

CONTRACT MAJOR (Div I, II, or III)

Contract Major Advisor: Amanda Turner

Students with the talent and energy for working independently and with the strong support of faculty advisors may undertake a Contract Major: a coherent study of an interdisciplinary subject not covered by a regularly offered major. The purpose of a Contract Major is to allow highly motivated students to follow a course of study outside the boundaries of established majors. Students have an opportunity to draw from the wealth of offered courses and develop a major that corresponds to their particular interests and goals.

A Contract Major must be in an area suitable to the talents of the faculty in residence and cannot consist of modifications to an existing major. A Contract Major also must conform to the structure and coherence of a departmental or program major—it must embody a disciplined study that moves from an elementary to an advanced level and culminate in a synthesis similar to a senior major course.

Developing a Contract Major proposal is both interesting and demanding. Due to these demands, students should carefully consider the advantage of working within existing majors or programs, taking note of the considerable intellectual pleasures involved in sharing similar educational experiences with other students working within the same area of study.

Students who wish to explore or propose a Contract Major should consult with the Contract Major Advisor and potential faculty advisors as early as possible first semester of sophomore year.

Considerations

A Contract Major cannot be pursued in conjunction with another major or concentration.

Alternatives:

- two majors
- major + concentration
- major + coordinate program
- major + courses of special interest

Identification

A Contract Major is:

- A coherent study of an interdisciplinary subject not covered by a regularly offered major or concentration, consistent with the liberal arts mission.
- A cumulative study that moves from an elementary to an advanced level.
- A course of study that is appropriate for the undergraduate level—not so narrowly defined where it would be considered a graduate level course of study.

A Contract Major cannot consist of minor modifications to an existing major or concentration.

Advising

Before deciding to pursue a Contract Major, schedule an appointment with Amanda Turner, Contract Major Advisor (CMA) **prior to November 15**. This advising session will help determine if a Contract Major is a good fit and also serve as an overview to the Contract Major approval process.

[More information can be found on the Contract Major site.](#)

CMAJ 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Contract Major

A Contract Major senior thesis, which is determined in consultation with faculty advisors, is either: one semester term (CMAJ 493 or CMAJ 494) and one Winter Study term (CMAJ 31); or two semester terms and Winter Study term (CMAJ 493, CMAJ 31, and CMAJ 494).

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: Divisional credit is either I, II, or III depending on approved Contract Major proposal.

Distributions: No divisional credit

Fall 2023

HON Section: 01 TBA Amanda B. Turner

CMAJ 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Contract Major

A Contract Major senior thesis, which is determined in consultation with faculty advisors, is either: one semester term (CMAJ 493 or CMAJ 494) and one Winter Study term (CMAJ 31); or two semester terms and Winter Study term (CMAJ 493, CMAJ 31, and CMAJ 494).

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: Divisional credit is either I, II, or III depending on approved Contract Major proposal.

Distributions: No divisional credit

Spring 2024

HON Section: 01 TBA Amanda B. Turner

CMAJ 497 (F) Independent Study: Contract Major

Contract Major independent study. An independent study petition is required, please see registrar.williams.edu for more information.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: Divisional credit is either I, II, or III depending on approved Contract Major proposal.

Distributions: No divisional credit

Fall 2023

IND Section: 01 TBA Amanda B. Turner

CMAJ 498 (S) Independent Study: Contract Major

Contract Major independent study. An independent study petition is required, please see registrar.williams.edu for more information.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: Divisional credit is either I, II, or III depending on approved Contract Major proposal.

Distributions: No divisional credit

Spring 2024

IND Section: 01 TBA Amanda B. Turner

Winter Study -----

CMAJ 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Contract Major

To be taken by students registered for Contract Major 493, 494.

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2024

HON Section: 01 TBA Stefan B. Aune

CMAJ 99 (W) Independent Study: Contract Major

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2024

IND Section: 01 TBA Amanda B. Turner