

MAJOR/MINOR DECLARATION AND RELATED PROCEDURES

Each department at New Paltz sets its own policies for major declaration, including minimum credit thresholds, GPA minimums, prerequisite coursework, etc. (See Declaring a Major (<http://www.newpaltz.edu/advising/declaration.html>.) While some students may be admitted directly into majors as first-year students, most students will complete at least three semesters before selecting and declaring a major. The process of major declaration involves meeting with someone in the major department (often the chair), receiving a major plan of study, completing the major declaration form, and being assigned an adviser in the major department. Transfer credits may be applied to major requirements; however, one-half of the major must be completed at New Paltz. Students will be expected to fulfill the major requirements that are in effect at the time they officially declare or redeclare (in the case of academic dismissal or removal from the major). Completing the process in a timely fashion is, therefore, important.

Students who have 60 or more credits in progress will not be permitted to register for additional credits unless they have a declared major. A pre-major is not valid after 60 credits are completed. New York State residents with 60 or more credits will not be eligible for New York's Tuition Assistance Plan (TAP) until the major is declared. This policy applies to incoming transfer students as well as continuing students at New Paltz. [Policy revision effective Fall 2015.]

Students who need help deciding on a major should seek assistance from the Career Resource Center and the Academic Advising Center. The Undergraduate Catalog is also a helpful resource. Descriptions of all majors, major requirements, course descriptions and policies for declaring a major can be found in the Catalog. Many departments also have this information on their Web pages.

Concentrations within Majors

A *concentration* or *track* provides a formal plan of study through which students may explore a subdiscipline or area of special focus within a major. Students who declare a concentration or track within a major must complete a set of required courses in addition to completing the core courses required for the standard major.

Double Majors [Policy revision effective Fall 2014]

A student may major in more than one field. The following restrictions apply:

1. The student must designate a primary major and, for majors that lead to either a BA or a BS, the degree the student intends to pursue.¹ All General Education and college-wide requirements must be completed. The second major need not be associated with the same degree type as the primary major.
2. All program requirements for both majors must be completed satisfactorily. In most cases, the student may find it necessary to complete more than the minimum 120 credits for graduation.
3. *At least 15 credits of the second major must not be contained within the program plan for the primary major.* (This includes both major courses and required cognate courses.) Beyond the 15 credits not in common, all other courses applied to the primary major may be applied to the

second major. Simply stated, there must be at minimum a 15-credit difference between the two majors.

4. A student pursuing a degree in Education (early childhood & childhood education, adolescence education, visual arts education) must designate that program as the primary major. The student may declare a second major in the same teaching subject as long as condition #3 is met.
5. Upon completion of all requirements, the student will be granted one degree with two majors noted on the transcript.

¹ The primary difference between degrees relates to the number of liberal arts credits required: 90 for BA, 60 for BS, 30 for BFA.

Dual Degrees

A student may earn two degrees (BA, BS, BFA) simultaneously. The following restrictions apply:

1. At least 15 credits of the major in the first degree must not be contained in the program plan of the major in the second degree (this includes both major courses and required cognate courses). Beyond the 15 major credits not in common, all other courses applied to the first degree may be applied to the second degree. Simply stated, there must be at minimum a 15-credit difference between the majors of the two degrees.
2. The student must complete the college-wide requirements associated with each degree. The primary difference between degrees relates to the number of liberal arts credits required (90 for BA, 60 for a BS, 48 for BS in Art Ed, and 30 for a BFA). However, majors in Engineering have been granted exceptions to their general education requirements. Engineering majors who wish to earn a second degree with a major in another field would be required to complete the general education requirements associated with the other degree.
3. Most importantly, the student must complete a minimum of 150 credits.

Second Bachelor's Degree Candidates

Any applicant to New Paltz who has already completed a bachelor's degree must apply as a transfer student following the procedures outlined for transfer students. The Director of Transfer Admissions reviews and approves applications for a second degree. The criteria for admission as a second-degree candidate are as follows:

- The intended major of the second degree must require at least 15 credits that were not contained in the major of the first degree.
- Second-degree candidates receive a maximum of 90 credits in transfer; the number of liberal arts and upper-division credits will be based on the courses taken in the first degree. The candidates' Progress Report will reflect the credits accepted as well as any requirements that remain unmet.
- Second-degree students are considered to have met the general education and writing intensive requirements.
- The student must complete a minimum of 30 credits at New Paltz.

It is the responsibility of the student to meet with the department chair of the intended major to review their academic program and the requirements remaining for their second degree.

When second-degree candidates have been formally admitted, they must file the Declaration of Major form and be assigned a faculty adviser in their major department. From that point on, the same procedures apply

to second-degree students as to those who began their college study at New Paltz.

Minors

A few majors² require students to minor in a field, but in most cases declaring a minor is optional. Minors typically involve between 18 and 25 credits, and can be a way of exploring an interest area in a less in-depth way than a major, or of organizing elective credits. To determine if a department offers a minor, consult the Undergraduate Catalog. Students who wish to pursue a minor must file a Declaration of Minor form. Contact the department offering the minor to determine the process for completing the declaration form. At least half of the credits for the minor must not be contained within the program plan of the student's major.

(This includes major courses as well as required cognate courses.)

Students will be expected to fulfill the minor requirements that are in effect at the time the minor is officially declared. Transfer credits may be applied to minor requirements; however, one-half of the minor must be completed at New Paltz. Students should consult the department regarding minimum grade requirements for courses used to fulfill the minor.

² A minor is required for Biology BA majors and for Theatre Arts BA majors.

Use of the S*/U* Grading Option with Major/Minor Courses

Courses that have been elected satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S*/U*) WILL NOT be counted towards the major, the minor, the Education curricula, or the Engineering curricula UNLESS the student requests that the S* or U* be changed to a regular letter grade. See the policy on S*/U* grading (<http://catalog.newpaltz.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/satisfactory-unsatisfactory-grading-option>) elsewhere in this catalog for details on how to implement this option.