



ACADEMIC WHYs and WHAT FORs!

Degree

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.

Undergraduate Degrees offered at Northern:

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

General Education

General Education 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. Pre-General Education courses numbered less than 100 are considered developmental and do not count as credit toward graduation. Placement in these courses is based on SD BOR Placement policies. 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.

Majors

Accounting (BS)*	Chemistry (BS, BSED)
Art Education (BSED)	BS Specialization in Forensic Science
Banking and Financial Services (BS)*	Communication Studies (BA)
Biochemistry (BS)	Criminal Justice (AA, BA*)
Biology (BS, BSED)	Digital Entrepreneurship (AS)
Biotechnology (AS)	Digital Media (AS, BFA)
Business Administration (AS, BS)*	BFA emphases in Graphic Design, Interactive Design, or New Media
AS Specializations in Management Information Systems and Business Administration	Elementary Education (BSED)
	English (BA, BSED)

Emphases in TESL, Literature, Creative Writing,
Teaching, Media Studies, or Professional
Writing

Environmental Science (BS)

Finance (BS)

Forensic Science specialization- Chemistry (BS)

General Studies (AA, BGS)*

Global Language and Culture (BA) *

Government (BA)

History (BA, BSED)

Human Performance (BS)

Emphases in Exercise for Special Populations or
Health Promotion

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)

Music (BA)

Music Education K-12 (BME)

Physical Education (BSED)

Psychology (BS)

Social Science (BSED)

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

Theatre (BA)

Emphases in Theatre Studies, Design, or
Musical Theatre

*Program available online

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 for most programs, 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, American Civic Traditions, Arts Administration, Behavioral Forensic Sciences, Biotechnology, Biotechnology Entrepreneurship, Chinese, Executive and Intermediate Banking, Geographic Information Sciences (GIS), Germans from Russia, 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.

A number of accelerated masters degree programs are now available with more anticipated. These allow you to take 9-12 graduate level courses which will apply to both the undergraduate and graduate degree. This gives you a head start on a master’s degree. Accelerated programs are available in Accounting Analytics, Banking & Financial Services, Instructional Design in E-Learning, Special Education, and Sport Performance and Leadership. An agreement exists with USD for a Master’s in Social Work as well.

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