

# INDIVIDUALLY DESIGNED MAJOR

The Individually Designed Major (IDMJ) allows qualified students in the College of Arts and Sciences, under appropriate direction of at least two faculty advisors, to design and pursue an interdisciplinary major presently not available in the College.

The Individually Designed Major is, as its name implies, a major designed by the student. It must be a true major, with a progression of courses, including an appropriate number of advanced courses. It cannot be a simple collection of introductory courses in several disciplines. The major may be an extension of a presently existing interdisciplinary minor, or it may be a wholly new subject, e.g. "Social Justice in Latin American Culture" or "Arts Management."

Courses already taken may be included in the major, but the IDMJ should be, as a whole, a planned endeavor, not simply the pulling together of courses already taken. For this reason, applications must be completed and approved by the IDMJ Committee no later than the end of the student's second year.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing an Individually Designed Major will be able to:

- 1) Show creativity and self-motivation in the development and completion of an original interdisciplinary curriculum.
- 2) Work collaboratively with faculty across disciplines and schools.
- 3) Analyze and critically evaluate ideas at the intersection of two or more academic disciplines.
- 4) Demonstrate literacy in a unique interdisciplinary subject area through effective writing and reflection.
- 5) Design a unique curriculum that prepares the student for unusual or innovative career pathways that are of personal interest.

## Eligibility

To be eligible, the student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.00 at the time of application, and apply before the end of their second year at Fairfield University. Applications and information may be obtained from the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. If you are interested in pursuing this major, please consult with two or more faculty who would serve as appropriate advisors, and also schedule an informational meeting with the IDMJ program director (Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences) at your earliest convenience.

## Course Requirements

1. The major requires a minimum of ten courses.
2. The major must be truly interdisciplinary. While there may be a primary department, at least four courses must be taken outside that department.
3. The major requires a suitable number of advanced courses.
4. The major also requires a senior project (seminar, capstone course, supervised lab, or whatever is appropriate for the relevant disciplines). The purpose of this project is to allow students to pull together the multiple threads of the interdisciplinary major.
5. Finally, the major requires that the student maintain a semester-by-semester portfolio for the purpose of a reflective review and self-assessment of the progress and changes in direction, if any, of the major. The student will use these materials as part of a progress review with advisors at least once a semester. The student will

submit the portfolio in the final semester of their senior year, and must also submit a final assessment of the major to the Individually Designed Major Committee as a requirement for graduation.

The IDMJ application deadline is November 1<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Faculty

### Director

Harriott, *Associate Dean* (Biology)

### Individually Designed Major Committee

Haber (Psychology)

Schmidt (Religious Studies)