PLANNING YOUR STUDIES AT SF STATE

The baccalaureate degree includes General Education (GE) requirements, other university graduation requirements, an academic major, perhaps a minor or second major, and elective course work. Students, with the aid of advisors, combine these elements in a creative and thoughtful way. By taking the time to create a meaningful degree program, students will not only graduate in a timely manner, but will benefit from the opportunity to take personal responsibility for their own learning.

Use GE to learn about yourself and your world.

If you are unsure about what you want your major to be, it is a good idea to spend your first semesters exploring different options. GE allows you to learn about different subjects.

It’s OK to be undeclared.

A large percentage of incoming first-time college students have not yet declared their major. Take time to explore the possibilities. Meet with an advisor in the Undergraduate Advising Center (http://advising.sfsu.edu) and use SF State services, such as the Office of Career Services & Leadership Development (http://careerservices.sfsu.edu), to help you find the right major. First-time college students need to declare a major before completing 70 units.

It’s OK to change your major.

Most students change their major at least once while in college. If you find that the major you have chosen is not right for you, explore other options. You will probably find that there are many more choices than you have ever encountered.

General Education and major requirements may sometimes overlap.

Most majors include courses that meet both GE and major requirements. This is referred to as “duplicate use of credit” or simply “double-counting.” By choosing certain courses, you can satisfy both GE and major requirements. For some majors, you can also meet GE requirements through “met in major”. Refer to your major to see if there are any GE requirements that might be “met in major”.

When you have decided on a major, make a tentative plan for your remaining semesters at SF State.

Many departments will provide you with an advising worksheet so you can keep track of your progress. Most majors have sample “roadmaps” that show a possible pathway to graduation. You can also refer to your Degree Progress Report, found in your Student Center, to track your progress towards completing your major.

Plan your program in consultation with an advisor.

Review your advising worksheet or roadmap frequently and meet with an advisor on a regular basis. Go to your major department and request an advisor or, if you are undeclared, or thinking about changing your major, meet with an advisor in the Undergraduate Advising Center (http://advising.sfsu.edu).

Bring your advising materials to your advising sessions. (Unofficial transcripts, Degree Progress Report [DPR], Advanced Standing Evaluation Form [ASE], if applicable, etc.).
or a year studying at a university in another country; the staff in the Office of International Programs (http://oip.sfsu.edu) will help you plan both your academic program and your finances if you would like to study abroad.

Go at your own speed.

Take care of the basic skills first. Most students work while attending SF State and therefore may not graduate in the typical eight semesters. Each student should take the number of units that is consistent with his/her specific family, work, and social obligations.

Students need to earn 120 units to graduate. Most majors consist of approximately 45 units. If a student is earning a B.A. degree, an average of 15 units per semester will be needed to complete the degree in eight semesters. Most B.S. degrees can also be completed in 120 units, but in some programs, a student will need more than 120 units. An average of 16.5 units per semester will be needed to complete the degree in eight semesters.

How is transfer credit evaluated for GE?

Transfer students from California Community College or California State University campuses will be given credit for general education requirements which their former institutions certify as completed. Transfers from other public or private colleges will be given appropriate GE credit as determined by SF State evaluators.

Can I earn GE credit for college-level learning that I acquired through prior work or life experience?

Yes, that may be possible. The CEEL (Credit by Evaluation for Experiential Learning) Program provides a way of earning General Education, elective, and, in some cases, major credit for those students who have acquired prior college-level learning for which no college credit has been awarded. To obtain further information about CEEL, contact the Undergraduate Advising Center (http://advising.sfsu.edu).

Should I carefully plan my GE program?

Yes. Some courses may not be offered every semester. Exceptions to GE requirements are considered only under unusual and extenuating circumstances.