

Academic Program Terminology Plan

The purpose of standardizing our institutional use of terms associated with academic programs is to ensure that all programs of a similar nature are treated uniformly and that students enrolled in like programs are offered the same opportunities and considerations across all academic areas (excluding LAW).

The program type below is available to degree-seeking and non-degree-seeking students:

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Certificate	<p>A group of courses that constitute an area of study that can be completed with or without an accompanying degree.</p> <p>For degree-seeking students: Certificate will be awarded at the time degree is awarded: <i>documented on the transcript.</i></p> <p>For non-degree-seeking students: Certificate will be awarded when coursework is complete: <i>documented on the transcript.</i></p>

The program types listed below are available only to degree-seeking students enrolled in degree-granting programs:

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Major	<p>A group of courses at the undergraduate or graduate level that constitute a primary program of study. At the undergraduate level, an academic major must contain a minimum of 24 upper division credit hours. At the graduate level, an academic major must contain a minimum of 18 credit hours.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Example: BA in Dance. The degree is the BA; the major is Dance. Also, MA in Mathematics. The degree is the MA; the major is Mathematics.</p> <p><i>Documented on the diploma and transcript.</i></p>
Minor (accompanying a Major)	<p>A group of courses that constitute a secondary program of study that is distinct, in subject area, from the primary program of study.</p> <p>Academic minors must contain a minimum of 18 credit hours (at least six upper division) for undergraduate degrees, six credit hours for master's degrees, and 15 credit hours for doctoral degrees.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Example: BA in Dance, Minor in Chemistry. The degree is the BA; the major is Dance; the minor is Chemistry.</p> <p><i>Documented on the transcript.</i></p>
Minor (as part of an Interdisciplinary Degree)	<p>Interdisciplinary degrees comprise distinct fields of specialization. These fields of specialization are required to follow curricula approved for inclusion in an interdisciplinary degree. Any academic minor may be used as a field of specialization in an interdisciplinary degree. Additionally, students and advisers in these degree programs can pursue self-designed fields of specialization provided they obtain approval from the academic areas housing the courses included in those fields.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Examples: Bachelor of General Studies: the fields of specialization are; 1)a minor in History; 2) a minor in English; 3) a self-designed 18 hours in Political Science (approved by POLS) and Women's and Gender Studies (approved by WGS).</p> <p><i>Documented on the transcript.</i></p>

Track	<p>A group of courses that constitute a distinction <u>within a major</u> at the <u>professional master's (e.g., MFA, MFT)</u> and doctoral levels (e.g., PhD, EdD, DMA).</p> <p>Example: PhD in Fine Arts, major in Theatre, tracks in Arts Administration and Playwriting; MFA in Dance, major in Dance, tracks in Performance and Choreography.</p> <p><i>Documented on the transcript.</i></p>
Concentration	<p>A group of courses that constitute a distinction <u>within a major</u> at the <u>undergraduate level and in Master of Arts/Master of Science/Master of Education degrees</u>. The concentration allows the student to complete the degree with a demonstrated proficiency in an area of focus <u>within the major</u>.</p> <p>Example: BFA in Theatre Arts with a Concentration in Acting; BFA in Theatre Arts with a Concentration in Design; BFA in Theatre Arts with a Concentration in Musical Theatre. MA in Languages & Cultures with a Concentration in German; MA in Languages & Cultures with a Concentration in Applied Linguistics.</p> <p>At the <u>undergraduate level</u>, a concentration must include at least twelve semester credit hours and generally should not exceed 50% of the total semester credit hours required for the major (not the entire degree). A minimum of twelve semester credit hours in the concentration must be upper division.</p> <p>For <u>Master of Arts/Sciences/Education degrees</u>, a concentration must align with <u>one</u> of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A concentration is a group of courses comprising at least six semester credit hours in the major. The THECB mandates that majors in Masters degrees include a minimum of 18 SCH. Concentrations must comprise six SCH <u>within that major</u>. The academic department determines what courses constitute the major and concentration. The concentration allows the student to complete the degree with a demonstrated proficiency in an area of focus <u>within the major</u>. 2. A concentration is a group of courses comprising at least six semester credit hours taken in addition to the major and which cannot be taken separately from the major. That is, a student not enrolled in the major may not complete the coursework required for the concentration. The concentration allows the student to complete the degree with a demonstrated proficiency in a secondary area of focus <u>complementary to the major</u>. <p>Regardless of concentration, the number of credit hours required to complete the degree should not change. This is because the required minimum semester credit hours for the degree awarded is based on the major only, not the concentration.</p> <p>Concentrations are only available to students enrolled in the home major.</p> <p><i>Documented on the transcript.</i></p>
Specialization	<p>A group of courses that constitute a distinction <u>within a concentration</u>.</p> <p>Example: Bachelor of Music, major in Music, concentration in Performance, specialization in Tuba. Bachelor of Fine Arts, major in Art, concentration in Studio Art, specialization in Painting.</p> <p><i>Documented on the transcript as an additional concentration.</i></p>