

Individualized Major - Frequently Asked Questions

1) **When can a student start the Individualized Major program?**

Prospective students interested in the Individualized Major program should apply to Eastern using one of the “Exploratory” major options on the online admissions application. They can get further information on the Individualized Major at the Fall semester Open Houses or by phoning/emailing the contact person listed on the Individualized Major website. Once the student is on campus for Summer Orientation, and at the start of the Fall semester, the student can get further advice on the Individualized Major option from the Admissions Office and Advising Center staff, Deans and faculty. If the student does not wish to pursue an existing major program, he/she will be directed to speak with the coordinator of the Individualized Major program for further exploration of whether the Individualized Major program fits the student’s career goals, and for advice on which department chairs to contact to further develop his/her Individualized Major program.

2) **Who determines what courses the student has to take to graduate with an Individualized Major?**

To put together a draft of a Plan of Study for an Individualized Major that fits the student’s current career aspiration, the student consults the department chairs and a faculty member in each of two departments related to the potential career choice. A faculty advisor in each of the departments whose coursework is being combined into the Plan of Study works with the student to design appropriate curriculum to meet the Individualized Major requirements, and ultimately post-graduate requirements for the student’s career interest. The department providing at least 18 credits towards the proposed Individualized Major becomes the primary discipline. The Dean of the School in which the primary discipline resides is the last one to oversee the Plan of Study coursework and gives final approval.

3) **What does Eastern mean by a “rationale” for the Individualized Major in the Plan of Study form?**

The Individualized Major is a self-designed major that combines courses in two or more disciplines to meet the requirements for a job or entrance to graduate programs in a career that interests the student. This combination of courses may not be available as a permanent major at Eastern and as such requires that he/she develop an Individualized Major. The “rationale” for the curriculum designed in collaboration with two faculty advisors is to meet the post-baccalaureate requirements for the workforce or graduate school admission in the career area chosen by the student.

4) **Can I do an Individualized Major as a transfer student?**

Yes. Transfer students, regarding of the # of credits they transfer to Eastern, can pursue their choice of Individualized Major but they must file the Plan of Study by the end of their second semester after transferring to Eastern.

5) **Does the Individualized Major allow for transfer courses to be included in the Plan of Study?**

Yes. The Plan of Study can include courses at the 200-level or higher level taken at any other institution which can transfer to Eastern. Those courses can be part of the Individualized Major if they meet the requirements for the career chosen by the student in designing his/her Individualized Major. Faculty advisors in primary and secondary disciplines review transfer courses to see how they meet the chosen career path. This allows for easier transfer articulation into a major and speeds progress to graduation in four years.

6) **Can students pursue an Individualized Major as a second major?**

Yes. If a student is already doing any major in the university and is still interested in pursuing a self-designed interdisciplinary major that is targeted to a specific career choice, the student can follow the process for designing the Individualized Major Plan of Study and pursue it as a second major. Some students do this who are in Education, especially those interested in elementary education. Others do this to expand career options related to their first major choice at Eastern.

7) Can a student interested in pursuing a double major in Education do an Individualized Major?

Yes, but the courses chosen for the primary discipline in the Plan of Study MUST be the ones required by the State of Connecticut to meet the certification of teachers in that particular subject. Students must work with their Education faculty advisors to choose appropriate courses in the primary discipline that are required by State content major regulations, in addition to taking all the required Education courses that are needed for State Teacher Certification.

8) Does the Individualized Major require a minor?

No. The Individualized Major requires 36 credits in two or more disciplines that are linked to a specific career with interdisciplinary course requirements

9) What is the difference between an Individualized Major B.A. or B.S. and the Bachelor of General Studies major program?

The Individualized Major B.A/B.S. program requires a different # of credits (36 vs. 30), combining two or more disciplines and has no minor concentration, unlike the BGS program.

10) Are Individualized Majors required to meet Liberal Arts Curriculum Tier I, Tier II and Tier III requirements?

All majors, including Individualized Major students, have to meet all Liberal Arts Curriculum requirements prior to graduation. An Individualized Major can count up to two courses to meet the Liberal Arts Curriculum and the Plan of Study requirements (for example, the Tier III LAC requirement may also be the Senior Seminar in the primary or secondary discipline of the Plan of Study).

11) Do Individualized Majors have to meet University Writing Requirements?

Yes. All Individualized Majors must meet the same writing requirements as other majors, which include an introductory composition course (ENG 100 or ENG 100P), a mid-level writing competency course (a course designed for the traditional major in one of the two or more disciplines combined in the Individualized Major) and a senior writing competency course (which can be taken in either primary or secondary disciplines, and often also meets the Tier III requirement of the Liberal Arts Curriculum).

12) In which discipline does an Individualized Major have to meet his/her writing competency requirements?

Writing competency requirements can be met in any of the disciplines combined in the Plan of Study to be filed by the student. Consultation with faculty advisors and department chairs from each of two departments determines how these requirements are met in the Plan of Study.

13) Can I avoid taking Research Methods or Statistics courses associated with traditional majors in a variety of disciplines if I decide to do an Individualized Major?

No. The Plan of Study for any Individualized Major will include courses that allow the student to become proficient in the methods of study and data analysis associated with the primary and secondary disciplines combined in the self-designed major.

14) Who serves as the main faculty advisor for a student pursuing the Individualized Major program?

The faculty member signing the Plan of Study as the “primary advisor” is the main faculty advisor overseeing the student’s progress to graduation, and facilitating the student’s registration process each semester.

15) How does the registration process work – same as for other students?

Yes. The primary faculty advisor for the Individualized Major student (once the Change of Major form has been filled out indicating this) receives the registration code for that student and is the main person to sign off on any paperwork requiring “faculty advisor” signature.

16) How is the graduation audit done for Individualized Majors?

The Plan of Study is filed with the Registrar's Office and the courses listed in that plan are used by the Registrar's Office as a check list to meet the major's course requirements. The student has to fulfill other University graduation requirements as for other majors, and that list of appropriate courses to meet those requirements is already built into the Banner software graduation audit program. The transcript will show the title chosen for the Individualized Major when the degree is granted. A B.A. or B.S. degree will be granted depending on the primary discipline designated in the approved Plan of Study.

17) Can a student choose the degree title in his/her transcript? Where does the student line up at Commencement?

Yes. The title indicated in the approved Plan of Study for the Individualized Major is the one that goes on the transcript at time of graduation. The student lines up under the department name in which he/she is taking for Commencement.