



Individualized Studies

Winona State University

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Meet our Team

Faculty Liaison



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It is my great pleasure to serve the Individualized Studies program as the faculty liaison. In that role, I provide supervision for academic advising for the program and for students in situations where faculty expertise is necessary. In order to meet our students' needs, I am committed to establishing connections with other faculty from different departments and representing our program throughout the University and our community.

In particular, the Individualized Studies program offers two internship courses each semester (INDS 398 and INDS 399). An internship can be an invaluable part of an individualized major or minor. The knowledge, skills, and connections that you acquire through an internship will be a key asset as you seek employment or apply to graduate or professional schools. I have been the internship director in my home department for more than nine years; I am happy to help you think about internship sites, plan your learning goals and objectives, and work with you, your site supervisor, and your faculty advisor to resolve any issues that might arise.

I hope that you will be able to pursue your unique goals and dreams with the Individualized Studies program. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about our program.

Program Advisors

Our program advisors will help you define your focus, choose courses, and advise you regarding academic matter. If you are interested in the Individualized Studies program or have any questions, please contact our program advisors.



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What is Individualized Studies?

The purpose of the Individualized Studies program at WSU as a major or minor is to help students design a program as unique as they are. The Individualized Studies program allows students to pursue individualized academic interests and personal/professional goals within the framework of an academically sound Bachelor of Arts major or minor. It is an excellent alternative for the mature student who wants to build on past experience and design his or her own degree program for current or future needs. It offers students a great deal of flexibility and allows for intellectual growth in a variety of academic areas.

Winona State University offers 60 undergraduate degree programs through five distinctive colleges: business, education, liberal arts, nursing and health sciences, and science and engineering. Some students, however, have found that their educational needs are not adequately addressed by a single disciplinary approach. The Individualized Studies program can be an alternative option for them. Students in the Individualized Studies program have chosen a wide range of topics for their majors and minors.

- **Design Your Degree.** Whether you want to enhance the work you are doing in your current position or prepare to meet your future career goals, Individualized Studies can get you where you want to be. Design a program as unique as you and experience the freedom of choosing your own path.
- **Move Up in Your Current Job.** Craft a degree program that will give you the knowledge and experience you need to take your career to the next level.
- **Land Your Dream Job.** Self-design a program that will give you a unique and competitive advantage as you pursue your desired career.
- **Start Your Own Business.** Enhance your current knowledge, develop your future plans and gain the tools you need to excel as a small business owner.
- **Build on Your Past Experiences.** Use your experiences as a professional to guide your program plan and strengthen your skills and knowledge
- **Create a Schedule that Works with Your Life.** Choose when and how you take courses. Online, hybrid, and traditional face-to-face delivery formats give you options that allow you to balance your life commitments while in school.
- **Earn credit for your prior learning.** Explore options to apply your significant college- level learning from life and work experience to your degree plan.

Our Individualized Studies graduates have gone on to do important work all over the country. You can, too. We want you to be successful at Winona State University and we will do whatever we can to provide the support that you need. If you have a question or a concern, reach out to your advisor, to our Faculty Liaison for Individualized Studies, to a faculty member, or to a student support person. Then, go after your goals and pursue your dreams. Bring out the best in your individualized approach to a baccalaureate degree!

Is the Individualized Studies Degree Right for You?

The Individualized Studies program is especially applicable for:

- Students who wish to combine coursework from two or more disciplines around a thematic focus to design a degree that best aligns with their academic needs.
- Adult students who may already be working in a profession and require the completion of a bachelor's degree to achieve specific personal, professional, or vocational goals.
- Students who wish to create a custom minor in an academic area where a minor is not available.
- Students who require greater flexibility in selecting course delivery and scheduling options that allow them to pursue a college degree while balancing family, work, or other commitments.

However, the Individualized Studies program is not the best fit for everyone. It may not be right for:

- Students who have simply not decided their major or minor yet and have not determined their future career or continuing education goals. It is difficult to create a meaningful customized education program if there is not a specific end goal in mind.
- Students who are not self-directed or independent learners.
- Students who require a specific degree for their intended career. For example, if your goal is to become a teacher, Individualized Studies is not a pathway to teacher licensure.

Program Requirements

Individualized Studies at WSU is an excellent alternative for the mature student with a desire to self-design a degree program tailored to individual needs. The Individualized Studies program offers major and minor options.

