

## THE MAJOR

BDIC is a degree-granting program that offers motivated and self-directed students the opportunity to design their own interdisciplinary majors. The program allows students to pursue their educational goals in areas not available within an existing departmental curriculum or traditional major on the campus. Each student's program of study (concentration) is developed with the advice and approval of a faculty sponsor (chosen by the student) and a BDIC faculty supervisor. Students confer with these faculty members on a regular basis as they progress through and continue to develop their programs.

BDIC concentrations are interdisciplinary, drawing upon at least three departments. In planning their concentrations, students are encouraged to draw upon the resources of the Five College Consortium. BDIC majors frequently undertake independent study or field experience learning.

BDIC majors earn either a bachelor of arts (BA) or a bachelor of science (BS) degree. (For the BS, 60 credits are required in courses from the sciences and mathematics.) The student's transcript records the area of concentration. Because of the individualized nature of each student's program of study, BDIC has almost as many concentrations as it has students in the major. To guide and assist this diverse group, BDIC has a staff of faculty supervisors and additional experienced faculty and staff, including many BDIC peer advisors. Each student is assigned to one of six academic clusters within BDIC: arts and cultural studies; business and law; communication; education and human development; and sustainability and natural sciences.

***There is no BDIC minor available.***

## ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

The first step in the application process is to meet with a BDIC advisor who will familiarize the student with BDIC requirements and discuss academic interests and career goals. To be accepted into the BDIC major, students must apply for acceptance to BDIC 396P, the one-credit proposal writing class. Applications to BDIC 396P are available in the BDIC office, as well as on its website: [umass.edu/bdic](http://umass.edu/bdic). The application deadlines are November 15 for the spring semester and April 10 for the fall semester. Students are eligible to apply to the proposal writing class as early as second semester of the first year. Acceptance into the class is determined by a BDIC faculty committee and is based on a number of criteria, such as GPA and the viability of the concentration plan. During BDIC 396P, students complete a proposal outlining their prospective concentration. Final acceptance into the BDIC major comes with the approval of the student's proposal.

First-year students are encouraged to enroll in BDIC 191, a one-credit seminar, How to Design Your Own Major.

## REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete at least 12 interrelated upper-division courses (numbered 300 or above) in the area of concentration, not including BDIC 396P or 350. Courses must be at least three credits each. Students must also take BDIC 350, which satisfies the Junior Year Writing requirement. BDIC 494I, Integration and Innovation, is also required in the junior or senior year. At the completion of the major, students write a Senior Summary and an abstract. Finally, foreign language may also be required depending on the student's area of focus.

## HONORS

Contact the honors program director for information on how to pursue honors opportunities within the major.

## STUDY ABROAD

Majors are encouraged to study abroad if it supports their academic and career goals. Students should contact the International Programs Office (413-545-2710, [umass.edu/ipo](http://umass.edu/ipo)) and work closely with their academic advisor to choose the appropriate courses in preparation.

## RECENT BDIC CONCENTRATIONS

The following is a list of titles of programs designed by recent BDIC students. This provides only a sample of representative concentrations and is not meant to limit the possibilities for any potential majors:

**ARTS AND CULTURAL STUDIES:** Third World Development; History and Racism; Sociolinguistics; Philosophy and Literature; Architecture and Culture; Comparative Religion and Holocaust Studies; Buddhist Philosophy through Art; Biblical Archaeology; Writing about American Society

**BUSINESS AND LAW:** Organizational Behavior; Entrepreneurial Studies; Global Economics and Finance; Investment Psychology; Sales Strategies and Social Behavior; Land and Environmental Resource Management; Economics and Legal Studies; International Trade and Foreign Policy

**COMMUNICATION:** Screenwriting; Critical Film Studies; Political Communication; Communication Arts and Film Technology; Photojournalism; Public Relations in Sports Industries; Creative Writing and Advertising; Psychology and Advertising; Archaeological Tourism

**EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:** Educational Reform for a Multicultural Society; Criminal Psychology; Women's Health Issues and Eating Disorders; Gerontology and Social Welfare; Health and Fitness Management; Arts for the Handicapped; Writing Children's Literature

**SUSTAINABILITY AND NATURAL SCIENCES:** Bio-Ethics and Medical Sociology; Nutrition and the Developing World; Political Economy of Natural Resources; Primate Conservation; Environmental Chemistry and Anthropology; Ecological Economics; Scientific Journalism

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Graduates of the program have been very successful in the employment sector and in graduate or professional school. Past surveys of alumni have shown that about 80 percent of those responding were either in careers or graduate school programs related to their individual concentrations. This success stems from the high level of motivation and capacity for self-direction characteristic of students who design their own major, as well as the specificity of their academic preparation for a given career and/or graduate program of study.

Office: 230 Commonwealth Honors College  
Phone: 413-545-2504  
Website: [umass.edu/bdic](http://umass.edu/bdic)