It is becoming more and more helpful to take an interdisciplinary course of study in today’s changing world. The Physics Department has a solution! There is some exciting news for students looking to pursue a B.A. in Physics at UNI! And it involves two new possibilities when it comes to their degree’s emphasis. These two new emphases, Data Science and a Custom Emphasis, are remarkably interdisciplinary courses of study.

“We are very excited about the new B.A. Physics program,” Dr. Paul Shand, Physics Department head, said of changes. “It is structured to provide our students with the skills that are needed to flourish in a global economy that is increasingly data-driven and that requires multiple competencies.”

The Data Science emphasis emphasizes the use of statistics, coding, and analytical methods as means of obtaining useful information. Students would not just be learning to use critical thinking skills obtained from studying Physics, but also computer programming and statistics.

Dr. Shand explained, “The Data Science Emphasis is unique in that it combines high-level scientific data analysis with statistical and business analytics in a single program. These are programs that prepare students for a fast-approaching future in which the coin of the realm is data.”

The other emphasis is the Custom Emphasis, which allows students to select courses from a wider variety of STEM-based fields. Students have a very broad selection in this regard, ranging from Computer Science, Mathematics, Technology, Chemistry, Biology, and Earth and Environmental Sciences. If there is something a student takes quite a bit of interest in outside of Physics, this emphasis will make it easier for them to study it. It is an excellent choice for students looking to double major or prepare for jobs in high-demand industries.

Dr. Shand describes the new Custom Emphasis as “a mechanism for supplementing skills learned in another major with the rigorous analytical and computational problem-solving capabilities gained by studying physics.”

Both of these new Physics emphases will be available starting in Fall 2019. If you are a student looking to pursue a Physics-based interdisciplinary course of study, one of these majors might be a great fit for you.