Major Requirements-INDS (Bachelor's Degree) No minor required – 49 credits

- Completion of INDS300 Academic Planning & Career Foundations (3 credits).
- Completion of INDS 495 Capstone Experience (3 credits)
- Completion of 34 upper-division (300 or 400 level) elective credits in addition to INDS300 and INDS 495.
- A maximum of 9 credits that apply to the major may be taken on a P/NC basis.
- Completion of 9 elective credits from any level (100-400)
- 36 credits must be unique to the major and not duplicated in a minor or in the General Education Program.
- Completion of WSU General Education & Intensive requirements.
- A minimum 2.0 GPA and 120 overall credits.
- 30 semester hours from WSU during junior and senior years.
- Enrollment in at least 1 credit from WSU during the semester in which you intend to graduate.

Major Requirements-INDM (Bachelor's Degree) Requires a minor – 36 credits

- Completion of INDS300 Academic Planning & Career Foundations (3 credits).
- Completion of INDS 495 Capstone Experience (3 credits)
- Completion of 24 upper-division (300 or 400 level) elective credits in addition to INDS300 and INDS 495.
- A maximum of 9 credits that apply to the major may be taken on a P/NC basis.
- Completion of 6 elective credits from any level (100-400)
- 27 credits must be unique to the major and not duplicated in the minor or General Education Program.
- Completion of WSU General Education & Intensive requirements.
- A minimum 2.0 GPA and 120 overall credits.
- 30 semester hours from WSU during junior and senior years.
- Enrollment in at least 1 credit from WSU during the semester in which you intend to graduate.
- Completion of a minor

Minor Requirements – INDS – 21 credits

- Completion of INDS300 Academic Planning & Career Foundations (3 credits).
- Completion of 12 upper-division (300 or 400 level) credits in addition to INDS 300, for a total of 15 credits.
- Completion of 6 elective credits at any level (100-400) for a total 21 credits for the minor.
- A maximum of 9 credits in the Individualized Studies minor may duplicate other courses in the student's major program or in the GEP.

Your DARS is the best resource for planning your coursework for graduation and should be your ultimate guide for course planning. You should work with your advisor to make sure that all program and University requirements are being met.

Procedure

Step 1 Exploring

If you are considering an Individualized Studies major or minor, we encourage you to meet with one of our academic advisors to discuss your interests, to learn about what the program can offer, and more. We have tried to include all possible information about the program in this student handbook. However, if you have any questions please feel free to contact a program advisor. Please find the contact information for our advisors on page 2. If you are not a current student of Winona State, but did *previously attend* the University, you will need to complete the [Re-enrollment Request Form](#). If you have never been a student at WSU, we encourage you to formally [apply to Winona State](#).

Step 2 Declaring a Major or Minor

No official application process for the major or minor is required. Current students should complete the [Declaration of Major or Minor form](#).

Step 3 Developing a Student Program Plan

This is the most important step. All Individualized Studies majors and minors are required to develop a student program plan. The development of this study plan provides you an opportunity to research the occupational outlook for your career options and to develop a strategy on how best to design a customized academic degree to achieve your specific educational and career objectives. The [Student Program Plan](#) is an assignment in INDS 300 Academic Planning and Career Foundations. Therefore, it is highly recommended that you take INDS 300 as early as possible after you declare an Individualized Studies major or minor.

An approved Individualized Studies Student Program Plan is required to be on file for all Individualized Studies majors and minors. You will work with your Individualized Studies advisor to obtain approval of your Student Program Plan. If a student is unable to get into INDS 300 right away, they are welcome to start working on their [Student Program Plan](#) prior to taking the course. Sections of the Student Program Plan include Basic Student Information, Rationale, Curriculum Design, Courses, Learning Outcomes and Occupational Outlook. Please see the Appendix 1. Student Program Plan Form.

Step 4 Completing Courses

Based on your Student Program Plan, you will complete the planned courses. Because the Student Program Plan will dictate what courses appear as requirements on your Degree Audit Report (DARS), it is important to review your plan and file an edited version if you deviate from the courses originally selected. It is recommended that you do this on an annual basis. You must observe the course schedule guidelines and consult with your advisor each semester before registration. Also, it is recommended that you consider internship course opportunities. For more details, please read the following section of course information.

