

SPECIAL MAJOR

Overview and Contact Information

Students whose interests cross department lines in an area for which no interdisciplinary major exists may plan a special major incorporating work in two or more departments. Students must work closely with faculty advisors to create a plan that is academically and educationally rigorous, which then must also be approved by the Academic Dean for the Senior Class.

Each year, ten to 20 students graduate with a special major. Recent examples include biomathematics, musical theater, neurochemistry, psycholinguistics, urban studies, and wildlife biology.

Contact Information

Kathryn McMenimen, Academic Dean for the Senior Class
Briana Chace, Office Manager and Assistant to the Vice President for Student Success

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<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/directory/departments-offices-centers/office-academic-deans> (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/directory/departments-offices-centers/office-academic-deans/>)

Requirements for a Special Major

A minimum of 40 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
	20 credits of coursework in the approved program ¹	20
	20 credits of coursework at the 300 level in the approved program, divided between two or more departments ¹	20
Total Credits		40

¹ Per the student's written plan endorsed by faculty and the Academic Dean for the Senior Class.

Other Requirements

- Declaration of special major form (https://my.mtholyoke.edu/ossa/academic_deans/Documents/Declaration%20of%20Special%20Major.pdf) (student or faculty login required)
- A written plan must be submitted to and endorsed by two members of the faculty and approved by the Academic Dean for the Senior Class. The plan must be submitted no later than the end of the eighth week of classes of the second semester of the student's junior year.

Additional Specifications

- Students who declare a special major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement.
- Special majors at Mount Holyoke are multi-disciplinary and are not eligible for the STEM OPT visa extension even if the majority of courses are in STEM fields.
- A special major in mathematics and economics is automatically approved upon application if it includes:
 - ECON-211, ECON-212, and at least two 300-level Economics courses (including ECON-307 and/or ECON-320), and
 - MATH-203, MATH-211, MATH-251, and at least two of the following courses: MATH-333, MATH-339, MATH-342.

- A special major in statistics and economics is automatically approved upon application if it includes:
 - ECON-211, ECON-212, ECON-320, and at least one other 300-level Economics course.
 - MATH-203, MATH-211, and at least two of the following courses: STAT-340, MATH-342, STAT-343, STAT-344.
- Any special major with a music component requires approval of the music department chair, and one of the advisors of the special major must be a music department faculty member. These special majors must include:
 - MUSIC-231 and at least two of the following courses: MUSIC-281, MUSIC-282, MUSIC-283.
 - One music elective at any level and an additional two music electives at the 300 level.