Individualized Major Program
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An Interdisciplinary Approach To Education

Isn’t the world an interesting place? Many students explore their unique and varied interests at St. Bonaventure through the Individualized Major Program. Students who have a clearly defined sense of their educational goals — but who can’t find a specific major to fulfill them — can experience different ideas and course combinations to fully develop their academic journey.

This program offers self-motivated students with varied interests the opportunity to design an individual program of study instead of pursuing a regular departmental major. The program caters to students who want to create their own approach to their educational experience.

The bachelor’s degree you receive at the end of your studies will come from the school where the majority of your classes are taken. An interested student will have, at the time of application for the Individualized Major Program, completed a minimum of 15 credits at St. Bonaventure University, be in good academic standing and have at least 45 credit hours remaining to complete the proposed degree requirements.

Throughout your journey, you will have a team of professors that surround you with support and guidance. This team is formed early on and is based on your expressed interests, creating a personalized educational experience and a unique degree. You will be prepared regardless of your major, developing skills for the needs of the world.

Each student who successfully applies for this program will be matched with expertise found within the University. The student will pull from various disciplines that create the degree of preference — an interdisciplinary approach to education.

To earn the Individualized Major degree, the student will satisfactorily complete all the approved degree and course requirements and achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 and a minimum major GPA of 2.0.

Ready to find your niche? Start your journey to becoming extraordinary at St. Bonaventure University.

Examples of Individualized Majors

Some hypothetical examples include: Religion and Law — combining courses from history, theology, and philosophy, OR Scientific Progress and Culture — combining courses from philosophy, sociology, psychology, and science. Others are Social Entrepreneurship and Altruism — combining business, psychology, and journalism, OR Economics — combining courses in undergraduate economics, MBA economics and independent study.
The Student Perspective

Simone Bernstein, ’14

I wanted to pursue a major that helped me put my work outside the classroom on a broader academic basis; I also wanted to understand why and under what conditions people give back to their communities, or can be motivated to do so. Such a major was not listed specifically in the St. Bonaventure course catalog. I took advantage of the possibility to create my own individualized major to pursue my interests.

I am in the Franciscan Health Care Program and many students in this program choose to select a biology or chemistry major in preparation for medical school. My motivation to attend medical school is a blended mixture of my desire for academic challenges, community service and passion. Volunteering in small urban hospitals solidified my passion for the sciences and grounded me in the fundamental concepts for the principles and interactions of life. I like learning with students, challenging myself and giving back to others.

With multiple interests, this road led me to an undeclared major. After analyzing the core curriculum of each major, I did not find one that fit my prime interests, altruism and social entrepreneurship. Altruism is the selfless concern for the welfare of others. With the Franciscan values and tradition of service, St. Bonaventure provides numerous ways for students to get involved in volunteer work on campus and throughout the community. St. Bonaventure students frequently help local organizations, but why do students and youth volunteer in the community? Through this major, I explore reasons why individuals engage in volunteering and find ways to promote service to those students who are not currently involved in the community.

My major is a blend of classes focusing on an interdisciplinary major in altruism and social entrepreneurship. I’m looking forward to enjoying the eclectic mix of classes called a bachelor’s degree in a major beyond the listings in the core catalog.

The Faculty Perspective

Bryan McCannon, Ph.D.

I had a bright, motivated student, Shelby Simmons, who was in my introductory level economics course and who happened to be a history major. Her long-term career plan was to pursue a joint law and master’s in economics program, but she needed an economics education to be eligible. By combining undergraduate economics courses, MBA-level economics courses and an independent study capstone course, we were able to develop a program to fit her needs.

This is an advanced and personalized program. She will be reading academic journal articles and applying her knowledge to real problems in the law. Additionally, her education will be significantly more quantitative than other liberal arts majors going to law school.

As a small university being able to create individualized majors, we can provide flexibility for our students. At St. Bonaventure, we have the ability, when needed, to create programs that match student need.

To learn more about the Individualized Major Program visit: www.sbu.edu/IM
Support for Undeclared Students

Major Adventures Program (MAP)

Not sure what you want to major in? Not to worry. Students aren’t required to declare a major until their sophomore year at St. Bonaventure. Meanwhile, we have some Major Adventures in store for you.

Through a strategic partnership with St. Bonaventure’s Career and Professional Readiness Center (CPRC), the Major Adventures Program (MAP) is designed to help incoming students plan for their future by exploring how their own interests and aptitudes mesh with a college major and potential careers.

As you explore the diversity of what St. Bonaventure offers academically, you may be pleased to discover that an additional minor or even a second major is well within your grasp.

An Overview of MAP

- **ACADEMIC ADVISER:** Each MAP student is assigned to an academic adviser who has demonstrated excellence in advising.

- **UNIVERSITY 101 AND PASSPORT EVENTS:** Most Major Adventures students are in the same sections of University 101, a first-semester seminar style course focusing on student success, in order to give them consistent programming and information about majors and career choices.

  Passport events are part of the course. Specific Passport offerings from the CPRC have included:
  - Writing your first college résumé
  - Major confusion?
  - Becoming social media savvy
  - Personality and career choice

- **PRESENTATIONS:** All MAP students are invited to presentations throughout the year that introduce them to majors and career opportunities. Some of these are Passport Activities that all freshmen attend.

Career and Professional Readiness Center

Our campus is fortunate to have a thriving career services office in the CPRC. Students have the option to meet with a career counselor to discuss their major and career exploration from the time they arrive on campus, continuing through graduation.

The CPRC specializes in offering career assessment tools and resources. Its website, www.sbu.edu/cprc, devotes an entire page to Exploring Majors & Careers, including the FOCUS 2 online career assessment tool, as well as a multitude of career-related resources.

To learn more about the MAP, contact:
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