Step 5 Applying for Graduation

When you are registered for the final term, you will be able to [apply for graduation](#) using the online application form. All graduation requirements should either be completed or in-progress when you apply for graduation. You are encouraged to check your DARS for this information. If there is something missing from the DARS record, you should schedule a meeting with your advisor. If you plan to register later due to an internship, practicum, or other reasons, there is a comments field on the application where this information can be

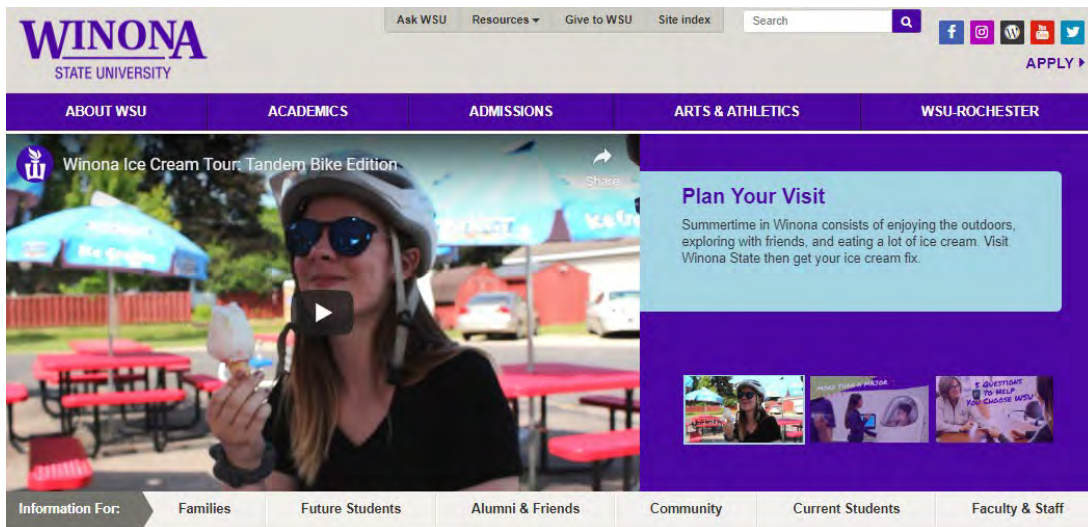
written, though your graduation application may be denied until you are registered for all of your coursework. There is also an area on the form to list any transfer courses that may be taken in your last term.

Searching for Course Options

Course Offerings

For your completion of elective courses, you can find the course information in the WSU [Undergraduate Catalog](#). Course descriptions, curricular and degree requirements, and other academic information are described in the catalog. After finding the courses you are interested in, you can see when, where, and how those courses are offered for a particular semester via the WSU website.

- Click “[Resources](#)” on WSU homepage, followed by [eServices](#)



- Select the campus, semester, subject and delivery method

Course Search Course Equivalents Non-Credit/Continuing Ed

Search

* Required field

* College/University

Campus

* Semester


Subject Course Number (Example 1100)

Course ID # (Example 004390)

Display Open + Waitlist Eligible Courses Open Courses Only All Courses

Delivery Method All In Person Completely Online Blended/Hybrid Mostly Online Hyflex

- If you need to meet specific General Education or Intensive requirements, you may find selecting the Advanced Search option beneficial.



Days Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

Times between and

MN Transfer Curriculum Goal

Credit Type

Instructor

Begins after Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

General/Liberal Ed

of Credits/Hours

Keyword Search

Location

Please note that the delivery method of each course is subject to change each semester. Also, some courses may require prerequisite courses or instructor’s permission for registration.

Experiential Learning

Internship Courses

An internship can be an invaluable part of an individualized major or minor. The knowledge, skills, and connections that you acquire through an internship are a key asset as you seek employment. We recommend that you include one in your plan of study.

Finding an internship site can be time consuming. You should start the process several months in advance. If you are unsure where to start, contact our faculty liaison or program advisors.

The Individualized Studies internship may be taken for anywhere between 1 to 12 credits (1-12 SH). A maximum of 3 internship credits may be taken for a letter grade. The remainder must be taken on a P/NC basis.

