

NEW MAJORS

Proposals for new majors in Yale College must be approved by the Committee on Majors before being submitted to the Yale College faculty meeting for consideration. Majors may be organized through FAS departments, councils of the MacMillan Center, committees appointed by the Dean of Yale College, or any combination of these. Some majors are governed by a partnership between FAS departments, and others are administered in collaboration with professional school departments.

The procedure for proposing a new major is summarized below:

- The process should begin with a petition to the chair and the secretary of the Committee on Majors, in which the faculty members of a proposed major specify its content and purpose, specifically addressing the question of why such needs cannot be met in an existing major. The outline of such a petition can be found in PDF format in the Appendix section. This petition should be submitted before the end of the fall term.
- Before the petition can be brought to the Committee on Majors, a representative of the FAS Dean's Office and the director of the Teaching Fellow program in the Graduate School should report to the committee as to the cost-impact of creating the new major and summarize the assets—human, physical, and financial—that are available to offset those costs. Costs to be assessed for the foreseeable future of a major should include administrative support, space, equipment, any special instructional equipment, or facility needs.
- The requirements of the proposed major should be comparable in number to closely-related majors in Yale College and should include courses from the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels, including a senior requirement such as a capstone course that entails independent research or small group projects.
- Sometimes a proposed new major will need to draw on the resources of one or more existing majors or programs. As part of the approval process, a “memorandum of understanding” documenting commitments to help sustain the new major should be subscribed to by the chairs of any likely donor departments and submitted to the Committee on Majors. Such commitments might include, for example, responsibility for furnishing through the foreseeable future DUSs, instructors, teaching fellows, access to limited-enrollment courses sponsored by other departments, and other departmental resources.
- If a proposed new major is recommended to the faculty for approval, the endorsement will normally be limited to an initial period of five years. In the penultimate year, the major should undertake a self-study and undergo review by the Committee on Majors. At that point, the committee might recommend the major (with or without modifications to its requirements) for renewal for five more years, renewal without term, or termination.

Questions arising from proposals to establish a new major should be addressed to David Francis (david.francis@yale.edu), Secretary of the Committee on Majors.