**Sterling College Self-Designed Major Proposal**

**Effective Spring 2021**

**Background**

The Self-Designed Major is an option for those who wish to focus their studies on an area that integrates coursework across one or more currently offered majors. Students who are considering self-designed majors should consult with their advisor early in their tenure at Sterling College. Students will work closely with faculty to develop an academic program that both fulfills students’ educational goals and is within the realm of faculty expertise. Examples of recent self-designed majors include: *Agricultural Education*, *Ecotourism*, *Ecological Design*, *Cultural Geography*, *Social and Ecological Justice Education*, *Farmstead Arts*, *Human Ecology*, and *Sustainable Building*.

**Process and Timeline**

1. **Self-Designed Major Workshop**

In the second semester of a student’s sophomore year or the first semester of their junior year (around 60 credits), those intending to design their major are required to enroll in the 1-credit Self-Designed Major Workshop (INT399). In this workshop, students work with the instructor and their peers to develop their proposal. Outside of class, students will also be working with their first reader (typically their advisor) and their second reader (another faculty member who complements the first reader’s expertise).

1. **Submission to Degree Committee**

Once a proposal has been completed, and approval from the first and second readers has been gained and registered in Blackbaud notes, students will submit their self-design major proposals to the Degree Committee Chair. To guarantee review that semester, the proposal should be submitted no later than the seventh week of that semester.

1. **Degree Committee Review**

The Degree Committee will review submitted proposals as soon as possible after their submission, and in the order in which they are received. After review, the Degree Committee Chair will respond with a letter to the student with one of the following three decisions:

a. Approval: The proposal is approved as it stands. A copy will be held on record in the student file, and its details entered into the student information system.

b. Minor changes: Some small revisions are requested and must be made before final approval. The student should continue to work with their first and second readers to make the requested changes and re-submit their proposal as soon as possible. The resubmission must again be approved by the first and second readers. Following submission, proposals with minor changes do not need to go back to the whole Degree Committee for review, but will be reviewed by the Degree Committee Chair and Dean of Academics.

c. Major changes: Some significant changes are requested. The student should continue to work with their first and second readers to make the requested changes and re-submit their proposal as soon as possible. Their resubmission must again be approved by the first and second readers. Following submission, proposals with major changes will go back to the whole Degree Committee for review.

1. **Changes to Approved Self-Designed Majors**

Any changes to an approved major must be discussed with your Academic Advisor and must be approved by your First and Second Readers (as indicated in FAWeb), and then submitted to the Chair of the Degree Committee for approval. This request must include an updated version of the self-designed major proposal, and an accompanying statement that explains what courses were changed and why.

***Students must have an approved major on file in order to register for courses in their senior year.***

**Self-Designed Major Proposal Form**

**YOUR NAME:**

**SDM CHECKLIST YEAR:**

* Prior to Fall 2018
* Fall 2018
* Fall 2019 and forward

**PLANNED MINOR (if applicable):**

**INTENDED DATE OF GRADUATION:**

**TITLE** of proposed major. This title will appear on your transcript.

**DESCRIPTION** of proposed major. The first sentence provides a definition of the major. The remainder concisely articulates the scope and themes of the major (no more than 200 words).

**FACULTY AND OTHER RESOURCES**: a brief narrative or annotated list of how particular Sterling faculty expertise and interests, as well as off-campus resources (including people and organizations), support the major (approximately 100 words).

**DOCUMENTATION** of courses comprising the major. Include the course number and title, the semester and year, and the number of credits. This list can include courses you have already completed (at Sterling or transferred from elsewhere), are currently enrolled in, and are to be completed in the future.

The number of self-designed major credits must total at least 50 credits (including SYRP).

Each self-designed major must include a distribution of courses across the discipline areas offered at Sterling, with minimum distribution requirements as follows:

1 credit of Applied Sciences (AS)

3 credits of Natural Sciences (NS)

3 credits of Social Sciences (SS)

3 credits of Humanities (HM)

Integrative credits strongly encouraged (INT)

10 credits of 300-400 level courses within the proposed major (not including SYRP).

*Formatting Notes:*

*Indicate upper-level course work with an \* beside the course title. Example: \*SS381D Social Economy.*

*Courses from another institution must have the school name clearly listed. Example: HDFS101 Individual and Family Development (Montana State University).*

| **MAJOR COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE** | **SEMESTER/YEAR** | **CREDITS** |
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| **Applied Science:** |  |  |
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| **Natural Science:** | | |
| \*NS302 Field Ecology | Summer 2020 | 4 |
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| **MAJOR COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE** | **SEMESTER/YEAR** | **CREDITS** |
| **Social Science:** | | |
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| **Humanities:** | | |
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| **Integrative:** | | |
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| **Total Credits:** | |  |

**NARRATIVE.** This is a thematic discussion of your major organized around its key components. Be sure to explainhow each individual course supports your major. The narrative also provides a rationale for why you are pursuing this major in lieu of an existing major. The relevance of your Senior Year Research Project (SYRP) should be discussed (500-750 words).