



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 (for BSED and BME degrees),
- 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 24 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 (required for all baccalaureate degrees):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 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* |

*Associate degrees require one course in each of the asterisked areas plus one additional course chosen from any one of those areas.

Additional Degree Requirements for baccalaureate degrees:

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

- AA Associate of Arts
- AS Associate of Science
- BA Bachelor of Arts
- BFA Bachelor of Fine Arts
- BGS Bachelor of General Studies
- BS Bachelor of Science
- BSED Bachelor of Science in Education
- BME Bachelor of Music Education

Majors

- Accounting (BS)
- Art (BA, BSED)
 - BA Specializations in Fine Arts and Graphic Design

- Banking and Financial Services (BS)
- Biology (BS, BSED)
- Biotechnology (AS)
- Business Administration (AS, BS)
 - AS Specializations in Management Information Systems and Business Administration
- Chemistry (BS, BSED)
 - BS Specialization in Forensic Science
- Communication Studies (BA)
- Criminal Justice (AA, BA)
 - BA Emphases in Law & Policy, Law Enforcement & Homeland Security, or Correction & Juvenile Justice
- Digital Media (AS, BFA)

BFA emphases in Graphic Design,
 Interactive Design, or New Media
 Elementary Education (BSED)
 English (BA, BSED)
 Emphases in TESL, Literature, Creative Writing,
 Teaching, Desktop Publishing, or Professional
 Writing & Rhetoric
 Environmental Science (BS)
 Finance (BS)
 Forensic Science specialization- Chemistry (BS)
 General Studies (AA, BGS)
 German (BA)
 Government (BA)
 History (BA, BSED)
 Human Performance (BS)
 Emphases in Human Performance or Fitness &
 Sport Administration
 International Business Studies (BA)
 Management (BS)
 Emphases in Entrepreneurship, General
 Management, Leadership
 Management Information Systems (BS)
 Emphases in E-Commerce & Data
 Analytics, Financial Systems Assurance &
 Security, General MIS

Marketing (BS)
 Emphases in Digital Marketing, Digital
 Media, Marketing Management, or Public
 Relations
 Mathematics (BS, BSED)
 Medical Laboratory Science (BS)
 Music (BA)
 K-12 Music Education Composite (BME)
 K-12 Music Education Instrumental Music (BME)
 K-12 Music Education Vocal Music (BME)
 Musical Theatre (BA)
 Physical Education (BSED)
 Professional Accountancy (BS – 150 credit hour
 degree)
 Psychology (BS)
 Sociology (BA)
 Spanish (BA, BSED)
 Special Education (BSED)
 Sport Marketing and Administration (BS)
 Studio Art (BFA)
 Emphases in 2-dimensional Media, 3-
 Dimensional Media, or Interdisciplinary Arts

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, limited to education majors, 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, Behavioral Forensic Sciences, Biotechnology, Biotechnology Entrepreneurship, Chinese, Executive and Intermediate Banking, Geographic Information Sciences (GIS), Jazz Pedagogy, Organismal Biology, Public History, Piano Pedagogy, Quantitative Analytics in Science, 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 or Worksheet)

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 in Degree Works.**

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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