INDIVIDUAL MAJOR, B.S.

The individual major is a program for undergraduate students who want to fulfill a specific academic goal that is not easily attained through a major in one or more departments. The major must meet a course of study that involves at least two departments and be targeted at a specific problem or academic interest identified by the student. A student proposal must be submitted and approved by the SoHE Undergraduate Program Council. Students are encouraged to begin working with faculty and advisors in the Student Academic Affairs & Career Development Office by the end of the sophomore year. Thirty credits must be earned in residence after the term in which the proposal is approved. The major will be guided by a committee of at least three faculty members (with no more than two faculty members from one department).

Individual majors are intended to create a unique program of study that otherwise does not exist on this campus individually or in a combination of majors and certificate programs. Students should carefully explore all University of Wisconsin-Madison majors, certificates, and dual-degree opportunities before pursuing an individual major. A proposal that essentially parallels an existing SoHE or campus major will not be approved.

Graduates of the Individual Major earn a bachelor of science in human ecology. The major will match the approved proposal title, which must have a human ecology focus.

HOW TO GET IN

ELIGIBILITY

Students must be in good academic standing and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 to be considered for an Individual Major. Any interested student should have completed at least two semesters (a minimum of 24 credits) in residence before submitting an application. Ideally, proposals will be made by the end of sophomore year or the beginning of junior year.

PROPOSING AN INDIVIDUAL MAJOR

After discussing their proposed plan with a SoHE advisor and ensuring they meet the application qualifications, students will begin building a faculty committee and developing a proposal. An Individual Major must be comprised of at least two different SoHE academic departments. If a third department is selected, it may be from in or outside of SoHE. Students should develop a one-page abstract to share with faculty as they work to build their committee. Once the committee is formed, the student will select one committee member as the major advisor. The major advisor must be from the SoHE department in which the majority of courses for the program will be taken. The student will work with the faculty committee to develop the proposal and select all required courses for the Individual Major, the majority of which must be completed in SoHE. The student will then submit a formal proposal to the SoHE Student Academic Affairs & Career Development Office to be forwarded for action to the SoHE Undergraduate Program Council, which meets throughout the academic year.

Please contact the SoHE Student Academic Affairs & Career Development Office for the complete Individual Major proposal instructions.

REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatetestudtext) section of the Guide.

REQUIREMENTS Detail
General Education
  • Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits
  • Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
  • Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits
  • Communication Part A & Part B *
  • Ethnic Studies *
  • Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

INDIVIDUAL MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

The student will work with the faculty committee to develop the individual major proposal and select all required courses, the majority of which must be completed in SoHE. If the Individual Major is approved by the SoHE Undergraduate Program Council, the student will complete all required courses as outlined with the faculty committee.

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Detail
Total Degree To receive a bachelor’s degree from UW-Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.

Residency Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW-Madison. “In residence” means on the UW-Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. “In residence” credit also includes UW-Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW-Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.
Quality of Work | Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

ADVISING AND CAREERS

Students interested in pursuing an individual major should first meet with a SoHE academic advisor to ensure program eligibility and to discuss their area of interest and rationale. Appointments should be made by contacting the SoHE Student Academic Affairs & Career Development Office at 608-262-2608.