

**The FOHSS fosters and encourages research in varied domains, including Anthropology, Applied Environmental and Sustainability, Economics, Education, English, History, International Relations, Political Science, Sociology and many more interconnected sub-domains across the other eight faculties at the University.**

### ***Interdisciplinary PhD in Anthropology***

Anthropology explores the spatial and temporal aspects of human existence, encompassing our biological origins, cultural diversity, languages, and social systems, helping us understand what it means to be human. Interdisciplinary in nature, Anthropology as a discipline has global relevance, addressing modern social, political, and economic challenges, often focusing on sustainability and ethical practices. Anthropological insights and training are increasingly pertinent in dealing with urgent, contemporary issues such as climate change, migration, development, health, and inequality bridging academic research with practical, real-world solutions as it offers a unique perspective into the bio-social dimensions of our species.

Anthropological research at SIU currently focuses on studies on Human adaptation and diversity with specific emphasis on climatic and dietary adaptations; Genetic ancestry and population history of Indian populations; applied domains like pharmacogenomic profiles of Indians; Ontogeny of dental morphology and metry of Indian populations; Education, Migration studies, Religious Studies, Prehistory, Protohistory, Harappan Civilisation, Chalcolithic cultures, Iron Age, ceramic studies, oral history, field archaeology- excavation and exploration techniques, sciences in archaeology, among others. Similar or allied topics can be explored using interdisciplinary perspectives, techniques and methods from history, sociology, evolutionary biology, genetics, chemistry, geology, GIS, among others, allowing for a holistic understanding of the research question.

Research scholars aspiring to undertake an interdisciplinary PhD should be able to locate their research within the discipline of Anthropology. Candidates interested in pursuing an Interdisciplinary PhD programme in Anthropology are expected to have a good conceptual and disciplinary understanding across the various sub-branches of Anthropology. The aspirants are expected to be aware of the emerging and contemporary ideas and debates in Anthropological research.

The essay-type questions will examine the candidate's ability to:

- critically analyse a phenomenon and communicate one's ideas.
- demonstrate in-depth understanding of disciplinary knowledge and critical thinking with an interdisciplinary approach.
- formulate a coherent, well-structured argument, with a clear thesis and logical progression of ideas.
- show familiarity with critical concepts, and theoretical approaches.

### ***Applied Environmental and Sustainability Science***

Applied Environmental and Sustainability Science stands at the crossroads of ecological understanding, human-environmental relationships, techno-managerial innovation, and policy implementation. Because of this, the discipline has become one of the most consequential interdisciplinary fields for research and innovation of our time. At the research level, the discipline equips scholars with rigorous interdisciplinary tools to interrogate the structural drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability, resource inequity, and biodiversity loss.

Interdisciplinary research in environmental science/studies, both at the theoretical and applied levels, at Symbiosis International University (SIU), integrates the natural and social sciences, along with management and technology disciplines, to address contemporary socio-ecological challenges. Its contemporary scope includes climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable development, and policy impacts, aligning with global agendas like the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It encourages blending environmental science/studies with fields like the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, along with possibilities of industry-linked research. This interdisciplinary PhD program is focus on diverse perspectives, such as contemporary environmental challenges and how they shape and are shaped by social, economic, and ecological processes. The program emphasis on to make scholarly connections between environmental change and impact across spatial (local, regional, global) and temporal scales, along with interpretation/reinterpretation of key debates in environmental sustainability through scientific and humanistic frameworks, drawing upon a plurality of methods and methodologies.

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### ***PhD in English***

A PhD in English is not merely building on established ideas but is an evolving space for critical engagement in the contemporary world. At a time marked by information saturation and social and political fractures, the discipline offers tools for critical thinking, mindful reading, nuanced interpretation, and ethical reflection. It fosters attentiveness to narratives and representations that extend into other disciplines such as sociology, history, media, education, and cultural production. It is designed to train scholars in research methodologies,

theoretical frameworks, and archival practices, while also encouraging sustained engagement with contemporary concerns such as identity, digital cultures, and the politics of knowledge. In this sense, it moves beyond narrow specialization to cultivate intellectual adaptability and global citizenship.

The program encourages diverse and innovative research trajectories. Prospective doctoral candidates may pursue work in areas such as comparative literature, engaging with transnational and cross-linguistic literary traditions; literatures from the margins, foregrounding and other underrepresented voices; postcolonial literatures, and South Asian literatures, with attention to regional, vernacular, and diasporic contexts. Additional areas of inquiry may include gender studies, translation studies, and cultural studies. The emphasis remains on developing projects that are both theoretically grounded and contextually responsive, enabling scholars to contribute meaningfully to ongoing conversations within and beyond the field.

While the PhD remains situated within the discipline of English, it actively promotes interdisciplinary inquiry. Scholars are encouraged to draw upon insights from cultural studies, history, philosophy, sociology, and media studies, among others, thereby enabling their work to speak across disciplinary boundaries. Such engagement not only broadens the scope of research but also enhances its relevance and impact in an increasingly interconnected intellectual landscape. In today's academic and professional environments, the ability to think across disciplines is a significant advantage, opening up opportunities for collaboration and diverse career pathways. This interdisciplinary approach thus ensures that scholarship remains responsive to complex, real-world issues, making the PhD in English a dynamic and forward-looking endeavour.

Students applying for the PhD in English are expected to demonstrate a strong foundation in literary analysis, critical thinking, and academic writing, to show familiarity with literary texts, critical concepts, and theoretical approaches. The response should reflect a strong command over language, including precision, clarity, and an appropriate academic tone, along with careful attention to structure, coherence, and articulation.

