

## INDIVIDUAL MAJOR, B.S.

The individual major is a flexible program for undergraduates in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences who want to attain a specific academic goal that is not easily attained through a major in one or more departments. The major must involve courses from several departments, must be at least as rigorous as a regular departmental major, and must be targeted at a special intellectual problem or academic need identified by the student. The individual major must be approved by a faculty committee and the CALS Curriculum Committee. Approval is not guaranteed, so students should be prepared to pursue alternative options and are encouraged to discuss these with their advisor.

The individual major is available in the bachelor of science degree program. The transcript will indicate "Individual Major" until the degree is awarded. It will then show the exact name of the approved "individual major."

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with an assistant dean in the CALS Office of Academic Affairs early in their undergraduate career to discuss the process, planning, and feasibility of completion.

### HOW TO GET IN

The individual major must be approved by a faculty committee and the CALS Curriculum Committee. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with an assistant dean in the Office of Academic Affairs early in their undergraduate career to discuss the process, planning, and feasibility of completion. The process to request to pursue an individual major is outlined below.

The student selects a three-person faculty committee from departments offering courses in the proposed major. The major advisor is from a CALS department that offers many of the courses in the proposed individual major. No more than two members of the committee can be from a single department. The student must submit a proposed plan of study to the committee for review and approval. The faculty committee must consult with the department with the most courses in the proposed major. The plan should include: the title of the proposed major; the rationale for the major; learning outcomes for the major and a brief assessment plan; the list of courses and the reasons for including each course in the major; and a semester plan for degree completion. The student is required to earn at least 30 credits after the term in which the proposal is approved. Thus, early planning is essential.

If the faculty committee approves the plan, the student should work with CALS Academic Affairs to submit the plan of study to the CALS Curriculum Committee along with a letter of support from the major advisor and a summary of the department discussion of the plan. The student and faculty advisor will meet with the Curriculum Committee to present the proposal. The Curriculum Committee may approve the proposal, reject the proposal, or ask for further clarification and resubmission. The decision of the Curriculum Committee is final. Any changes in the major must be approved by the faculty advisor and reported to the Office of Academic Affairs, and any changes that significantly affect the nature or rigor of the program must be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

## 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/#requirementsforundergraduestudytext>) section of the *Guide*.

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| General Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits</li> <li>• Communication Part A &amp; Part B *</li> <li>• Ethnic Studies *</li> <li>• Quantitative Reasoning Part A &amp; Part B *</li> </ul> |
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\* 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.

### COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the University General Education Requirements, all undergraduate students in CALS must satisfy a set of college and major requirements. Courses may not double count within university requirements (General Education and Breadth) or within college requirements (First-Year Seminar, International Studies, Science, and Capstone), but courses counted toward university requirements may also be used to satisfy a college and/or a major requirement; similarly, courses counted toward college requirements may also be used to satisfy a university and/or a major requirement.

### COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CALS B.S. DEGREE PROGRAMS

Code	Title	Credits
	Quality of Work: Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.000 to remain in good standing and be eligible for graduation.	
	Residency: Students must complete 30 degree credits in residence at UW–Madison after earning 86 credits toward their undergraduate degree.	
	First Year Seminar ( <a href="http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementsstext">http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementsstext</a> )	1
	International Studies ( <a href="http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementsstext">http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirementsstext</a> )	3

Physical Science Fundamentals	4-5
CHEM 103 or CHEM 108 or CHEM 109	General Chemistry I Chemistry in Our World Advanced General Chemistry
Biological Science	5
Additional Science (Biological, Physical, or Natural)	3
Science Breadth (Biological, Physical, Natural, or Social)	3
CALs Capstone Learning Experience: included in the requirements for each CALs major (see "Major Requirements") ( <a href="http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirements-text">http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/#requirements-text</a> )	

## INDIVIDUAL MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL MAJOR

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with an assistant dean in the Office of Academic Affairs early in their undergraduate career to discuss the process, planning, and feasibility of completion. Development of the individual major is the responsibility of the student. The student should identify a faculty major advisor from the CALs department that offers many of the courses in the proposed individual major. In addition, the student should select two additional faculty from departments offering the courses in the proposed major to serve on the faculty committee. The student should consult with the faculty members and an assistant dean in Academic Affairs as a plan of study is developed. The plan of study must include the following:

- title of proposed major
- rationale for the major (what specific goal does the major achieve that cannot be achieved through one or more existing majors? what is the targeted intellectual problem? why is the major necessary for achieving the student's academic and career goals?)
- 3-5 learning outcomes for the major with a brief explanation of how learning will be assessed
- list of courses, including the reason for including each course in the major (how does each course contribute to the major learning outcomes?)
- semester plan for degree completion and estimated graduation term (if graduation exceeds four total years, include a justification for the extended time-to-degree; note that the student must earn at least 30 credits after the term in which the proposal is approved)

### APPROVAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL MAJOR

Once the plan of study is developed, the student submits the plan to the faculty committee for review and approval. The faculty committee must consult with the department with the most courses in the proposed major. The faculty committee may require revisions prior to approval. Once approved, the student should work with CALs Academic Affairs to submit the plan of study to the CALs Curriculum Committee along with a letter of support from the major advisor and a summary of the department discussion of the plan. The student and faculty advisor will meet with the curriculum committee to present the proposal. The curriculum committee may approve the proposal, reject the proposal, or ask for further clarification and resubmission. The decision of the curriculum committee is final. Any changes in the major must be approved by the faculty advisor and reported to the Office of Academic Affairs, and any changes that significantly affect the nature or rigor of the program must be reviewed and approved by the curriculum committee.

## UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

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.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will develop learning outcomes as part of the individual major proposal process in consultation with their faculty mentors and an assistant dean. Review the Provost's website (<https://assessment.provost.wisc.edu/student-learning-outcomes/writing-student-learning-outcomes/>) for guidelines on developing learning outcomes.

## FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Students will develop a semester-by-semester plan as part of the proposal process for the individual major, in consultation with their faculty mentors and an assistant dean. Review the Four-Year Plans available for similar or related majors in the *Guide* to begin planning. Students should submit the proposal early in their academic career but no later than achieving senior standing (86 credits) to ensure timely progress to degree completion.

## ADVISING AND CAREERS

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with an assistant dean in the Office of Academic Affairs early in their undergraduate career to discuss the process, planning, and feasibility of completion.

Students are required to identify a faculty advisor as part of the process for requesting approval to pursue an individual major. The faculty advisor serves as the student's academic advisor along with support from the other members of the student's faculty committee. Additionally, students must work closely with an assistant dean in Academic Affairs throughout development and completion of the major.

## WISCONSIN EXPERIENCE

Opportunities to apply learning in the classroom to real-world settings is at the core of a CALS education. We offer a variety of CALS Signature Experiences for students in all majors to live the Wisconsin idea.

These opportunities fall into five major categories:

We want our students to make a strong start and every CALS first-year student can achieve that through a First-Year seminar to explore different areas of study and build a peer group. There are several seminars to choose from, including QuickStart (<https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/prospective-students/quickstart/>), which allows students to begin their college career the summer before they arrive on campus.

CALS students learn through hands-on, real world experiences. A majority of CALS students earn credit for internships and research experiences in labs.

Through peer advising and mentoring, student organizations and residential learning communities, students build their community and networks.

Students gain a global perspective by taking a course with an international focus and many students study abroad. In addition to general UW–Madison programs, CALS offers more than 34 study abroad programs led by our faculty.

Finally, many CALS students take advantage of the ability to customize their path of study by participating in an honors program, pursuing certificates or second majors, and choosing elective courses that match their interests and meet their goals.