



**STUDENT-DESIGNED MAJOR  
INFORMATION HANDBOOK  
2016-17**

Dr. Christine A. Wooley, Coordinator  
Calvert Hall 109

## Table of Contents

The Student Designed Major.....	3
Section 1. Requirements for the Major.....	3
Section 2. Administration of the Major.....	4
Section 3. Advisors and the SMP Mentor.....	4
Section 4. Admission to the Major and Program Changes.....	5
Section 5. The Proposal for the Major.....	5
Section 6. Sample outlines of Student-Designed Majors	
Public Health (course listing only).....	7
Neurosciences (course listing only).....	8
Environmental Design (course listing only).....	9
Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies (complete application).....	11
Section 7. Forms	
Application and Guidelines for the Student-Designed Major.....	17
Student-Designed Major Proposal Approval Form.....	19
Program Revision for Student-Designed Major.....	20

## **The Student-Designed Major**

The Student-Designed Major is an interdisciplinary program available to any student who wishes to develop a more individualized program of study than those provided by existing majors. The Student-Designed Major should be a coherent program of study that crosses disciplinary lines. Similar to other majors at St. Mary's, it should have learning outcomes drawn from the areas of study that clearly map to the courses included in the major. Likewise, the major should adhere to the same principles of breadth, depth, and liberal arts-centered inquiry that the faculty has established for existing majors; to that end, one of the major disciplines must be chosen as the primary discipline to provide a coherent focus for the major.

In planning the Student-Designed Major, the student selects an advisory committee of two faculty members, one from the primary discipline, and one from a secondary discipline. The Coordinator of Student-Designed Majors also serves on the advisory committee. The members of the advisory committee are responsible for composing learning outcomes for the major, as determined by the coursework the student will complete. All students interested in developing a Student-Designed Major or in applying to the major must meet with the Coordinator of Student-Designed Majors.

Although the individual student is responsible for the design and planning of the program, he or she must fulfill the following requirements. These requirements are intended to ensure that each student-designed program be related integrally to the goals of a liberal arts education and appropriately reflect the disciplines involved. Each course of study is approved only on a case-by-case basis, through petition to the college's Curriculum Review Committee.

### **Section 1.                      Requirements for the Major.**

1. General College Requirements.
2. A minimum of 48 credit hours of course work for the major, chosen from at least three disciplines (defined for this purpose as courses beginning with different alphabetic prefixes, such as ECON or ENGL). One of these "disciplines" can be a recognized Cross Disciplinary Study Area.

The 48 hours of coursework must include:

- a. Five classes (usually construed as 20 credits) in the primary discipline, at least three of which (12 credits) must be upper division;
  - b. Three additional upper-division classes (12 credits), chosen from among the secondary disciplines;
  - c. At least one methods or theory course, as applicable, preferably chosen from the primary discipline;
  - d. A St. Mary's Project of eight credit hours;
  - e. Elective credits to complete the required total of 48 credit hours.
3. No more than four hours of internship credit and four hours of Independent Study may be counted towards the major.
  4. Students must earn a grade of C- or better in each course counted towards the major, and maintain an overall GPA of at least 2.0 in these courses.
  5. All coursework must be chosen prior to acceptance to the program with approval from the advisory committee and final approval from the Curriculum Committee. Any later substitutions must be pre-approved by petition to the Curriculum Committee.

## **Section 2. Administration of the Major.**

- 2.1 Each student-designed major will be administered by an advisory committee. To provide continuity for the major program as well as for individual students choosing this major, the administrative member of the committee will be the Coordinator of Student-Designed Majors. The remaining advisory committee members will consist of two faculty advisors chosen by the student, one from the discipline of primary concentration, and one from a secondary area of concentration. *All proposals and program changes will be developed by the student in consultation with members of the advisory committee, and must be approved by the advisory committee prior to being submitted to the Curriculum Committee.*

## **Section 3. Advisors and the St. Mary's Project Mentor.**

- 3.1 Each student will develop a program in consultation with the advisory committee (see Section 2). When the major proposal is approved, one member of the advisory committee will become the student's academic advisor to ensure a consistent level of ongoing coordination and guidance. In addition, the student must subsequently organize one meeting per year with the committee

as a whole.

In choosing the advisory committee, the student should be aware of the faculty members' future plans and should choose an advisor who will be on campus throughout the course of the program. If unforeseen circumstances require the replacement of a faculty advisor, the remaining advisory committee members should help the student choose a replacement.

