INDIVIDUALIZED MAJOR PROGRAM

Design your own major!

The Individualized Major Program (IMP) in the School of Liberal Arts is a special option that enables students to design programs of study that lie outside the scope of existing major programs. Unlike conventional majors with specific requirements and lists of courses to be taken, in the Individualized Major, students work with faculty members to develop a plan of study that is custom-designed to fit individual needs and interests. The IMP differs from the bachelor’s degree in general studies, which is based on a broad interdisciplinary plan of study, in that the IMP requires a clearly defined concentration that connects to areas of study in the School of Liberal Arts and may draw its curriculum from various disciplines and schools. Students collaborate closely with their faculty advisor in planning their courses of study and in completing senior capstone projects. To ensure the integrity and rigor of each student-designed major, a faculty committee approves all Individualized Majors when students are first admitted to the program and again once their studies are complete.

WHY CHOOSE AN INDIVIDUALIZED MAJOR?

The IMP is designed for disciplined and self-motivated students whose educational goals are not met by existing majors. Most IMP students fall into two categories:

• Students who wish to major in either traditional disciplines or recognized interdisciplinary areas for which majors are not available on the IUPUI campus. The IMP can serve transfer students who wish to continue work started elsewhere in areas in which IUPUI has faculty expertise but no organized major.

• Students who wish to create unique majors that reflect their individual experience, interests, and needs. These students may organize existing courses into meaningful new majors, join together course work in several disciplines to focus on a thematic area, or make unusual yet valid connections between subjects that are not commonly studied together.

Careful design of an Individualized Major enables students to prepare themselves for their chosen careers and allows them to gain admission into their chosen graduate and professional degree programs.

ADMISSION AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS

All students seeking admission must:

• be admitted to the School of Liberal Arts
• have a GPA of 2.5 or higher or evidence of recent high performance
• have completed at least 30 credit hours toward degree requirements

An Individualized Major makes extra demands on students and on their faculty sponsors. Students desiring to pursue an Individualized Major should confer with the director of the program who will provide assistance, if needed, in identifying and securing the agreement of a full-time faculty member from the School of Liberal Arts to serve as their primary advisor. Under the supervision of this advisor, a student will prepare a proposal for an Individualized Major. A student is accepted for admission to the major when this proposal is approved by the advisor and their faculty committee.

After admission to the program, students must meet each semester with their primary IMP advisor to consider their academic progress and register for courses.

COURSE OF STUDY

The Individualized Major requires a minimum of 34 credit hours in the major. Two courses are required of all students (4 to 7 credit hours):

SLA 1360 Individualized Major Plan

(1 credit hour)

A tutorial in which a student develops his or her plan for a major, including a list of courses, schedule, and rationale. Students proposing majors in traditional fields should discuss the history and nature of the discipline, describe its subfields and the methodologies it employs, and show how the proposed major fits within this framework. Those designing unique majors need to establish the intellectual unity of the proposed major and show appreciation of the different disciplinary traditions and methodologies on which it will draw.

SLA 1460 Individualized Major Senior Project

(3 to 6 credit hours)

A tutorial devoted to a capstone project that culminates and integrates the Individualized Major. Normally this is a major research paper with an oral presentation, but other options may also be approved if appropriate for a particular plan of study. Typically the project is presented to the student’s Individualized Major Committee and should also be presented to a broader audience in a seminar, colloquium or student conference.

The remaining courses are selected from existing courses. (30 or more credit hours)

• No courses applied to general education requirements may be included in the Individualized Major.
• At least 15 credit hours in the major must be at the 300 or 400 level (in addition to 1360 and 1460).
• No more than 6 credit hours of independent study may count in the major.
• All courses counted in the major must be taken for letter grade; no course graded below C may count toward the major.

EXAMPLES

At IUPUI, students have designed Individualized Majors in traditional fields such as Classical Studies, Japanese Studies, and Women’s Studies; they have also created innovative cross-disciplinary majors such as International Health and Culture Studies, Environmental Ethics, Political Communication, Disability Studies, Urbanism and Design, Media and Cultural Criticism and Analysis, and Cinema and Media Arts.

CONTACT US

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9/2015