

Criteria for Majors, Minors, Concentrations and Emphases

Santa Clara University's courses of study provide students with both breadth and depth of knowledge. For example, the University Core Curriculum offers students a breadth of knowledge necessary to be a well-educated person. Majors, minors, emphases, and concentrations are curricular programs that provide varying depths of knowledge.

Majors offer the greatest depth and coherence. They are usually associated with an academic discipline, but may sometimes be offered in an interdisciplinary area that has a common set of issues, questions, and methods. Majors are characterized by:

- a central core of method, theory, and content;
- a formal integration of the diversity of topics and analytical tools which they contain;
- an intellectual sequence of study which moves to increasingly complex and sophisticated understandings; and
- opportunities for students to demonstrate some mastery of the field's nature, tools, central questions, arguments, history, philosophical presuppositions, etc.

Minors provide a structure for learning about another field in addition to a student's chosen major. Intellectually curious students often want to go into depth in more than one area, for both personal and intellectual reasons, and for career purposes. Some minors are interdisciplinary, reflecting the fact that some important questions necessitate interdisciplinary answers.

Emphases or concentrations tend to focus on upper-division courses in a particular sub-discipline of the major. Unlike minors, they are typically aimed at providing more intensive, or finely focused, study within a particular major.

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