

Application for an Individually Designed Major in Interdisciplinary Studies

Name _____ ID _____

Date _____ Year of graduation _____ Box # _____

Change from current major? (*yes or no*) Second major? (*yes or no*)

What are the names of your General Education Concentration(s), Minor(s) and/or other Major(s)?

1) _____

2) _____

This form must be completed after consultation with a faculty advisory board (see details below). Once completed and approved by the advisory board, submit the completed form to the Registrar's Office in Libbey Forum for review by the Curriculum Review Committee.

Students are strongly encouraged to fulfill the requirements of a Bates Education by avoiding significant overlap in fields of study in their major(s), minor(s) and GEC(s). Only one of the eight courses or co-curricular experiences chosen to fulfill the two concentrations may also be counted toward the student's major(s).

I. Definition of an individually designed interdisciplinary major

An individually designed interdisciplinary major is a specialized field of study that crosses one or more boundaries of Bates' established departments and interdisciplinary programs. The major is designed by a student in consultation with an advisory board consisting of at least three faculty members, and must be approved by the Curriculum Review Committee. The courses in the major provide a breadth and depth of coverage typical of Bates' established majors. The program of study encompasses multiple perspectives and approaches to inquiry, and leads to a culminating capstone thesis or comprehensive exam. The coursework consists of at least ten courses from no fewer than two departments/programs, including one senior thesis or comprehensive exam.

II. Faculty Advisory Board

The student selects at least three faculty members to serve on an **advisory board** that collectively oversees the major. The faculty should be drawn from departments or programs in which the student has taken, or will take, two or more courses. Members of the advisory board should have expertise in the proposed area of study. One member of the advisory board is designated the **major advisor**. A **thesis advisor** oversees the senior thesis and may also serve on the advisory board. Guidelines for the advisory board members are provided in section VI.

III. Application Procedure

Students must apply, with the consultation and approval of the student's advisory board, to undertake an individually designed interdisciplinary major. All application materials should be submitted to the Registrar's Office for approval by the Curriculum Review Committee. The application includes:

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- The **names** of the student applicant (entered above) and the members of the advisory board (entered in section VI).

In addition to completing all pages of this form, please also attach the following:

- The **working title** for the proposed major. The transcript will list this major as "Interdisciplinary Studies."
- A **concise description** (2-3 sentences) of the field of study of the proposed major.
- A **written rationale** (1-2 pages) for the design of the major. In this section the student must explain why the proposed field of study cannot be pursued through some combination of currently available majors, minors or General Education Concentrations. In addition, the student should describe the role of each of the selected courses within the major and indicate a likely thesis topic or describe the content of a comprehensive exam.
- A **description of anticipated thesis needs**. Some thesis projects involve purchase of materials, use of specialized equipment and/or require prior approval from the IRB or IACUC. Students are expected to discuss anticipated needs with the advisory board and the mechanisms for meeting them.
- A **description and justification of any deviations from the course selection guideline in section V**.

IV. Deadlines

The deadline for interdisciplinary majors is the same as the deadline for all other majors, March 1 of the sophomore year. In the event that a student does not submit a completed application by this date, a registration hold will be put in place. In the event that a student is changing their major or wishes an interdisciplinary studies major to serve as a second major, applications are due by the end of the junior year.

V. Course Selection

A minimum of ten courses must be taken for this major to meet college requirements. (Advisors may require more.) The CRC, however, asks that more than ten courses be listed to obviate the need to seek approval for changes, if a course becomes unavailable. The categories below are designed to help students propose a major commensurate with many established majors. Include any deviations from these guidelines in the written statement. List any course in only one category.

Total number of courses for this interdisciplinary major (must be at least 10): _____

This number should include courses taken for the thesis (457 and/or 458), listed in section VI below.

Indicate how you intend to complete the [W3] requirement:

In which semester(s) will the thesis work be conducted? (Check all that apply.)

- Fall Winter (Note: HONORS CANDIDATES must submit their Honors Thesis Prospectus to their board for approval.)

Will the thesis be a written document or performance-based? Written Performance-based

Will the thesis satisfy the W3 requirement? Yes No

If the thesis will not satisfy the W3 requirement indicate how that requirement will be satisfied:

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Subject, Course Number (or JSA/JYA)	Title	Semester taken or proposed
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Methods Courses (List up to 2, Complete at least 1) In these courses, students learn the approaches to inquiry (conventions, protocols, and techniques) used by working scholars in fields most closely related to their own field of study. These courses should introduce methods most appropriate to those proposed for the thesis inquiry.

1.		
2.		

300 Level Courses (List up to 4, Complete at least 2)* These courses are expected to encourage the student to gain in-depth understanding of advanced scholarly work in the fields that contribute to the self-designed major.

3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Other Courses (List 9, Complete at least 6) **These courses are expected to provide a breadth of background and perspectives.

7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

* Independent study courses (360, s50) are encouraged but should be listed under "Other Courses".

**List title and a faculty member who has agreed to advise any proposed Independent Study.

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VI. Guidelines for the Advisory Board

The advisory board overseeing an individually designed interdisciplinary major is charged with ensuring that the major achieves a rigor, breadth, and depth consistent with other majors at the College. The advisory board is expected to meet as a group with the student to discuss the proposal before it is submitted for review by the CRC. Advisory board members are much more knowledgeable about the field of study proposed by the student than the CRC. It is therefore the responsibility of the advisory board to judge the academic merit of the proposal and signify its approval by signing the application form. Only proposals that are deemed acceptable by the advisory board should be submitted to the CRC. Any subsequent change(s) must be approved by the major advisor, in consultation with the advisory board. The change(s) must be indicated on the Interdisciplinary Major Change Application and submitted to the Registrar for review by the CRC.

Advisory board members' signatures on the student's application indicate that:

- a. All advisory board members have read the student's written rationale and list of selected courses and agree that the proposed plan of study constitutes course work that is consistent with the rigor, breadth, and depth of other majors at Bates College.
- b. All advisory board members agree that the student cannot study their field of interest through some combination of existing majors, minors, or general education concentrations.
- c. All advisory board members have met as a group to discuss the proposed major and agree that the proposal merits their approval.
- d. All advisory board members are confident that the student has the academic strengths required to complete successfully the proposed major.
- e. All advisory board members agree to substitute for, or approve, a new thesis advisor, if necessary.

Major Advisor _____
Name (Print) Signature Prog/Dept Date

Advisor _____
Name (Print) Signature Prog/Dept Date

Advisor _____
Name (Print) Signature Prog/Dept Date

Thesis Advisor _____
Name (Print) Signature Prog/Dept Date