- 3.2 The advisory committee must approve and sign the student's initial proposal, including the projected program of courses and learning outcomes for the major, before the student may submit his or her proposal to the college Curriculum Review Committee. The CRC's approval is required in order for the student to be formally admitted to the major. The committee may recommend supplemental advisors if they deem it necessary.
- 3.3 The student will design a St. Mary's Project in consultation with a faculty mentor. The St. Mary's Project mentor is not required to be a member of the advisory committee.

#### Section 4.                      Admission to the Major and Program Changes.

- 4.1 The student wishing to pursue a Student-designed Major must apply for admission to the major by submitting a proposal for an SDM to the college Curriculum Review Committee. Prior to submitting this proposal, the student must choose an advisory committee and secure their agreement to act as members. The completed proposal must be submitted **before the student has earned 56 credits** (whether at St. Mary's, or transferred from another institution). The student is responsible for all other requirements for the B.A. or B.S. degree at St. Mary's College of Maryland. A copy of approved proposals will be kept on file by the Coordinator of Student-Designed Majors and the office of the Registrar.
- 4.2 The Curriculum Review Committee will meet to discuss and approve (or reject) SDM proposals once each semester, approximately one month prior to Advising Day. It is the student's responsibility to ascertain the exact date each semester, and to ensure that all members of his or her advisory committee have approved of the major proposal in time for its submission. The student is responsible for submitting the proposal to the Coordinator of Student-Designed Majors, who will forward the proposal to the Curriculum Review Committee.
- 4.3 Revisions to the program will be considered by the Curriculum Review Committee during the same meeting in which they discuss program proposals. Forms for submission of program revisions may be obtained online, at the SDM website.

#### Section 5.                      The Proposal for the Major.

The proposal should be developed in consultation with the student's advisory committee, who will define the learning outcomes for the major and ensure that they align with the learning outcomes of the courses to be included in the major. The student is responsible, however, for writing the proposal for the major. The proposal must be submitted to the advisory committee in its final form before they sign the form indicating their approval of the student's proposed plans. Although the advisory committee may already be familiar with the student's intended program, it is through the written proposal for the major that the advisory committee will come to understand and evaluate the nature of the student's plans. It is very important, therefore, that the proposal for the Student-Designed Major be written clearly, coherently, and with a comprehensive coverage of the student's intended academic goals. The proposal should include a copy of the student's unofficial transcript, as well as the following:

- 5.1 Learning outcomes for the major as established by the advisory committee.
- 5.2 A detailed and comprehensive description of the student's special academic interests and an explanation of why they cannot be addressed by an existing major;
- 5.3 An explanation of the student's educational goals and the role that the student-designed major will play in the fulfillment of those goals;
- 5.4 A listing of all courses that will make up the major. These should be categorized according to primary and secondary disciplines, with both course numbers and names clearly indicated. Any courses already completed should be noted, along with the grade(s) received for this coursework;
- 5.5 A description of any anticipated field work, independent research, or independent studies that will contribute to the major, as well as plans for off-campus study or internships;
- 5.6 Possible subjects for the St. Mary's Project and an indication of the courses that will prepare the student for the project. Students may register for St. Mary's Project as IDIS 493/494, or through one or more of the disciplines (e.g., ENGL 493/494). Although it is not likely that a student will have a clear idea for a St. Mary's Project at the time of application for the major, a preliminary description of desired projects will give the committee a clearer insight into the student's aims.

## Section 6.

## Sample Outlines of Student-Designed Majors.

### **Courses for SDM in Public Health**

#### Primary Discipline: Public Policy

POSC201: American Politics

ECON101: Introduction to Economics

POSC311: Public Policy

Plus 4 credits chosen from between:

- ECON251: Intermediate Macroeconomics
- ECON252: Intermediate Microeconomics

Plus 4 credits chosen from among:

- POSC315: Policy Evaluation
- POSC367: Public Administration
- POSC408: American Health Policy and Politics

Plus 4 credits chosen from between:

- POCS301: Individual Rationality and Group Politics
- SOCI385: Research Methods

Total: 24 credits

#### Secondary Discipline: Biology

BIOL105 & 105L: Principles of Biology I

BIOL106 & 106L: Principles of Biology II

BIOL270 & 270: Genetics

BIOL271 & 271: Ecology and Evolution

BIOL360: Microbiology

BIOL380: Topics in Biology: Epidemiology

Total: 28 credits

#### Tertiary discipline: Sociology

SOCI101: Introduction to Sociology

SOCI302: Medical Sociology

Total: 8 credits

St. Mary's Project: SMP combining public policy, biology, and sociology

Total: 8 credits

Major: 68 credits



## **Courses for SDM in Neurosciences**

### Primary discipline: Neuroscience

NEUR201: Introduction to the Neurosciences

PSYC235: Physiological and Sensory Psychology

NEUR301: Seminar in the Neurosciences (1 credit)

