Suggested Outline for BIS/IDIM Academic Goals Statements

1. Introduction and background material (approximately 1 page)
Describe your academic experiences and general interests as they relate to the program you are proposing. You should include both academic and non-academic goals and interests that are relevant to your proposed program. Keep in mind that this is a proposal for your academic program, and therefore you should emphasize the intellectual and creative aspects of the program.

Introduce your proposed program, outlining the areas of concentration. IDIM applicants should begin with a clear statement of the theme of their proposed program, explaining how it relates to the areas of concentration and how the areas are interrelated. If appropriate, this is a good place for BIS students to note briefly any relevant connections among the areas proposed. You may wish to note briefly the relationship between your individualized program and your plans for the future.

2. Description of areas of concentration (approximately 3-4 pages)
Describe the overall purpose and the specific focus of each area of concentration, and explain how the courses you've put together will give you a depth of understanding and competence within that area of concentration. Explain what you want to learn through study in each of your areas. BIS students should describe their non-CLA area last.

Using concrete examples in each case, emphasize:

- specific courses you've already taken that have contributed to your theoretical and practical understanding of your chosen areas and stimulated your interest in specific related issues.
- specific courses you've not yet taken and how they will contribute to the program’s depth and coherence; especially address anything that may appear unusual or questionable to your readers.
- the overall coherence within each area, including the relationship between the course work you've completed and the courses you are proposing to complete your program.

You will probably not stress each course equally, but every course in your proposed program should be mentioned. IDIM applicants must explain how each of the areas of concentration contribute to an understanding of the overall theme. This may be done as part of your explanation of each area, or this may be the subject of a separate paragraph.

3. Conclusion (approximately 1 page)
Briefly summarize the strengths of your proposed program. Emphasize the appropriateness of an individualized degree for you by focusing on how your course selection enables you to meet your academic goals. Explain how your plans for the future (career, graduate school, post-college plans) relate to your chosen course of study in an individualized degree program.