The senior project provides IDIM students with the opportunity to integrate what they have learned from the courses in their major programs. The project should be both creative and scholarly; it should demonstrate your ability to formulate an original interdisciplinary project and to complete it in a way that shows a level of skills and understanding appropriate for a senior who has been engaged in a sustained program of study on a single theme. The particular form the project takes will vary depending on the substance of the student's major program and the student's specific learning goals. Here are some forms the senior project can take:

♦ an original research project using, for example, a method such as surveys or interviews
♦ a critical review of the scholarly literature on some aspect of the student's major field
♦ a work of art, film, or fiction, or some other demonstration of artistic development, supplemented by an analytic written commentary
♦ a paper based on an internship with a business or a non-profit organization.

Whatever form the senior project takes, it provides an excellent opportunity for students to work closely with faculty advisers in the process of planning the project and in carrying it out.

The senior project must be completed in one of the student's last semesters of registration. The process of planning the senior project, however, should begin by the beginning of the semester prior to the semester of registering for the project. However, it is useful to start thinking about the senior project even earlier. As you are taking the courses in your major, thinking about the sort of senior project that might emerge is an important way of bringing the separate parts of your studies together to create a coherent interdisciplinary experience.

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The IDIM senior project process consists of seven distinct steps:

1. Select a topic at least one semester before you plan to begin working on the project.

This step involves thinking seriously about the goals of your major--both as you thought of them when you initially proposed the major and as you think of them as you approach graduation. Selecting a topic will involve three elements: choosing the subject you will be working on, choosing your approach to the subject, and choosing the form your project will take. For some students, these elements can or need to be thought about separately; for others they cannot. For everyone, the process of selecting a topic should involve consultation with faculty advisers.

2. Write a proposal before the semester in which you plan to complete the project.

The IDIM senior project proposal explains what your project is about, how you plan to carry it out, and what you hope to learn by doing it. Your proposal should be two to three pages long. Your most important audience is your faculty advisers. They will approve your proposed project, or recommend or require changes, based on this written proposal. Your faculty advisers will want to know:

♦ what questions you want to answer or problems you want to address
♦ how you plan to address them, i.e., what form your project will take
♦ what methods you will use, e.g., statistical analysis, archival research, textual analysis, video production
♦ what materials you will use (a bibliography will often answer this question)
♦ what courses and experiences have prepared you to undertake this project
♦ the ways in which this project represents a culmination of your major.
3. **Work with your IDIM adviser** to 1) make any revisions needed to clarify your project proposal and 2) to identify your faculty advisers for the project.

When your IDIM adviser feels that your proposal is solid, he or she will give you Senior Project Proposal Approval Forms to take to your three faculty advisers. These advisers can be the same faculty members who approved your program, or you can make substitutions if any of your original advisers are unavailable or if there are other faculty whose interests are more specifically related to your project. The three faculty advisers must represent or have expertise in three different areas of concentration in your major. One of the advisers will serve as the primary adviser and will grade the project. The other two must approve both the proposal and the final product, but they do not necessarily participate in assigning a grade.

4. **Bring your proposal to your faculty advisers for review and approval.**

This is a crucial step in the process. Your faculty advisers can provide you with information and advice that will help you carry out the project in the best and most efficient way possible. Furthermore, you must have their approval of the project proposal or you cannot expect that they will approve the final product. It is your responsibility to find out what each of your faculty advisers expects of you. Be sure you know whether they want to meet with you regularly, read drafts of your work, or have any other kind of contact with you as you work on the project. Having a clear understanding of all your advisers' expectations will ease the project evaluation process later and will give you the opportunity to have a productive relationship with all your faculty advisers.

5. **Register for at least two credits for the senior project** to be earned during the semester in which you plan to complete the project. **Grading for the project must be on the A-F system.**

Ordinarily students register for Directed Study with the primary faculty adviser. Other arrangements are possible: extra credits in a course (X-registration), Directed Research, etc. You will not be able to register for your project until you have completed your project proposal because most registration options, such as Directed Study, require you to submit to the College a contract form that has been signed by your primary adviser.

6. **Complete your project**, making sure you stay in contact with your faculty advisers in the way specified at the time they approved your project proposal.

7. **Make four copies of your completed project and bring one of them to the IDIM Office.**

Your IDIM adviser will give you Senior Project Evaluation Forms to give to your three faculty advisers when you deliver their copies of the project. These forms must be completed by your advisers and returned to the IDIM office about two weeks after finals (check with the office for the exact date for that semester). It is your responsibility either to pick up the evaluations from your advisers and deliver them to the IDIM office or to arrange for your advisers to send them to the office directly. **If you are in the CLA Honors Program and your senior project is your honors project, you are also responsible for having your advisers sign your Graduation With Honors form.**

After your IDIM adviser has received your senior project and your three final evaluation forms, he or she will file a major clearance form with your CLA Student Community, indicating that you have completed all requirements for your major.

**Questions or Problems…**

Your IDIM adviser will be happy to assist you at any point in the senior project process. Come to the IDIM Office in 345 Fraser Hall, or phone 612/624-8006 or e-mail idp@class.cla.umn.edu.

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