NEUR303: Advanced Seminar in the Neurosciences (1 credit)

NEUR302: Directed Research in the Neurosciences (2 credits)

8 credits chosen from among:

- PSYC314: Drugs, Brains, and Behavior
- PSYC322: Biological Psychology with Lab
- PSYC326: Perception with Lab
- BIOL419: Neurobiology with Lab

Total credits: 20

### Secondary discipline: Psychology

PSYC LDIV: Abnormal Psychology (3 credits, TR) (A)

PSYC301: Psychological Statistics

PSYC303: Writing and Research Methods in Psychology

Total credits: 11

### Secondary discipline: Biology

BIOL105 & 105L: Principles of Biology I

BIOL106 & 106L: Principles of Biology II (4 credits, TR) (A)

BIOL LDIV: Human Anatomy and Physiology with Lab (4 credits, TR) (A)

BIOL270 & 270L: Genetics

BIOL401: Developmental Biology with Lab

Total credits: 22

### Tertiary discipline: Chemistry

CHEM103: General Chemistry I (B)

CHEM106: General Chemistry II (B+)

Total credits: 8

SMP: 8 credits

Total for major: 69

## **Courses for SDM in Environmental Design**

### Primary Discipline: Environmental Studies

ENST LDIV: Environmental Science (AP)\*

BIOL101: Biology (AP)\*

ENST 233: Environmental Perspectives (2)\*

PHIL 321: Environmental Ethics (4) \*\*

Plus 3 courses chosen from this list:

- ENST 350/450: Topics in ENST
- ENST 450: Seminar in Environmental Studies: Applied Sustainability Practicum
- ENGL 395: Advanced Topics in Writing: Nature Writing Workshop
- ANTH 341: Economic and Ecological Anthropology
- ANTH 302: Food and Culture

*Total: 26 credits*

### Secondary Discipline: Mathematics

MATH 151: Calculus I \*

MATH 152: Calculus II \*\*

MATH 255: Vector Calculus

*Total: 12 credits*

### Secondary Discipline: Physics

PHYS 151: Fundamentals of Physics I (recommended) or PHYS 141 General Physics I

PHYS 152: Fundamentals of Physics II (recommended) or PHYS 142 General Physics

*Total: 8 credits*

### Secondary Discipline: Art and Art History

ARTH100: Introduction to Art History \*\*

ART 204: Introduction to Drawing \*

ART 338: Advanced Topics: Figure Sculpture \*\*

Plus two courses from this list:

- ARTH 321: Art and Architecture of the Ancient Maya
- ARTH 322: Native North American Art and Architecture
- ARTH 331: Topics in Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art
- ARTH 355: Advanced Topics in Global Art History

*Total: 20 credits*

St. Mary's Project: 8 credits

*Total credits for the Major: 74*

\*Courses already taken  
\*\*Courses currently enrolled in

## **Sample application for a SDM in Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies**



### Application and Guidelines for the Student-Designed Major

Student's name: J. R. Date: 03/04/2xxx

Intended date of graduation: May 20xx

Present major: English Present adviser: JCB

Title of proposed student-designed major: Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

Primary area discipline: Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

Secondary area discipline: Theatre, Film and Media Studies

Other area disciplines: English

Advisory committee: JCB

(names printed or typed)

(primary discipline member)

LW

(secondary discipline member)

DS

(coordinator of student-designed majors)

The completed application for a student-designed major must be accompanied by a written proposal including the following:

1. Learning outcomes for the major, as established by the advisory committee;
2. A detailed and comprehensive description of your special academic interests and an explanation of why they cannot be addressed by an existing major;
3. Your educational goals and the role that the student-designed major will play in the fulfillment of those goals;
4. A listing of all courses that will make up your major. These should be categorized according to primary and secondary disciplines, with both course numbers and names clearly indicated. Any courses already completed should be noted, along with the grade(s) you have received for this coursework;
5. Any anticipated field work, independent research, or independent studies as well as plans for off-campus study or internships, and their relation to the planned program; and
6. Possible subjects for your St. Mary's Project.

Student-Designed Major Proposal Approval Form

Date: 03/04/2xxx

We recommend that the proposal prepared under the supervision of the advisory committee listed below

by JR

titled Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

be accepted as fulfilling in part the requirements for a student-designed major.

