D., Professor

Erica R. Meiners, Ph.D., Professor

Russell Wartalski, Ed.D., Assistant Professor

Nontraditional Degree Programs provide expanded opportunities for quality education in two baccalaureate degree completion programs. These programs are self-paced and involve university faculty and individualized academic advising to support students' degree attainment.

Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (<http://catalog.neiu.edu/nontraditional-degree-programs/bachelor-arts-interdisciplinary-studies/>) offers students a variety of options to complete graduation requirements, including prior learning assessment for credit.

University Without Walls (<http://catalog.neiu.edu/nontraditional-degree-programs/university-without-walls/>) is a flexible program that leads to a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. Students in this program complete the degree through independent study and coursework as determined by university faculty.

Prior Learning Assessment

Nontraditional Degree Programs (NDP) award credit for prior experiential learning in order to acknowledge and validate college level learning that occurs outside the classroom.

Course Based Approach

The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) option for students in the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies program (BAIS) helps students determine, demonstrate and document such learning with integrity and rigor through a Prior Learning Portfolio submitted for assessment by faculty evaluation. The program uses the course credit equivalency model of PLA in which students identify an existing credit-bearing course(s) (offered by a regionally accredited American institution of higher education) that states learning outcomes consistent with those of the student's prior experiential learning. The student demonstrates through a portfolio how and when the course-equivalent learning occurred and requests an award of credit. A credentialed faculty member with expertise in the relevant academic area evaluates the portfolio and makes a determination regarding the award of credit. The amount of credit awarded through PLA is limited to 36 credit hours for each student and may be applied to any Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies degree requirement except Northeastern residency.

University Without Walls

In addition, NDP offers the University Without Walls (UWW) degree program. This program assesses and builds a curriculum based on each student's prior learning as determined by Northeastern's faculty.