

Independent Interdisciplinary Major Checklist

_____ Pick up the *Independent Interdisciplinary Major (IIM) Guidelines* which is available at the Office of Academic Services or on our [website](#). Consult with the IIM Coordinator in the Academic Services office any time throughout your application period.

_____ Select the topic of your Independent Interdisciplinary Major. Review the [Brandeis University Bulletin](#) to identify a broad list of courses applicable to your topic. Your course list should include a balance of courses from at least two but preferably three or more departments. Your courses should cover foundational knowledge you will need, as well as issues and problems of interest to you. Keep in mind that you will need to select 12 courses for your final curriculum (including the Independent Study or Senior Research option). Please note that more than 15 courses are not necessarily preferable or recommended.

_____ Consult the sample binder of approved Independent Interdisciplinary Majors in the Office of Academic Services.

_____ Search University catalogs or the internet for examples of similar majors offered at other institutions. Copy any findings for inclusion in your petition.

_____ Identify possible faculty advisors, for example, faculty members teaching courses selected for your major. You will identify one primary faculty advisor and two secondary faculty advisors. Your primary faculty advisor must be from the College of Arts and Sciences. If you wish to include faculty from the Heller School or International Business School on your IIM committee, you should consult first with the IIM coordinator in Academic Services. When you meet with prospective faculty advisors, try to ascertain their availability for the duration of your course of study (i.e., are they planning a leave or sabbatical in the next few years?) and assess their willingness to provide the time and attention your project will require, especially in your senior year.

_____ Approach faculty about serving as one of your advisors. Give them the *Memorandum to Advisors of Independent Interdisciplinary Majors*, *Frequently Asked Questions*, this checklist and copies of your transcript to inform them about potential responsibilities and your academic record. Review the list of potential courses with them. Share comments with other advisors.

_____ Consider the senior thesis (two courses) or independent study (one course) options, a mandatory senior requirement for all independent majors. The senior thesis will enable you to pursue honors. Please refer to the FAQ section for further explanation between the two choices. Review possible topics with advisors.

_____ When choosing a title of your major, please refer to the FAQ section before reviewing the options with your advisors.

_____ Draft your proposal, including evidence of comparable majors offered at other colleges and universities. Discuss the integrity of the topic with regard to established scholarly fields of inquiry, your intellectual and academic goals and post-Brandeis plans, how each course contributes to the curriculum and to meeting your intellectual goals, and why this major is more desirable than a combination of majors and/or minors already offered at Brandeis.

_____ Provide each advisor with a copy of your potential course list, a draft of your proposal, and any findings about similar majors at other schools.

_____ Arrange a group meeting for yourself and at least two of your advisors to discuss the curriculum, title, and your draft proposal. After consultation with your advisors, revise the proposal.

_____ Once your proposal is finalized, ask your primary advisor to write a letter discussing the committee's endorsement of your proposal and addressing all of the bulleted points in the *Memorandum to Advisors of Independent Interdisciplinary Majors*. Obtain the signatures of your other two faculty advisors. **Please note:** You should give your faculty advisor around three weeks to write your letter, two at the absolute minimum, and leave yourself time to collect the signatures of your secondary advisors.

_____ Submit the complete proposal to the IIM Coordinator in Academic Services. A completed proposal **must include:** a) the *Petition for Independent Interdisciplinary Major* form filled out (no substitutes), b) your proposal statement, c) the endorsement letter from your faculty committee, and d) printed curriculum examples from other schools.