

CONTRACT MAJORS

The purpose of the contract major is to enable highly motivated students to develop individual programs of study most appropriate to their particular academic interests. Contract majors should be considered only in those cases where students' academic interests are substantially different to the point that they cannot be accommodated by an existing major program. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is normally expected.

A contract major is interdisciplinary in nature and may include regular courses, independent study, fieldwork, study at other institutions, and study overseas. Three faculty advisors from academic disciplines related to the contract major must sponsor the proposing student; no more than two may be from the same department. One will be designated as the student's primary advisor.

Contract majors consist of at least 30 credits, of which at least 24 are upper-division (300/400-level) credits. Transfer credits may be applied to the contract major; however, at least half of the major credits must be earned at New Paltz. All other degree requirements must be completed.

Interested students should first consult a representative of the appropriate dean's office to discuss the proposed contract major and the composition of the contract committee/advisors. Students seeking a contract major should ideally submit a proposal before the end of their sophomore year, or at the latest by the end of the first semester of their junior year.

The final proposal should consist of:

1. a completed "Declaration of Major/Contract Plan" form, which can be obtained from an advisor or the appropriate dean;
2. an essay describing the major, how it fits in with the student's plans after graduation, and why a combination of majors/minors and electives won't accomplish the same thing.

These materials must be submitted to the primary dean's office for approval. The contract major will be assigned to the academic unit of the approving dean, who will forward all materials to Records & Registration to be kept on file for degree clearance.

Since the student's progress report will not contain major-specific information, the student and advisors should keep copies of the submitted contract-major plan of study for registration planning.

Procedural revisions entered May 2019