He has seen this happen many times, and has even been the beneficiary of his own efforts. One of the students he helped, Tabassum Majid, defended her PhD just two weeks ago, and wrote a capstone paper that he published in one of his books.

Although INDS might seem like an easy major to some, Dr. Ronch would disagree. He says, “One thing that’s attractive about the INDS major is that it’s a amorphous, and so you get to form it. But what’s really challenging is that you have to create the form, and that is a lot of work.”

Creating the structure of a degree is no small task, so students get excited once they have planned everything out. However, Dr. Ronch gives a warning to those that become overly ambitious. He says, “Understand that you may have found a big important problem, but also know that you can’t solve it all in one fell swoop.”

Rather, he advises students, “take bites at the problem”, and break it down piece by piece. According to him, “What the INDS program is very good at doing is teaching students a strategy to define their path of investigation or analysis.”

So what comes after all of this hard work and dedication? Well, a degree of course, but how useful is that document in the real world? Dr. Ronch says, “If students go to an environment that understands the value of an interdisciplinary perspective, then they should rise to the top. But it’s finding those places that is a challenge.”

However, Dr. Ronch has assuring words about the future of INDS. He believes, “in academia, people are beginning to see not only the value of interdisciplinary study as an educational strategy, but the value of it as a way to come up with better solutions to problems.” He concludes that INDS graduates are leaving with more than a degree. They are leaving with a “worldview that is very different, and ultimately an asset.”