

OTHER ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Honors

The **Dean's Honors List** is compiled at the end of each term to honor undergraduate students who have completed 12 or more letter-graded units during the term with a 3.5 grade point average or better for that term. Units with a grade of CR do not count toward the 12-unit minimum, nor do units from Credit by Examination. The **President's Honors List** is compiled at the end of each university year to honor those undergraduate students who have demonstrated consistent achievement, as represented by being named to the Dean's Honors List for any two of the three terms of the university year.

Candidates for bachelor's degrees with the following **Cal Poly cumulative grade point averages** are awarded Latin honors at graduation. **Only courses taken at Cal Poly calculate into the Cal Poly grade point averages.** The GPA is officially calculated at the time the student has *completed* graduation requirements:

Summa cum laude – 3.850

Magna cum laude – 3.700

Cum laude – 3.500

The Latin honors are noted on both the diploma and the transcript.

Academic Minors

A minor is an integrated, coherent group of courses (comprising 15 to 24 units in most cases), which gives the student knowledge in an area that lies outside of the major field of study. Please see Programs (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/programs/>) for the list of minors.

Requirements for the minor:

- At least half of the units must be from upper-division courses (3000- or 4000-level)
- At least half of the units must be taken at Cal Poly (in residence). For the French, German, Italian Studies, and Spanish minors, the requirement for students studying abroad is at least one third of the units must be taken at Cal Poly; this allowance is for study abroad programs only and does not apply to any domestic transfer credit.
- Not more than one-third of the courses in a minor can be graded with student-selected Credit/No Credit (CR/NC), Courses that have mandatory CR/NC grading are not included in the one-third maximum.
- A minimum 2.00 GPA is required in all units counted for completion of the minor

The minor must be completed prior to, or at the same time as, the requirements for the bachelor's degree. A major and a minor may not be taken in the same degree program, and a minor is not required for a degree.

Students who wish to earn a minor should contact the department offering the academic minor as early as possible in the program and fill out the appropriate agreement form. Students may select a minor which has requirements from a catalog that is different from that of their major.

The minor form must then be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The completion of the minor is noted on the student's transcript, but is not shown on the diploma. In no case is a diploma awarded for the minor.

Blended BS+MS Programs

Blended programs can provide an accelerated route to a graduate professional degree, with simultaneous awarding of both bachelor's and master's degrees. See individual programs and the Graduate Education (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/graduate-education/#generalpoliciesgoverninggraduatestudies>) section for additional information.

Change of Major

Policy Statement

Cal Poly students must declare a major at the time of application. After making this decision, a student might later discover that their interests and skills align better with a different major. The university must make options and processes transparent for changing majors and successfully completing a degree program.

General Information

Entering students are encouraged to make careful and informed decisions about their majors. All majors at Cal Poly are impacted, and it may be difficult to change majors despite a students' best efforts. If a student decides to change majors, doing so early in their academic career will facilitate timely degree progress. For upper-division students and transfer students, this process may be more difficult due to fewer remaining degree requirements. In addition, students should be aware that not all departments can accommodate an upper-division change of major.

I. Minimum Time at Cal Poly

Students will be required to complete at least one semester before determining eligibility to begin the change of major process.

II. Requesting a Change of Major

To begin the formal change of major process, students must submit an inquiry form to the intended major in their portal. First-time/first-year students and new transfer students may begin exploring potential majors during their first semester at Cal Poly, however, they cannot officially initiate a change of major during this period.

III. Basic Criteria for Eligibility for an Individualized Change of Major Agreement

Departments/programs **can** consider **any or all** the following criteria when determining students' eligibility for a change of major.

- a. Academic record including Term GPA, Cal Poly GPA, **or** Higher Ed GPA.
- b. Ability to complete degree requirements in the new major within 150% of the program's published length, determined from the start of the student's undergraduate enrollment. Review the Expected Academic Progress (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/academic-standards-policies/academic-standards/>) and Financial Aid's Satisfactory Academic Progress, <https://www.calpoly.edu/financial-aid/manage-your-financial-aid/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/> for more information.*
- c. Admissions eligibility for the proposed major.
- d. Ability of the department to accommodate change of major students into a program.

