



northern *State* university

ACADEMIC WHYs and WHAT FORs!

A bachelor's degree consists of a minimum of 120 semester hours in

- general education, including system core and degree requirements,
- a major,
- an optional minor or endorsements
- professional education (B.S.Ed. and B.M.E.),
- and general electives.

The number of hours in each of these categories will vary depending on the curriculum you select, as well as your major and minor.

An associate degree consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours including 18 credits of general education and specified courses for the major.

General Education

General Education, or GE, are the courses that the NSU faculty have identified to provide fundamental skills and knowledge which will enable you to function effectively in and appreciate the various components of society.

General Education consists of 30 hours of Board of Regents' mandated primary core requirements and selected courses identified as degree requirements. **Pre-General Education courses in English, Math and Reading are required by some students to prepare them for the regular General Education courses and must be completed within the first 42 attempted credits. Pre-General Education courses numbered less than 100 are considered developmental and do not count as credit toward graduation. They must be completed in the first 30 attempted credits hours. Placement in these courses is based on ACT and ACCUPLACER test scores or MATH Index. They are self-support courses and charged at that tuition rate.** Degree requirements are courses that specifically complement the students' major and cause the complete GE package to vary slightly depending on the curriculum in which your major field is offered.

Board of Regents System Core:

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Two courses Written Communication | Two courses Arts & Humanities |
| One course Oral Communication | One course Mathematics |
| Two courses Social Sciences | Two courses Natural Sciences with Labs |

Degree Requirements:

- BA: Two courses Arts & Humanities, including one foreign language, one course Human Values
 BS: One course Quantitative, one course higher level Math or additional Natural Science, one course Human Values
 BSED/BME: Professional Education Course work: EPSY 302, EPSY 428, INED 441, EDFN 475

Major

A major is the subject area that you want to specialize in during your academic career. A complete listing of Northern's majors and the degree programs in which they are offered is included below. Use the university catalog for a complete listing of the courses required for each major.

Undergraduate Degrees

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| AA Associate of Arts | Business Administration (AS, BS) |
| AS Associate of Science | AS Specializations in Management Information Systems and Business Administration |
| BA Bachelor of Arts | Chemistry (BS, BSED) |
| BGS Bachelor of General Studies | BS Specialization in Forensic Science |
| BS Bachelor of Science | Communication Studies (BA) |
| BSED Bachelor of Science in Education | Criminal Justice (AA) |
| BME Bachelor of Music Education | Criminology Specialization-Sociology(BA) |

Majors

- | | |
|--|---|
| Accounting (BS) | Digital Design (AS) |
| Art (BA, BSED) | Economics (BS) |
| BA Specializations in Fine Arts and Graphic Design | Elementary Education (BSED) |
| Banking and Financial Services (AS, BS) | English (BA, BSED) |
| Biology (BS, BSED) | Emphases in TESL, Literature, Creative Writing, Teaching, Desktop Publishing, Professional Writing & Rhetoric |
| Biotechnology (AS) | Environmental Science (BS) |

Emphases in Bioremediation, Wildlife
Management
Finance (BS)
Forensic Science specialization- Chemistry(BS)
General Studies (AA, BGS)
German (BA)
History (BA, BSED)
Human Performance & Fitness (BS)
 Emphases in Fitness Administration,
 Personal Training/Strength & Conditioning,
 Health & Fitness for Older Adults
Human Services – Sociology(BA)
International Business Studies (BA)
Management (BS)
Management Information Systems (AS,BS)
Marketing (BS)

Mathematics (BS, BSED)
Medical Laboratory Science (BS)
Music (BA, BME)
 Specializations in Instrumental and Vocal
Musical Theater (BA)
Physical Education (BSED)
Political Science (BA)
Professional Accountancy (BS)
Psychology (BS)
Sociology (BA)
 Focus areas in Criminal Justice and Human
 Services
Spanish (BA, BSED)
Special Education (BSED)
Sport Marketing and Administration (BS)

Minors, Endorsements, Certificates

A minor is an additional area of study outside the major, usually consisting of a minimum of 18 specified credits. While not required, a minor demonstrates depth of knowledge in an additional field of study. Minors are available in many subject areas. Minors may be attached to baccalaureate degree programs only.

A teacher education endorsement will provide minimal preparation for students wishing to take the content knowledge exam in a subject area outside their major. These are awarded by the SD DOE based on courses taken, exams or both.

A variety of Certificates are available, requiring 12 credits each, in Allied Health, Arts Administration, Biotechnology, Biotechnology Entrepreneurship, Chinese, Executive and Intermediate Banking, Geographic Information Sciences (GIS), Organismal Biology, Public History and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

General Electives

General electives are the balance of semester hours required after completing general education, the major and minor, and certification requirements for an education degree. General electives might be courses in subject areas in which you have an interest but no intent to specialize, or extra courses in your major or minor fields. The size of the major and minor, as well as the general education package, affects the number of elective hours available in the degree.

Program Evaluation (Degree Audit)

As you complete courses at NSU, the credit is applied toward the requirements for general education, majors, minors, and general electives. An automated degree audit system is used to produce a “check list” of courses you need yet to graduate in the program that you have defined. This program evaluation is available to you at any time via WebAdvisor.

When you decide on a degree and a major, you will formally **declare** that program by filing a program declaration. Your advisor will help you with this process when you have made a firm decision. Like others before you, you may change your mind more than once as you expose yourself to different disciplines across the entire curriculum.

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