

INDIVIDUALIZED MAJOR

Students who wish to design and follow a personalized program of study may create an individualized major. Individualized majors offer an alternative to traditional majors, and allow students to pursue educational goals that fall outside of existing departmental curriculum. In addition, individualized majors provide students with the opportunity to work across disciplines and to apply multiple disciplinary perspectives to an area of inquiry. Individualized majors emphasize innovation, creativity and originality and enable students to address new and evolving social, cultural, political, and scientific concerns. Students pursuing an individualized major are encouraged to include opportunities to gain real-world experience and professional development as a part of their major, including an internship or community-engaged learning activity. Individualized majors are appropriate for highly motivated students who are able to operate outside of existing structures.

All students pursuing an individualized major complete a senior project. This capstone project is the culmination of the individualized course of study and is an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and competencies gained in the prior course sequence. Students may participate in a senior seminar class in a related discipline with consent of the instructor, or pursue an independent study to complete this requirement. They should present a final project, presentation, or exhibition in consultation with their advisors. Senior project presentations and exhibits must be viewed and approved by individualized major advisors prior to graduation.

Some recent college majors include creative storytelling and cultural perspectives, deaf culture and child development, and critical public health studies. See examples of individualized majors (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/majors-minors/individualized-major/individualized-majors-examples>).

Requirements

Before applying for an individualized major, students should consult with their advisor about the possibility of pursuing their interests within an existing program.

Select an advisory committee of three faculty members in relevant disciplines, including at least one tenure track or tenured faculty, and work with them to plan a structured, coherent and logical course of study. Your committee chair, who will be your primary major academic advisor, must be a tenure track or tenured faculty member.

The program of study for a major must include a minimum of 30 semester hour credits within the field of concentration, plus a senior seminar or project with the value of between 4 and 8 semester course credits.

Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 at the time of petition. Students pursuing an individualized major may not declare a second major.

Students must submit a petition and essay to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) for approval of individualized majors.

Students should begin the process of declaring an individualized major before the end of their sophomore year.

See examples of individualized majors (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/majors-minors/individualized-major/individualized-majors-examples>) and find forms and information (https://inside.mills.edu/student_services/registrar_and_records/forms.php#imajor).

See the template for the Interdisciplinary Studies major for Bachelor's Degree Completion students (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/majors-minors/individualized-major/individualized-majors-interdisciplinary-studies>).