

HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES
INDIVIDUAL MAJOR
(form revised Fall 2007)

Statement of Purpose

The Individual Major at Hobart and William Smith Colleges is designed for the mature, self-motivated student capable of developing a coherent, synthesized program to meet specific intellectual needs. The Individual Major is as rigorous as the regular department majors. It consists of eleven or twelve courses selected by the student in consultation with a faculty adviser and approved by the Committee on Individual Majors. Before developing an Individual Major, a student should make a realistic determination of whether the program is compatible with the liberal arts tradition of the Colleges and the resources currently available in the Colleges' community. The most successful students in the program have been those who have planned their courses of study early and have executed them with imagination and intellectual vitality.

Individual Majors may be constructed around relatively personalized topics (e.g., Psychological Aspects of Early Education; Processes of Perception; Contemporary Folk Cultures) or around recognized fields of study not offered under a formal organizational structure at the Colleges (e.g. Ethnomusicology; Movement Science). The Individual Majors Committee also provides formal oversight of majors in the Writing and Rhetoric Program.

A student interested in pursuing an Individual Major should pick up the necessary forms at the Office of the Registrar and speak with a faculty adviser and/or the Chair of the Individual Majors Committee about the feasibility of the program being contemplated.

Guidelines Used by the Individual Majors Committee

1. Deadline: The Committee on Individual Majors normally does not consider proposals later than the spring term of the sophomore year. To be considered at one of the Committee's monthly meetings, proposals must be received in the Registrar's Office at least one week in advance.
2. Course requirements: An Individual Major requires 11 or 12 courses, of which at least 6 must be unique to the major. In the proposal, in addition to these 11-12 courses the student must list **three potential alternates**. Only one of the 11-12 courses chosen may be an introductory course. Several of the courses must be at the 300- or 400-level. In some cases, the Committee will require that a student take a particular course. An Individual Major may include a course equivalent, courses from study abroad, Honors, and/or independent study (but note restrictions below).
3. Course restrictions: **The Committee on Individual Majors cannot ever count a first-year seminar or a course with a grade below C-**. Normally the Committee will also **not** count:
 - a. more than one introductory course (although you may have to take additional introductory courses as prerequisites for upper-level courses you wish to include),
 - b. more than two courses at the 450, 455 or 495 level,
 - c. more than three courses taken at another institution,
 - d. introductory-level language courses,
 - e. more than three courses from any program or department offering its own major.
4. Double Majors: A second full major has 11-12 courses. Each major must have at least 6 courses that are unique to it.
5. Advisor: The student should select an advisor whose area of expertise is associated with the course work in the Individual Major.
6. Changes: When the Committee approves a major, it is approving **a specific list of courses**. Any changes must therefore be approved by the Committee. Using courses approved as alternates to replace courses in the major requires approval unless the alternate is in the same department and at the same level as the course being replaced. Be sure to get Committee approval for changes **before** including those changes on your senior-year degree audit worksheet in the spring of your junior year. To request a change use the form available in the Registrar's Office.

Individual Major Declaration

Return to the Registrar's Office, First Floor, Gulick Hall.

Committee Action

() Approved

() Not Approved

Name _____ Box # _____ Date _____

CWID _____ Class _____

Major Advisor _____ Is this your Primary Advisor? _____

Title of Major _____

Please check one: _____ Disciplinary major
_____ Interdisciplinary major

Please check one: _____ First Major
_____ Change of Major (from _____)
_____ Second Major (first major is _____)

Intended minor: _____

Do you intend to earn credit in your Individual Major by taking courses through another university or college?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you intend to earn credit in your Individual Major by completing a course equivalent?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you intend to earn credit for courses in your Individual Major by completing an independent study or Honors?

Yes _____ No _____

If your answer is "yes" to any of these questions, please list and describe the courses in Part III of the Individual Major Record (see p. 5).

Individual Majors Record

Student's Name: _____ Title of Major: _____ Class _____

I. Please list the courses you wish to include in your Individual Major. **Be sure to include the department, course number, and title of the course.**

_____ Department, Course # and Title Please use * if
course is completed

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

Alternate 1. _____

Alternate 2. _____

Alternate 3. _____

Advisor's Signature / Date (if applicable)

II. Please outline your academic program for next year. This is intended to protect you against counting on courses for your major which will not be available when you need them.

Fall

Spring

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

III. Description of the proposed major

Please attach a typed description of your Individual Major (two full page minimum).

Include in this description:

- the central theme of your major,
- why this is a viable major,
- why an individual major will accomplish your goals better than a department or program major,
- which of the Colleges' eight goals your major helps you address and why you believe this,
- how **each** of your courses (including any independent study, Honors or course equivalent) is relevant to your major.

Ask your advisor to fill out the advisor's recommendation form and attach. **The proposal will not be reviewed without it.**

Turn in all forms directly to the Office of the Registrar on the first floor of Gulick Hall.