Advisory Committee Signatures

\_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Discipline Adviser (print name) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Discipline Adviser (print name) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator of Student-Designed Major (print name) Signature

## Major Proposal

### 1. Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the major in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, J.R. will be able to:

- Explain how representations of gender and sexuality have changed over time (humanistic foundations: evaluate);
- Synthesize theoretical accounts of identity formation in order to understand the social construction of gender and sexuality (humanistic foundations: evaluate);
- Critique contemporary representations of gender and sexuality in a range of media (the arts: create);
- Create complex representations of gender and sexuality through fiction and/or stage work (the arts: create);
- Use information from a variety of sources to analyze representations of gender and sexuality (information literacy: articulation);
- Write effectively and perceptively as determined by the appropriate rhetorical context (written communication: articulation);
- Speak effectively and perceptively as determined by the appropriate rhetorical context (oral communication: articulation).

### 2. Academic Interests

I have always been fascinated by gender. I consider myself to be a gender non-normative person and as I've done more and more work with the WGSX department here at St. Mary's, I have found a deep interest in the complexities of gender as it is perceived, portrayed, and constructed in contemporary society and how these representations have progressed over the years. I have a deep abiding love for literature, performing arts, and visual media, and these are all places from which we take our cues about gender and sexuality. Therefore, my major would be concentrated in the areas of Theatre, Film, & Media Studies and English.

My academic interests lie in discovering and dismantling the influence that literature, media, and other forms of popular culture have over society's ideals and expectations of gender and sexuality. I feel that the way that gender and sexuality are defined and presented in contemporary society is unsettlingly confining and sets boundaries up against transgression or fluidity. These boundaries are reinforced by the representations of gender and sexuality in the media.

A simple English or TFMS major could not comprehensively cover the vast areas of culture and media that I wish to study. Additionally, a major in only one of these areas would not be able to facilitate a study focused specifically on gender and sexuality. My interests lie over the discourses of cultural studies, film studies, media studies, feminist studies, queer theory, and literary studies, with specific focus on these discourses' views of gender and sexuality. Furthermore, there are other disciplines that have very much to say about these topics (philosophy, anthropology, sociology, etc.) and confining myself to just media or literature would be ignoring institutions that have theories and information that are necessary to truly understand and approach the ramifications of

the representations that I intend to study. Therefore, having a WGSX major will allow me to take more classes in alternate disciplines with purpose and relevance.

## 2. Educational Goals

I wish to explore how all of these factors (literature, film and other visual media, theatre/performance) work together and, specifically from a queer theory and cultural studies perspective, how they have shaped society's perceptions and ideals of identity, and how they continue to do so. The overarching goal in comprehensively understanding how this process works is to eventually work, in my lifetime, toward dismantling these constitutive processes and reshaping them to promote a more fluid portrayal of gender and sexual identity.

My goal is to use my studies in these areas to continue the dismantling of representation done by feminist and queer theory. My post-collegiate plans are to attend graduate school and earn a PhD in a discourse related to gender in a specific area of either literature, theatre, or film. I would like to have a strong background in these areas in order to have a sturdy foundation for my graduate studies. I would like, then, to go on to contribute to a collegiate academic community, perhaps back at St. Mary's, as a professor of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies to facilitate future deconstruction of the confines of gender and sexuality as enforced by the media.

I intend to spend the majority of my life in an academic setting where I will devote my time, studies, and thoughts to publicly dismantling the constrictive productions of gender that are so intensely proliferated in our society. Through careful critique and analysis of popular media, as well as dissecting and deciphering constructions of the past, I hope to be a driving force in exposing gender and sexuality as socially constructed ideologies that constitute our behaviors and working toward an understanding of this that leads to the dismantling of binding gender/sexuality norms, roles, expectations, and discrimination.

I also have very strong desires to create my own representations of gender and sexuality through creative fiction writing, stage writing, and stage directing/designing. I do not feel that it is enough simply to analyze and critique what one sees presented. It is crucial, if one wishes to react and, dare I say, fight back, to create one's own representation of what is at stake. I see no better way to counteract the harmful reproduction of stereotyped gender and sexuality than to produce my own work which subverts the dominant imagery that I am working so hard to reveal as constructed and manipulative--and what better way to reveal construction than to utilize that very strategy of construction myself?

