Student-Designed, Interdisciplinary Majors

The self-designed, interdisciplinary major is for students whose exceptional intellectual interests cross disciplinary boundaries. These majors should reflect a plan of study that cannot be replicated through one of the College's existing majors. Like other majors, a student-designed one must be coherent, provide curricular depth, and include a writing-intensive course and capstone project. It must represent a clearly defined field of study, more than a narrow research topic; and it cannot be pre-professional in orientation. Because students designing their own major are not attached to a particular department or program, they must be self-motivated academically and capable of working independently.

The deadline for proposing a student-designed major is October 1 for approval in the fall semester and March 1 for approval in the spring semester. Proposals should be submitted no later than in the first semester of the junior year.

Additional requirements for student-designed majors are as follows:

• **GPA Requirement.** Students proposing a self-designed major must have a minimum GPA of 3.0.

• **Number of Courses.** A student-designed major should consist of 12-18 courses.

• **Interdisciplinarity.** A student-designed major must include courses from at least two different disciplines; no more than half of all courses for the major should be from a single discipline.

• **Advanced Courses.** At least half of the courses in a student-designed major must be at the advanced level (usually 300-level or above).

• **Structure of the Major.** Each student-designed major must include a set of foundational courses; advanced courses that give coherence and depth to the major; and a capstone project, which synthesizes and integrates learning in the major. Generally, the capstone project will be writing-intensive; if this is not feasible (e.g., some projects in the arts), a writing-intensive course must be part of the major.

• **“Double Majors.”** For students with another major/minor, a maximum of three courses may be counted towards both the self-designed major and the other major/minor. In general, additional majors/minors should not be in fields closely allied to the proposed self-designed major.

• **Transfer Credits.** A maximum of three courses not taken at Trinity may be counted towards a self-designed major.

• **Advisers.** Two faculty members from different disciplines must support the proposal, serve as academic advisers to the student, and agree to oversee the capstone project.

• **Capstone Integrating Project.** In the semester in which the capstone project is to be completed, students should submit a two-page report to the Curriculum Committee succinctly describing the project's principal methods and objectives, including how the project will integrate learning in the major; the report, which should be signed by both faculty advisers, is due at the end of September for fall-semester projects or the end of February for projects in the spring.

• **Honors.** The two faculty sponsors may decide jointly to award honors to a student in a self-designed major, based on academic performance and the quality of the synthesizing project. All candidates for honors must have at least an A- (3.67) grade point average in all courses taken towards the self-designed major.

Students interested in proposing a self-designed, interdisciplinary major should consult as soon as possible with their current academic adviser and both prospective sponsors of the self-designed major.

A form, available from the Registrar's Office, must be completed, signed by both advisers, scanned and submitted electronically to the Curriculum Committee, via the Committee's Secretary (Dean Sonia Cardenas).