Academic departments/programs must publish and clearly communicate current information about minimum eligibility criteria for a student to be considered for an Individualized Change of Major Agreement (ICMA) to change major. This includes any unique procedures or timelines set by individual department/programs.

IV. One ICMA Per Major

A student who enters into a change of major agreement (ICMA) and does not complete the ICMA requirements, either by failing to complete the terms, or by opting out due to a change of plan/interest, may not request an ICMA in that same major later in their academic career at Cal Poly.

V. Individualized Change of Major Agreement

At the discretion of the department/program, an ICMA may be initiated in one of the following ways:

1. A change of major can be approved immediately without further coursework.
2. A change of major can be completed at the end of a semester by creating an ICMA using courses that a student is currently enrolled in.
3. The ICMA can be created to be completed in the subsequent semester by enrolling in the courses specified on the ICMA.

Departments/programs will adhere to the following parameters when creating the Individualized Change of Agreement (ICMA):

- a. ICMA's will be limited to one semester in length.
- b. If an ICMA is initiated and the terms are successfully completed, the student will be permitted to change their major.**
- c. If a department/program has determined that a student is eligible and has placed the student on an ICMA, additional eligibility criteria, *that are more restrictive*, cannot be applied retroactively after the ICMA has been created.
- d. A student cannot be required to take courses before the ICMA is created, with the following exceptions:
 - i. Courses required for academic placement in GE written communication and/or mathematics/quantitative reasoning in the proposed major.
 - ii. Appropriate MATH placement eligibility necessary for major/support coursework in the proposed major (e.g. Engineering students must be eligible for MATH 1261 Calculus I (formerly MATH 141)).
- e. Once the ICMA has been created, a student cannot be required to take additional courses that are not listed on the ICMA.
- f. An ICMA cannot require a student to enroll in more than two specified major or support courses in the proposed major. Three courses may be required in the ICMA, only if at least one course fulfills a requirement for both the current and proposed major.
- g. Consideration of GPA requirements for the terms of the ICMA may include any or all the following: minimum grades in courses specified in the ICMA, Semester GPA, and/or Cal Poly SLO GPA.
- h. An ICMA that has been approved and accepted by the student, can be edited, at the discretion of the department/program in response to circumstances that would constrain the ICMA from being completed in one semester. Some examples include but are not limited to, if the student cannot enroll in a course because it is at capacity, the class is not offered that semester, the class is cancelled, a scheduling conflict cannot be resolved, or a grade threshold needs to be renegotiated. Edited ICMA's will go through the approval process and accepted by the student.

VI. Request for Extension of an ICMA

After an ICMA is created and accepted by the student, a student can formally request an extension of their ICMA for an appropriate reason. An ICMA can be extended by one full semester to allow completion of the required courses. Approvals are at the discretion of the department/program. Denials may be appealed to the Office of Academic Innovations and Programs. Extension of the ICMA can be considered for the following:

- a. Unforeseen circumstance(s) outside the student's control.
- b. If the student needs to withdraw from a class, the semester, or request a grade of incomplete due to reasons that are serious and compelling
- c. If the student submits a request for Informal Time Off or is approved for Leave of Absence, the ICMA will be extended for the length of the absence.
 - i. Courses taken at another institution while on an ICMA extension will not be considered in the completion of the ICMA, unless approved by the ICMA approver prior to the leave.
 - ii. Students must resume or cancel the ICMA immediately upon re-enrolling at Cal Poly.

