



INDIVIDUAL MAJOR INFORMATION

College of Letters & Science Academic Deans' Services
University of Wisconsin-Madison 110 Ingraham 1155 Observatory Drive Madison, Wisconsin 53706
Tel: 608.262.0617 Fax: 608.262.5093



College of Letters & Science

Individual Major Guidelines & Application

*****The deadline to submit a completed application for the Individual Major is the Friday of the 4th week of the Fall or Spring Term. Applications must be submitted electronically before 4:00 p.m. to LSDEANS@SAA.LS.WISC.EDU. Please contact L&S Academic Deans' Services at 608.262.0617 for more details.***

GUIDELINES FOR THE INDIVIDUAL MAJOR (IM)

The Individual Major (560) within the College of Letters & Science is a method of fulfilling the depth requirement for students whose interests bridge existing departments and disciplines in ways not accommodated by an existing major or interdisciplinary program. This major must consist of a coherent pattern of courses in more than one department or recognized interdisciplinary program in the College of Letters & Science **and** must be approved by the Faculty Committee on Individual Majors. **Getting approval to pursue an individual major is never guaranteed. Thus, students should speak with their advisor about other academic options.** Students interested in learning more about individual majors should contact L&S Undergraduate Academic Deans' Services at 608.262.0617 in 110 Ingraham Hall and set up an individual appointment with the coordinator for the individual major prior to starting this process. Information can also be found at <http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/college-wide/>.

Eligibility. Any student working toward an L&S degree may elect to develop an individual major. (*Students earning degrees in other undergraduate schools and colleges on the UW–Madison campus are not eligible to pursue an Individual Major within Letters & Science.*) This major **must** receive approval during the second-semester of the sophomore year or first semester of junior year. Seniors may find it impractical to use this major since **all students are required to earn at least 30 degree credits after the term in which approval is given.** A student may complete only one individual major.

Developing an Individual Major. The student takes primary responsibility for developing an individual major proposal. **The well-written proposal must meet the requirements and rigor for a major in the College of Letters & Science (the proposal cannot just be a list of courses that are similar in content area or subject matter).** Also, the student *must* demonstrate that the proposed individual major is not currently available as an option in any of the L&S majors or certificate programs.

Students may consult with the individual major coordinator as part of the process of defining the theme or topic for the individual major. The coordinator may

provide feedback about the construction of the major and how it might relate to other majors in the College as well.

Once a theme or topic has been identified and refined, the student must find a tenured faculty member in the College of Letters & Science who is willing to serve as the individual major adviser. This designated faculty advisor will:

- assist the student in defining/redefining the relevant themes, learning objectives and rationale for the major and assist in developing/refining the student's individual major proposal;
- assist in the review and selection of courses for the major plan included in the proposal;
- help in defining/redefining the relevant themes, learning objectives and rationale for the major;
- advise the student in course selection and, in consultation with the individual major coordinator, track progress toward completion of the major.

As soon as the topic and the advisor (i.e., a tenured faculty member in an L&S academic department) are known, the student should meet with the individual major coordinator within L&S Academic Deans' Services. The purpose of this meeting is to review the details of individual major requirements and to review procedures.

Applying for an Individual Major. Applications for the individual major are accepted up to Friday of the fourth week of classes in the fall and spring semesters. Applications received after that deadline will be reviewed during the following term. Individual major applications are not reviewed during the summer.

The application must include:

1. the individual major application form showing the proposed course list;
2. a cover letter from the student to the Faculty Committee on Individual Majors describing the area of interest, providing a rationale for the proposed major, and discussing its applicability to future goals and plans;
3. a narrative explaining how the courses included in the proposal apply to the proposed individual major program;
4. a letter of recommendation and support for the proposal from the individual major advisor; **and**

5. the student's current transcript. Additional supporting materials may also be included. **Students must submit the original application in an electronic format to the individual major coordinator.**

Each individual major application is reviewed by a committee of three faculty members, each representing a department related to the proposed major. The faculty committee evaluates the proposal for coherence, appropriate breadth and depth, and similarity to existing majors. The committee may approve the proposal as submitted, recommend modifications, reject the proposal altogether, or reject it with an invitation to revise and resubmit in a later semester. The committee's decision is final. A student cannot declare an individual major until after it has been approved by the committee.

Individual Major with Honors. It is possible to earn an Honors degree with an individual major. Honors candidates must complete all requirements for the Honors degree and the requirements for the individual major with Honors which include: a minimum of 20 Honors credits within the individual major with no more than 10 in any one department (not counting the Senior Honors Thesis) and a Senior Honors Thesis of 6 to 8 Honors credits. **For more information about Honors in the Individual Major, refer to:**

[Individual Major with Honors](#)

****The deadline for submitting an Individual Major Application Packet is the end of the fourth (4th) week of the fall or spring term. No applications will be accepted during the summer.**

College of Letters & Science
Individual Major Application Form

Type or Print Legibly
Application Due End of 4th Week of the Fall or Spring Term

Name: _____
Last First Middle

UW-Madison ID No.: _____

Today's Date: _____

Total Credits Completed: _____ **Circle One:** BS BA

Anticipated Graduation Date: _____

Title of Proposed Major:

Adviser's Name & Department (please print or type):

Advisor's Signature & Date

For Office Use Only – Student Should Not Fill Out This Part

Preliminary Approval: _____
Dean's Signature

Date: _____ Approved Denied (Circle One)

Comments:

I.M. Faculty Committee: _____
Chair's Name & Department (Please Print or Type)

Chair's Signature: _____

Date: _____ Approved Denied (Circle One)

Committee Members [Faculty Name(s) and Department(s)]:

1. _____

2. _____

Comments or Modifications:

Name: _____ ID No.: _____

Date: _____

COURSE PLAN FOR INDIVIDUAL MAJOR
PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY

COURSES COMPLETED

A/D ¹	Dept.*	Course #	Course Title	Level	Crs.	T/C

COURSES IN PROGRESS

A/D	Dept.*	Course #	Course Title	Level	Crs.	T/C

¹ Add (A) and Drop (D) should be used to add or delete courses to a student's Individual Major plan.
*Use department abbreviations as listed in the *Timetable*.

For Administrative Use Only

DARS Exception: Add Course (AC) & Requirement Modification (RM)
Requirement Name: INDIMAJ.1
Pseudo Course: INDIMAJ11A

Name: _____ ID No.: _____

Date: _____

COURSES TO BE COMPLETED (continued from page 10)

A/D	Dept.*	Course #	Course Title	Level	Crs.	T/C