

INDIVIDUALLY DESIGNED MAJOR PROPOSAL FORM

In order for an Individually Designed Major proposal to be considered, it must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by March 1 of the student's sophomore year.

Student Name: _____

Year of Graduation: _____ Term of Graduation: Fall Spring

Title of Proposed Major: _____

Proposed Degree (circle) B.A. B.S. B.F.A.

Rationale: The Denison major promotes discipline of thought and depth of understanding as they are articulated within a specific field. The standard offering of Denison majors is carefully selected; each major is rigorously reviewed, meets a myriad of nationally accepted academic standards, and often follows a long tradition of academically sound pedagogy. As the major is a hallmark of a Denison degree, the institution guards its majors with utmost care. The Individually Designed Major (IDM) option allows students to design a major that is not offered in Denison's standard curriculum. However, the Academic Affairs Council applies the very highest standards in approving IDMs. Students must have a compelling and coherent case for an IDM that exceeds all thresholds.

Note: At least 20% of the total number of hours must be in the program declared as a major. A student may take no more than 40 hours in one department for the BA and BS degree, and the proposed IDM should include at least five courses that are other than directed or independent studies. The IDM should also include at least one directed or independent study or senior research project suitable to the area of the proposed program (the culminating project).

As part of your application material, you must respond to the following three questions. Please read the questions carefully and be certain your answers respond fully to each point. You should discuss your responses extensively with your advisor(s). An application that does not completely address all three issues will not be accepted.

1) What is the intellectual justification of this major? What is the coherent thread that defines the major? Include a discussion of the core courses and the additional courses you have selected.

2) Explain how it is not possible to complete this course of study within the framework of an existing major. AAC will closely examine your list of courses to ascertain whether the proposed course sequence can or nearly can be completed with an existing major plus additional coursework with electives. In some rare cases, the proposed course of study may be able to be met within the existing majors and electives; however, the name and/or focus of the degree may be critical in order to continue this course of study in the student's post-Denison career.

3) The culminating project is the key terminal step in the IDM experience. Explain the content of your final project and describe how it forms an integral part of your IDM. AAC will look for a rich discussion of the culminating project indicating that you have reflected on this component and have selected a project that supplements the intellectual theme of the major.

Course Selection

Your Individually Designed Major will be composed primarily of courses offered at Denison. You should divide these courses into two groups: the *core courses* which form the basis of your IDM and *additional courses* which complete and enrich your IDM. *Core courses* must be completed in order to satisfy your IDM; substitutions are not permitted. *Additional courses* typically cover content areas or experiences important to the IDM. Along with your additional courses, you should submit a list of substitute courses that can be taken in lieu of a course on your additional list. Indicate, with an asterisk, those courses you have taken or are currently taking.

Note: if your IDM is accepted, your list of core courses forms a contractual relationship for your major. If you fail to complete any course in the core group, you will not graduate.

When choosing your selection of courses, it is critical that you first determine their availability. Students should consult with their IDM advisor and where possible with the departments offering the selected courses. Most departments will have a good idea of when certain courses will next be offered. You should not just pick courses from the catalog as many of these might be offered on an infrequent basis. Students must also ascertain the prerequisites of all selected courses and be sure their suggested course of study is compatible with satisfying the prerequisites. In summary, your proposed course of study should be logistically sound.

In the table below, indicate the core courses for your IDM. Mark all courses taken or currently being taken with an asterisk.

CORE COURSES

Department	Course Number	Course Title	Semester taken or planned to be taken.

In the table below, indicate the additional courses for your IDM. Mark all courses taken or currently being taken with an asterisk.

ADDITIONAL COURSES

Department	Course Number	Course Title	Semester taken or planned to be taken.

In the table below, indicate any substitutions which would be appropriate for the list of additional courses above. Where appropriate, mention which additional courses would be replaced with each substitute. For example, you may deem it necessary in your IDM to have two courses in plant biology. You may list two courses in your additional list and then list a group of additional plant biology courses in your substitutions list and indicate that any plant biology course in the substitute list can replace either of the plant biology courses in the additional listing.

**SUBSTITUTIONS for
ADDITIONAL COURSES**

Department	Course Number	Course Title	Semester taken or planned to be taken.

Course Schedule

Please place the core and additional courses in the scheduling grid below. Also include the other courses necessary for your Denison degree such as general education courses and electives. Be sure to include your IDM culminating project. The purpose of this grid is to allow AAC to understand that you have a viable working plan that will allow you to graduate on time and that you have consulted with individual departments about the likely scheduled offering of your core and additional courses. Sometimes courses and the terms you plan to take them can be interchanged.

	FALL	SPRING
First Year		
Sophomore		
Junior		
Senior		

Check List

Student Responsibilities:

- 1) A formal proposal with answers to the three questions.
- 2) Completed course selection and course schedule forms.
- 3) Signatures of advisors (a minimum of two, one of which must be your major advisor; three signatures are recommended).
- 4) A letter of endorsement from your major advisor.
- 5) An unofficial transcript.

Faculty Advisor Responsibilities:

- 1) Submit a letter of endorsement along with the student's application. This letter is a critical component of the evaluation process AAC uses to assess the IDM. Your letter should address the following questions: 1) Does the proposal contain a coherent rationale, a demonstration of the linkage between the proposed major and the courses chosen to fulfill it, and a justification for designing a new major rather than doing a standard major? 2) Does the proposal contain an appropriate balance between introductory and advanced courses? 3) Is the committee of advisors chosen to supervise this major able to provide adequate supervision in this particular area of inquiry?
- 2) Assist in the selection of appropriate courses for the IDM and verify that the student has researched their planned availability.
- 3) Discuss the culminating project with the student. At this early point in the student's career, some solid ideas for a possible project should be sketched out. AAC will look for evidence that the culminating project serves as a guiding beacon for the major and the selection of coursework. While the student will have the flexibility to change and solidify the culminating project as the IDM progresses, it is counterproductive not to have a firm plan in place that provides substance and trajectory to the IDM.

Signature of Major Advisor: _____ date: _____

Signature of Co-Advisor: _____ date: _____

Signature of Co-Advisor: _____ date: _____