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### ***Interdisciplinary PhD in History and Archaeology***

Many think of history and archaeology as disciplines centred on hard facts that need to be memorised. In reality, research in these fields is concerned with past events and present narratives through the study of texts, archival data and material culture. The discipline acknowledges the subjectivities and gaps inherent in the 'knowledge' of the past and hence an interdisciplinary approach in exploring and examining phenomena is integral to the study. Because texts, discourse and material culture are an integral part of human life and continue to influence our contemporary socio-political-economic experiences, the methods of history and archaeology are widely applicable across disciplines and understanding of phenomena.

At SIU, interdisciplinary research in history and archaeology is pursued through diverse perspectives across India's economic, religious, education, societal and cultural contexts, the history of science and technology, heritage, art and architecture, history of conflict and peace building, and Indian Knowledge Systems among others. The approach examines both the past and its connections to the present. Research scholars aspiring to undertake an interdisciplinary PhD should be able to locate their research within the discipline of history. For the Entrance exam, the candidate would be expected to be aware of contemporary cultural historical narratives that affect our understanding of the world.

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### ***Interdisciplinary PhD in Political Science***

Political Science as a discipline has evolved from a focus on thought and theory, institutional and governance approaches to a multi, inter and transdisciplinary field that encompass both *Innenpolitik*, *Aussenpolitik*, different systemic variables, along with non-institutional stakeholders, to seek an insight into contemporary challenges, be they local, national, regional or international. The field of Political Science today, therefore, apart from governance, international relations, political economy, and public policy, also encompasses considerations of cultural studies, environmental politics, women and gender studies, and of course, the digital world. Political Science as a discipline now focuses on critical and reflective thinking, data driven research, which is in alignment with the rapidly changing realities of the day.

An interdisciplinary pursuit in Political Science for a Ph.D., therefore opens up pathways for exploring diverse and emerging areas of research. While foundational knowledge cannot be side-lined, research scholars will have the opportunity of engaging with a plethora of disciplines such as economics, education, environmental studies, development studies, data science, history, human rights, migration studies, peace studies, public health, sociology, law, media studies, to engage holistically with complex enquiries. This will also enable candidates to integrate traditional theoretical frameworks with approaches that are policy-oriented approaches, and are relevant in the contemporary context.

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### ***Interdisciplinary PhD in Psychology***

Psychology continues to evolve from a study of mental conditions to aspects that influence every area of human life. In its contemporary era, Psychology has emerged as an important lens to view global challenges and to solve them. Research areas in contemporary Psychology include positive psychology, exploration of digital environments, and their interaction with the human psyche. The brain body connection is also being investigated through work in the field of neuropsychology. Human behaviour could be examined by evaluating the impact of factors like media, biological makeup, significant current and past events, business, health, education, Indian psychology and gender among other fields of study.

Considering the inherent multidisciplinary nature of Psychology, prospective students opting for the Ph. D program would be required to connect and situate Psychology with other allied disciplines. Traditional Psychological theories could also be integrated and synthesized with contemporary issues. The student must also be capable of demonstrating their ability to incorporate multiple perspectives while evaluating a problem. The students are required to be prepared for essay type questions based on contemporary areas and issues in psychology, specifically gender, poverty, disability, culture, domestic violence, abuse towards various age groups. They would be expected to explore different paradigms of psychology to be able to analyze and explain any phenomena from multiple perspectives (five principle paradigms are biological, psychodynamics, behavioural, cognition and humanistic). They would also be required to critically analyze the concepts from Positive Psychology, and Indian knowledge systems to understand their role in wellbeing and happiness.

Research scholars aspiring to undertake an interdisciplinary PhD should be able to locate their research within the discipline of Psychology. For the Entrance exam, the candidate would be expected to be aware of contemporary Psychological narratives that affect our understanding of the world.

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### ***Interdisciplinary Ph.D in Sociology***

Sociology had been identified as a 'modern' discipline due to its development in the post-Enlightenment period of Western Europe. Over the centuries, the subject has undergone various transformations, addressed the demerits of grand theorisation, focused on application, and prioritised spatial and temporal contexts. With the aim of documenting multiple voices and social realities, the discipline has emphasised reflexivity and criticality. By drawing on connections between the individual and the social, Sociology has pursued research that has duly captured continuities and changes. Consequently, 'contemporaneity' has been a driving force in the discipline. Sociology has practised interdisciplinarity since its early years and benefited from theoretical and empirical insights from natural and social sciences, while shaping them in significant ways. This has not only resulted in a vast body of work that the discipline can rely on, but has also expanded the scope of scholars pursuing Sociology.

In the PhD programme in Sociology under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at SIU, researchers are therefore expected to pursue topics of current relevance that contribute to the growth of the discipline and society. The candidates will ground themselves in Sociology's fundamental ideas and develop expertise, while engaging with other disciplines to undertake a more holistic approach. Presently, the disciplinary focus has been on emerging areas of: Sustainable Urban Futures, Climate Crisis and Social Vulnerabilities, Human-AI Interactions, Health and Well-being, Digital Pedagogies, Social Justice and the Politics of Identities, Interpersonal Trust and Changing Intimacies, Decoloniality and the Construction of Knowledge, among others.

Applicants aspiring to undertake an interdisciplinary PhD should be able to locate their research within the discipline of Sociology. For the entrance exam, the candidate would be expected to be aware of contemporary Sociological narratives that affect our understanding of the world.

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