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## Shaped Major

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### PROPOSAL FOR SHAPED MAJOR AT YESHIVA COLLEGE:

Like departmental majors at the College, the Shaped Major is meant to move beyond the shared “general” education experience of the Core, and to provide students with in-depth, intensive work in a particular area of intellectual interest. For most students, the traditional departmental majors meet this goal, focusing within a discipline. But some students’ intellectual goals cross the boundaries between liberal arts disciplines and their departments—and we would like the College to be able to provide the conditions for meeting those goals, which can be equally rewarding and legitimate. Providing a Shaped Major can also extend in exciting ways the intellectual reach of educational opportunities at a small liberal arts college.

Students hoping to pursue a Shaped Major should work with a faculty member in their area of interest to frame their goals for the Shaped Major—and to make sure that these goals cannot be met within an existing departmental major (many of which include interdisciplinary inquiry, and are amenable to petitions from students to count one or two courses outside their department toward the major). On the basis of those goals, a PROPOSAL PACKET should be submitted to the Curriculum Committee and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, consisting of the following items:

1. A 500-750 word narrative framing of the focus of the student’s Shaped Major, including the organizing questions that the student hopes to address. This narrative should also identify the central ideas that give this Shaped Major coherence; provide *an explanation of how it is different from existing departmental majors*; and discuss what the student hopes to know at the end of this course of study, how this program of study will contribute to the student’s future plans, and the basis on which the student has selected the courses he needs to complete the Shaped Major.
2. At least one “anchor” course, ideally taken toward the beginning of the student’s coursework, that will address the central questions of this Shaped Major, and help the student integrate the ways in which different disciplines have addressed those questions. This course should not be taken on an independent study basis.
3. A minimum of 11 additional proposed courses to complete the Shaped Major, organized by semester.
  - Courses to fulfill the Major must come from at least two different departments of the College, and the proposal should provide department, course number, and title for each course. (In some cases, it may make sense to include alternate elective courses.)
  - At least five of the courses fulfilling the Shaped Major must be taken at the advanced (2000-level and above) level.

- No more than one of the courses fulfilling the Shaped Major may be taken on an independent study basis.
4. A letter of support from the full-time faculty member who will serve as the students' Shaped Major advisor if his proposal is accepted. That letter should address: the intellectual quality of the student's proposed Major and choice of courses to complete it; the potential for realistically completing this Major using the College's regularly offered courses; this student's ability to work independently and seriously in meeting the goals of his Shaped Major; the appropriateness of the Major to the student's career plans; the necessity for the Shaped Major rather than an existing departmental major.

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- a. Ideally, students should apply for the Shaped Major by the end of their second term on campus, but applications from students at the start of their third term of coursework will be considered.
- b. Students applying for the Shaped Major must earn a minimum grade point average of 3.4 in their first two semesters on campus.
- c. Applications for Shaped Majors will be evaluated by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and members of the Yeshiva College Curriculum Committee, and approved applications will be filed with the Registrar. Approval will be based on: the proposal's intellectual credibility and potential to be completed using regularly offered courses at the College, and the applicant's intellectual readiness to complete successfully an independent course of study.
- d. Once a Shaped Majors proposal has been approved and filed, any changes in it must be formally resubmitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and an updated form will be filed with the Registrar.

NOTE: Courses within any given major or minor require a grade of a "C-" or better to fulfill its requirement