# Majors

## Major Fields of Study

To receive a bachelor's degree, a student must declare and complete the requirements for a major field of study. A major consists of more than a collection of courses. Each department or committee offering a major helps students plan a coherent program of study. Having the deadline for declaring a major allows this planning. In addition, before graduation, a student must pass a comprehensive examination in the major, demonstrating critical and creative abilities as well as an understanding of the principles of the subject. Comprehensive examinations are graded either using the usual pattern (A+, A, A-, B+, etc.) or Pass/Fail, as each major department or committee chooses. Those using Pass/Fail grading may also choose the category "Pass with Distinction."

After an appropriate period of discernment, but no later than the end of the second semester of the second year, a student selects a major field of study under the following guidelines.

1. To be accepted as a major in a particular field of study, a student must have maintained at least a 2.00 GPA in the courses already taken in that field. A student who has completed two years of study and is in good academic standing, but who has not achieved a 2.00 GPA in the intended major field of study, may be permitted to register for one additional year. A student who, at the end of an additional year, is still not qualified to declare a major will not be permitted to enroll again. Following consultation with the student, the major advisor and the chair of the academic department may approve an exception to admit a student who has not yet achieved the 2.00 GPA into the major.
2. Each candidate for a degree must complete a writing-intensive component in the major that exposes the student to the conventions of writing and research expected in a given discipline.
3. Each candidate for a degree must pass a comprehensive exam in the major field of study. To be eligible to take the comprehensive exam, a student must have a 2.00 GPA in the major field and have been accepted as a major at the beginning of the semester before the semester in which the exam is to be taken.
4. No more than two courses (eight semester hours) used to satisfy requirements for a major may be used to fulfill requirements for another major, minor, or certificate of curricular study.

There are forty majors from which to choose. For information on requirements for specific majors, please refer to Programs A-Z (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences-programs/).

## Special (Student-Initiated) Majors

Certain interdisciplinary majors, individualized to meet a student's needs and goals, may be initiated by students. Such majors must provide benefits not obtainable through established majors. After consultation with the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, a student may complete a form designed for special majors and submit this for consideration by the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee. If the proposal is approved by the committee, it goes on to the faculty for approval.

A specified faculty coordinator, with other participating faculty (usually two additional), is responsible for advising students and administering comprehensive exams in each independent major. These majors adhere to the rules of other majors. No Pass/Fail courses can be included in the independent major.

## Honors in the Major Field of Study

A student deemed worthy of special recognition in the department or program of their academic major graduates "with honors" in the major. (This is generally separate from a "with distinction" evaluation on a comprehensive examination, although departments and programs establish their own criteria for honors designations within their majors.)