## 3. Listing of Courses for SDM in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Primary Discipline: WGSX courses

- \*WGSX200: Introduction to Women's Studies - 4 credits (A)
- \*WGSX210: Introduction to Gender Studies - 4 credits (A)
- plus 20 credits chosen from the following list:

- ENGL390: Victorians in Text, Photo, and Film - 4 credits
- ARTH382: Sexuality and Modernity - 4 credits
- PHIL325: Feminism and Philosophy - 4 credits
- ANTH302: Food and Culture - 4 credits
- ANTH304: Anthropology of Media - 4 credits
- SOCI230: Sociology of Gender - 4 credits
- SOCI351: The Sociology of Deviance - 4 credits
- HIST435: France in the Belle Epoque - 4 credits
- Total: 28 credits

Secondary Discipline 1: TFMS courses

- \*TFMS425: Mediated Bodies - 4 credits (A)
- plus 8 credits chosen from the following list:
  - TFMS425: Horror Film - 4 credits
  - TFMS345: Writing for Stage and Screen - 4 credits
  - TFMS320: Film History - 4 credits
  - TFMS440: Experiments in Directing - 4 credits
  - TFMS325: Documentary Practices - 4 credits
- Total: 12 credits

Secondary Discipline 2: English courses

- \*ENGL390: Woman Word - 4 credits (A)
- \*ENGL390: Books That Cook - 4 credits (A)
- ENGL395: Advanced Fiction - 4 credits
- Total: 12 credits

St. Mary's Project: SMP combining women/gender/sexuality studies, English, and theatre/film/media studies

- Total: 8 credits

Total credits for major: 60 credits

\* Courses already taken

4. I have no plans for Independent Studies or internships at this time.

6. Possible SMP Topics

With my SMP, I hope to focus on exposing the performative and constitutive nature of gender and sexuality. My SMP will emphasize how our perceptions of gender have been presented and re-presented to us, as a constructed ideal, to the point where it is ideology that we accept as "truth," as something natural that is unchangeable; and how we, simultaneously, adopt these ideals in order to convince others that we ascribe to a certain gender as it is perceived to be natural. My SMP will either be a focus on a form of literature, theatre, or film and a deconstruction of its presentations of gender; or, it will be a piece of theatre or film that I create



that attempts to either subvert proliferated ideals of gender or bring attention to these ideals through my own staging, costuming, framing, and script/character development.

- Lost representations of transgender individuals in history
- Writing and directing a stage play with primarily transgender characters
- Directing a play that includes transgender/genderqueer characters (with a subsequent paper written on the difficulties with and strategies for representing gender)
- A critical analysis of heteronormativity in queer cinema
- Writing and directing a play a la “The Vagina Monologues” based on interviews with transgender/transsexual/gender non-normative people from different social classes/regions/countries



Application and Guidelines for the Student-Designed Major

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended date of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Present major: \_\_\_\_\_ Present adviser: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of proposed student-designed major: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Primary area discipline: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary area discipline: \_\_\_\_\_

Other area disciplines: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisory committee: \_\_\_\_\_

(names printed or typed)

(primary discipline member)

\_\_\_\_\_

(secondary discipline member)

\_\_\_\_\_

(coordinator of student-designed majors)

The completed application for a student-designed major must be accompanied by a written proposal including the following:

1. Learning outcomes for the major, as established by the advisory committee;
2. A detailed and comprehensive description of your special academic interests and an explanation of why they cannot be addressed by an existing major;
3. Your educational goals and the role that the student-designed major will play in the fulfillment of those goals;
4. A listing of all courses that will make up your major. These should be categorized according to primary and secondary disciplines, with both course numbers and names clearly indicated. Any courses already completed should be noted, along with the grade(s) you have received for this coursework;

5. Any anticipated field work, independent research, or independent studies as well as plans for off-campus study or internships, and their relation to the planned program; and
6. Possible subjects for your St. Mary's Project.

Student-Designed Major Proposal Approval Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Intended date of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

We recommend that the proposal prepared under the supervision of the advisory committee listed below

by \_\_\_\_\_

titled \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

be accepted as fulfilling in part the requirements for a student-designed major.

Advisory Committee Names and Signatures\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Discipline Adviser (print name) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Discipline Adviser (print name) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator of Student-Designed Major (print name) Signature

\* Student's academic advisor should be indicated alongside his or her signature.

Approved by the Curriculum Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Program Revision for Student-Designed Major

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended date of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Present major: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of student-designed major: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Primary discipline: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary discipline: \_\_\_\_\_

Other secondary discipline(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Primary discipline adviser: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary discipline adviser: \_\_\_\_\_

Old requirements:

New proposed requirements:

Rationale for changes, including consideration of how the changes align with the established learning outcomes for the major:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by the Curriculum Committee \_\_\_\_\_