

Student-Designed, Interdisciplinary Majors and Minors

The self-designed, interdisciplinary major/minor is for students whose exceptional intellectual interests cross disciplinary boundaries. These majors/minors should reflect a plan of study that cannot be replicated through one of the College's existing majors/minors. 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/minor 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. In the case of student-designed **minors**, moreover, the final deadline is *March 1* of the junior year, unless a student is spending the semester abroad.

Additional requirements for student-designed majors/minors are as follows:

- **GPA Requirement.** Students proposing a self-designed major/minor must have a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- **Number of Courses.** A student-designed major should consist of 12-18 courses. A student-designed minor should consist of 5-6 courses.
- **Interdisciplinarity.** A student-designed major/minor 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 6 courses in a student-designed major and at least 3 courses in a student-designed minor 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/Minors."** For students who will have two majors, a maximum of three courses may be counted toward both fields of study; for students proposing to add a minor, a maximum of two courses may be counted toward both fields of study. In general, if a student has more than one major and/or minor, these should not be in closely allied fields.
- **Transfer Credits.** A maximum of three courses not taken at Trinity may be counted towards a self-designed major; for a student-designed minor, a maximum of two courses taken elsewhere can be transferred.
- **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.
- **Honors (majors only).** 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/minor should consult as soon as possible with their current academic adviser and both prospective sponsors of the self-designed major/minor. Department chairs and/or program directors of the prospective sponsors will be contacted via e-mail to confirm their support of the proposed student-designed major/minor.

The Curriculum Committee reserves the right to limit resubmissions of denied proposals.

The form for the [major](#) or [minor](#) must be completed and submitted electronically to the Curriculum Committee.