VII. Academic Standing

Academic departments have the discretion to initiate change of major agreements while a student is on Academic Notice, or in Subject to Dismissal status, if the new major represents a viable path toward good academic standing. If a student in Subject to Dismissal status is dismissed from Cal Poly prior to the completion of the agreement, the ICMA will be void/cancelled and may be re-initiated upon the student's return to the campus. Further, if a student on an ICMA has a finding of misconduct that results in severe sanction, such as suspension or expulsion from Cal Poly, the ICMA will be void/cancelled and may be re-initiated if the student returns to campus.**

VIII. Appeals Process

Under certain circumstances denials of an ICMA can be appealed. Students should first address their concerns with the department and/or college of the intended major to assure that all options have been exhausted before escalating to the Office of Academic Innovations and Programs to begin an Academic Petition Appeal (acadprog@calpoly.edu). Students who have additional questions about the process can contact the Mustang Success Center, or College Advising/Student Services Center. The right to an appeal is not guaranteed. More information about the Academic Petition Appeals process can be found here:

<https://academicprograms.calpoly.edu/content/academic-petition-appeals/>

* 150% of programs published length i.e., 6 total years at Cal Poly for first-time freshmen, or 3 total years at Cal Poly for transfer students)

** A student with an ICMA that has been voided/cancelled due to dismissal is eligible to re-apply to the same major after returning to campus in good standing.

Course Substitution

Although a curriculum is specified for each major, under certain conditions a student may be permitted some deviation from the established curriculum. See the major department for substitutions involving major or support courses.

All Cal Poly students are expected to complete the GE courses specified in their degree program. Cal Poly GE courses must be selected from the GE requirement list. Substitutions are not permitted except in extraordinary circumstances. Students requesting exceptions must follow petition procedures, outlined on the GE web site. This process may take several weeks.

Double Majors or Degrees

If a student has completed the requirements for two or more majors leading to the same baccalaureate degree (e.g., two BS degrees), those majors are acknowledged on a single diploma. The major which the student requests as their **primary** major will appear first on the diploma. If a student has completed the requirements for two or more majors leading to different baccalaureate degrees (e.g., a BS and a BA), those degrees and the completed major or majors leading to each degree are acknowledged on two separate diplomas. If a student has completed concurrently the requirements for two or more degrees, at least one of which is a graduate degree, Cal Poly issues a separate diploma for each degree earned.

A student who adds a second major to their degree objective is expected to fulfill all requirements for both majors, including General Education requirements. However, a student may be allowed to use one senior project to fulfill the requirements for two majors. The program in which the student seeks to replace the senior project must grant permission before the student begins the project. Permission must be obtained using a major/support substitution.

Students who have declared two majors will be awarded both degrees for the term in which all requirements are completed for both majors.

* 150% of programs published length i.e., 6 total years at Cal Poly for first-time freshmen, or 3 total years at Cal Poly for transfer students)

Final Examinations

Except in specific circumstances, final assessments are administered during the scheduled finals week. If the assessment is a final exam, faculty will include the date and time of the exam on the course syllabus and, whenever applicable, provide students with advance notice if the final exam date is not available at the start of the term or has been rescheduled with the written approval of the appropriate dean.

If a student has three or more final exams on the same day, faculty should make a reasonable effort to schedule an alternative final exam for that student during the finals week. It is the student's responsibility to notify an instructor to request to reschedule a final exam by the end of the seventh week of instruction.

Graduate Courses Taken by Undergraduates for Graduate Credit

Cal Poly undergraduates who have achieved senior standing may take courses in the 4000 or 5000 series for possible graduate credit while still undergraduates. If they subsequently enter a Cal Poly master's or credential program, they may petition to have up to 9 units of such course credit applied toward their master's degree or credential program, **if** the units were not used in any way for the baccalaureate degree. Such courses should be noted in the appropriate section of the Formal Study Plan.

Student Classification/Standing

Undergraduate students are assigned a classification level according to the number of units earned:

Lower Division

Freshman fewer than 30 units
Sophomore..... 30 to 59 units

Upper Division

Junior 60 to 89 units
Senior..... 90 or more units

For the purposes of this calculation, earned units include transfer and Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate credit, in addition to Cal Poly units. Note that Student Standing can differ from Academic Progress levels; the Academic Progress calculation takes into account only degree-applicable units, whereas Student Standing includes all earned units, whether they apply to the degree or not.