

McDonough School of Business Individualized Major Overview

Overview

The academic goals and career objectives of most McDonough School of Business students can typically be met by pursuing one of the seven majors offered in the school, in which case pursuing an Individualized Major is not recommended. The purpose of the Individualized Major is to assist students who have a clear career or professional objective that falls outside of the seven standard majors to pursue a unique academic plan within the McDonough School of Business.

Past McDonough students have pursued Individualized Majors in the following areas: Entrepreneurial Biotechnology, Film Production & Marketing, and Financial Mathematics.

Application Criteria

- McDonough students must have a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA in order to be eligible to submit an Individualized Major proposal.
- Proposals must be submitted *before* the end of a student's first semester of junior year. Students should aim to submit no later than September to allow for adequate time for review by the Faculty Advisory Council.
- Students must declare a primary major (one of the seven majors offered within McDonough) and if approved, the individualized major would become their secondary major.
- Please note that individualized majors that can be achieved through a combination of already existing majors and/or minors in or outside of McDonough will *not* be approved (i.e. Students may not pursue a coding or computer science-focused individualized major if they are eligible to pursue the COSC minor). In addition, individualized majors must be outside of the field of study of the student's primary major (i.e. a student may not pursue a 'Data Science' individualized major if their primary major is OPIM).
- An Individualized Major proposal must include at least 3 courses (9 credits) taught in McDonough and will not be approved if it includes more than three courses found in one of the existing McDonough majors.
- Students must find a full-time McDonough faculty member who is willing to serve as a faculty advisor for their Individualized Major.
- All aspects of the Individualized Major application must be completed prior to submission; incomplete applications will not be sent to the Faculty Advisory Council.
- **Please note that Individualized Major proposals are approved on a case-by-case basis. Prior approval for a similar proposal in the past does not guarantee approval of a subsequent proposal.**

Individualized Major Components

As part of the application process, students must develop a study proposal for their Individualized Major that includes at least 6 three-credit courses (minimum of 18 credits total), at least 3 courses (9 credits) of which must be taught in McDonough. An Individualized Major proposal will not be approved if it includes more than three courses found in one of the existing McDonough majors. Students are encouraged to build flexibility into their plan of study to allow for both required foundational courses and elective course options (i.e. include language similar to '3 of the following 6 elective courses'). Please note that there can be no overlap in coursework between the primary major and the individualized major, only unique coursework.

Individualized Major Application Process

Step 1: Students should first explore all seven available majors in McDonough to be certain that their academic and career objectives cannot be achieved through one of those existing options.

Step 2: If the student believes the Individualized Major option is a route they want to pursue, they should set up an appointment with their academic dean in McDonough in order to be sure they understand the application criteria and process.

Step 3: Students should research the field of study that they intend to propose. This should include interviewing a professional in that field, obtaining curricular program information from other universities that offer a similar program, and speaking with McDonough faculty members about potential opportunities in that field. As students are conducting their research, they will need to find a McDonough faculty sponsor, and then should meet with their faculty sponsor to discuss their research and outline their proposal.

Step 4: After the initial meeting with their faculty sponsor, students must create their Individualized Major proposal using the attached application and guidelines. Upon completion, their faculty sponsor must review and sign the proposal in order to be submitted for review by the Faculty Advisory Council.

Step 5: The student should submit their completed application and supporting documentation to the Director of Advising in the Undergraduate Programs Office, who will then review the application in order to ensure that it is complete.

Step 6: Completed applications will then be sent to the Faculty Advisory Council; the Council will use the student's specific academic and career goals and proposed coursework to determine the appropriateness of an Individualized Major in the chosen area. The Council may approve the proposal in its entirety, request additional information, suggest modifications to the proposal, stipulate specific revisions, or reject the proposal altogether.

Step 7: The Director of Advising in the Undergraduate Programs Office will communicate the decision of the Faculty Advisory Council to the student. The review process typically takes several weeks, so students should plan to submit no later than the suggested September deadline in junior year.

Important Notes

- Proposals must be submitted *before* the end of a student's first semester of junior year. Students should aim to submit no later than September to allow for adequate time for review by the Faculty Advisory Council.
- The Individualized Major application process typically takes 10-12 weeks from initial research to receiving the Faculty Advisory Council's final decision; therefore, it is recommended that students begin the process no later than spring semester of their sophomore year.
- Not all Individualized Major proposals are approved. Therefore, if a student chooses to take courses in the proposed field of study before receiving approval, the student runs the risk of taking a course that will not fulfill a degree requirement.
- When considering courses for the proposal, students should refer to the Georgetown Schedule of Classes and the University Bulletin; students should only propose courses that will be offered in relevant semesters and for which they will have completed necessary prerequisites.
- In proposing an Individualized Major, students understand that the Georgetown Schedule of Classes is subject to change from semester to semester. Courses may or may not be offered and/or may be canceled for any number of reasons, and students are encouraged to be mindful of potential changes that may occur.
- If the Individualized Major proposal is approved:
 - Students must successfully complete all courses in the proposal in order to fulfill their degree requirements.
 - Students may change up to 2 courses in the Individualized Major with the approval of their faculty advisor and Director of Advising in the Undergraduate Program Office. If students wish to change more than 2 courses, they must submit a new proposal for review to the Faculty Advisory Council.

Questions?

Students who have questions about the Individualized Major option should schedule an advising appointment with their academic dean or email msbundergrad@georgetown.edu.

**McDonough School of Business
Individualized Major Application**

Student Name: _____ **NetID:** _____ **GUID:** _____

Phone Number: _____ **Class Year:** _____ **Cumulative GPA:** _____

Intended Primary Major: _____ **Intended Minor (if applicable):** _____

Students applying for an Individualized Major must submit the following in order for their applications to be considered:

- 1. Completed Application Cover Page** (including signatures from the student and faculty advisor below)
 - 2. A Proposal document that includes all of the following components:**
 - a. A statement outlining your rationale for wanting to pursue the Individualized Major, the academic value of the proposed major and why existing majors or combinations of majors/minors do not meet its objectives.
 - b. Background research of the field, including similar programs at other colleges/universities.
 - c. Specific plans for how this Individualized Major will be applied to your plans after graduation.
 - d. Proposed coursework (include course numbers, titles, and the course description).
 - e. Rationale for why you are including each course in your proposal.
 - 3. Your Resume**
 - 4. Timeline & Plan of Study** (Outline the sequence/timing of when you plan to take each course, keeping in mind prerequisites and courses taught in specific semesters)
 - 5. Four Year Academic Plan** (Attach a completed graduation plan, incorporating completion of all degree requirements - primary major, Individualized Major, minor [if applicable], Liberal Arts Core, Business Core)
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Proposed Individualized Major: _____

Faculty Sponsor Name _____

Faculty Sponsor Signature _____

Date: _____

Student Signature _____

Date: _____



Approval of Faculty Advisory Council _____

Date: _____