If you are interested in pursuing the Individualized Studies internship, please talk with your Individualized Studies advisor; he or she will give you more information and help you start the process. For general information on internships, please visit the WSU [Career Services Internship page](#). You can also visit the [Individualized Studies Internship page](#) to view some of the sites where past majors and minors have completed internships. The [Communication Studies Internship Site](#) is also a valuable too and includes many links to websites that list internship opportunities. includes many links to websites that list internship opportunities.

A limited number of academic departments at WSU allow non-majors to take internships through their department. Thus, it may also be an option for a student to take an internship through another academic department rather than through Individualized Studies.

The INDS internship courses are available only for Individualized Studies majors and minors who have completed a minimum of 60 credits, including at least 21 credits of upper-division coursework. Prerequisites: Department approval. INDS 398 and INDS 399 may be combined up to a maximum of 12 credits for majors and 6 credits for minors. Below is a list of INDS internship courses:

Individualized Studies Internship Courses		
INDS	398	Internship (1-3 SH) – Letter grade
INDS	399	Internship (1-9 SH) – P/NC only

Independent Study

If you are interested in pursuing an Independent Study in an area of special interest to you, please talk with your Individualized Studies advisor; he or she will give you more information and help you start the process.

Prerequisites: INDS 300 and Department approval. The Individualized Studies Independent Study is only available to Individualized Studies majors and minors.

Individualized Studies Independent Study Course
INDS 499 Independent Study (1-6 SH)

Career Goals

Because it is a customized program, Individualized Studies degrees are as unique as the students who design them. In today's job market, employers are interested in the knowledge, skills, and competencies that a student has acquired through a degree program and related work and volunteer experience. Within the Individualized Studies major and minor, a student can build on his or her interests, experience, intellectual strengths, and career goals to design a program which encompasses many of the areas of competence that employers are seeking. These might include critical thinking, problem solving, communication skills, technology skills, and the ability to work well with others. Students in the Individualized Studies major/minor are encouraged to highlight those aspects of their degree program as they interview and seek employment.

“As an adult learner returning to WSU for a BA degree, the Individualized Studies Option is a perfect avenue to blend independence and purpose into a meaningful academic and life experience. I’m able to choose course work that can be applied directly to my current role and give me real-time benefits with that knowledge. It also positions me well for many future aspirations by allowing me to learn and grow without traveling too far out of my comfort zone. It’s an ideal opportunity for me both personally and professionally!”

(INDS graduate and employee at Mayo Clinic, Rochester)

Individualized Studies majors and minors should have a career goal in mind before declaring this program. Career and future educational goals will help shape the individualized program you create. Students are encouraged to work with WSU Career Services throughout their time as an Individualized Studies major or minor. [WSU Career Services](#) provides a comprehensive range of services to assist current students and graduates in achieving their employment goals and/or entrance into a graduate or professional program.

Student Program Plan

Although the Student Program Plan will be completed using the online [Individualized Studies - Student Program Plan form](#), students often find it helpful to sketch out what they will include in their plan. It is important to note that once you begin filling out the online version it must be completed in one sitting.



INDIVIDUALIZED STUDIES: STUDENT PROGRAM PLAN

[All Individualized Studies (INDS) majors and minors are required to develop a student program plan. The development of this plan provides you an opportunity (1) to research the occupational outlook for your career of choice and (2) to develop a strategy on how best to design a customized academic degree to achieve your specific educational and career objectives. The plan also provides Winona State University with important information about your degree plan and what you expect to accomplish through this major/minor.]

Rationale

[Provide two to three paragraphs describing your specific and unique rationale for choosing the INDS major/minor over a more traditional major/minor with prescribed courses. It may be helpful to consider a future job interview and how you would explain to a prospective employer why you decided to create a customized degree and why this degree would make you a more valuable employee.]

Curriculum Design

[A Professional/Individualized Studies program can be designed in three ways. Please select the focus that best aligns with your educational needs and goals.]

Select One	Type of Design	Description
	Thematic Focus	This design indicates that coursework is in two or more disciplines organized around a theme. As an example, a student may be interested themes such as leadership or cultural competency from the perspectives of multiple disciplines such as sociology, economics and health.
	Interdisciplinary Focus	This design indicates that selected coursework is in two disciplines, such as political science and public relations.
	Disciplinary Focus*	This design indicates coursework is all in the same discipline, for example, computer science.

[*If you selected a disciplinary focus for your degree in a discipline that is currently offered at Winona State, please explain why you chose to pursue Professional/Individualized Studies rather than a major or minor offered in your identified discipline.]

Courses

[Provide a comprehensive list of all courses you have already taken or plan to take as part of your Individualized Studies major or minor. Ensure that you have met all the coursework requirements for your program through these classes. If a course is an Intensive please indicate that in the Intensive Column (MS/CA = Math Stats/Critical Analysis, O = Oral, W = Writing). **NOTE: Any subsequent changes to your list of courses must be reviewed and approved by your advisor.**]

Institution	Course department and number	Course name	Number of credits	Intensive? MS/CA or O or W See instructions above	Course completed? Yes or NO	If not completed, which semester do you plan to take the course?
WSU	INDS 300	Academic Planning & Career Foundations	3	O		
Total Credits:						

Add additional rows if necessary

Be sure you have reviewed the prerequisites for the courses you have listed above. If you still need to take any prerequisites for the courses listed above, please indicate them here:

Course #	Course Name	Prerequisite for?	# of credits	Semester you plan to take the course

Add additional rows if necessary

Learning Outcomes

[Identify a minimum of ten specific learning outcomes that you will need to achieve through this degree and identify the courses that will provide you the education to achieve these outcomes.]

You can find learning outcomes in the outline for each course on WSU’s web site [here](#):

Specific Learning Outcomes	Course(s) where outcome will be achieved
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	
6)	
7)	
8)	
9)	
10)	

Occupational Outlook

[Please complete the appropriate section (Option A or Option B) below.]

Option A: If you will be seeking a new job once you have completed your Individualized Studies degree:

[Provide a summary of a minimum of three specific occupations that interest you. Make sure that the individualized degree you are creating will provide you the knowledge and skills that you need to achieve your career goals. You may do your own research or work with [WSU Career Services](#) to research an intended career field. Feel free to use your findings from the “Career Field Research Paper and Presentation” assignment to complete this section. The [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) is another valuable resource.]

Occupation Name	Description of Occupation	Median Pay	Education Required	Outlook/growth
1)				
2)				
3)				

Option B: If you are earning your Individualized Studies degree for your current job, describe how the design of your program will specifically enhance your abilities and effectiveness relating to specific job skills and requirements for your current position (or in your opportunities for promotion). [Provide a minimum of two paragraphs.]

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INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL AND CONTRACT: PART ONE

Your name:	Warrior ID#:	
Address:		
E-mail address:	Your cell phone number:	
Total number of credits completed:	Your Overall GPA:	

Note: This page is for WSU internship instructor. You do not need to disclose this to your internship site supervisor (the person for whom you are working during your internship).

_____ You should submit this page, along with your DARS or transcript to your WSU faculty instructor for the internship **before** you complete Part Two.

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INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL AND CONTRACT: PART TWO

Your name:		Warrior ID#:	
Internship Position Title:			
Dates of internship (15 weeks, maximum)	Start date:	End date:	
Check the type of internship you are doing:			
INDS398 (For a letter grade) <input type="checkbox"/>	INDS399 (Pass/No credit) <input type="checkbox"/>		
Number of INDS398 credits you are applying for (maximum of 3):			
Number of INDS399 credits you are applying for (maximum of 9)			
Hours per week:			
Name of internship supervisor and supervisor's title:			
Organization name:			
Email address:	Phone number:		
Mailing address:			
Paid or Unpaid?			
<p><i>Using the space below, provide a job description. Include a complete description of the intern's assignments including any expected achievements such as a writing a report, creating a program or system, and milestone expectations. The activities to be performed for the internship must add up to a meaningful learning experience, not just a "part-time job." Therefore, the tasks described should entail significant responsibility. Use as much space as you need.</i></p>			
<p><i>Using the space below, describe your internship objectives and the expected learning outcomes. Use as much space as you need.</i></p>			

Using the space below, Describe the nature of any present or previous employment of the intern with this organization.

The on-site supervisor will be asked to submit a written evaluation(s) of the intern's performance.

On-Site Supervisor Signature

Date

Instructor Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Requirement:

You, as the student, are responsible for obtaining the On-Site Supervisor signature on this form and the Instructor's signature.