

Memo To: All UH-Downtown PS Holders  
From: Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, President  
Subject: Majors, Minors, Simultaneous Majors,  
and Second Degrees

UH-Downtown/PS 03.A.35  
Issue No. 3  
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Page 1 of 6

## 1. PURPOSE

This Policy Statement (PS) describes the elements of a bachelor's degree, including majors and minors, as well as the policy and procedures for simultaneously awarding students two undergraduate degrees or two undergraduate majors within the same degree.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Bachelor's Degree (a.k.a. Baccalaureate Degree or Undergraduate Degree): Certification of successful completion of all requirements of an undergraduate academic program, which is housed in one or more disciplines of study or academic departments. Examples of such degrees include the Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BS), Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), and Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology (BSET).
- 2.2 Major: A specific program of study within a degree representing a discipline, field of study, or a designated combination of fields that form the unique area of knowledge or skill for a bachelor's degree in which students concentrate and in which the university is authorized to grant degrees. Examples of majors include English, History, Chemistry, Finance, Accounting, Criminal Justice, and Computer Science.
- 2.3 Minor: A coherent group of courses in an academic discipline or cross-disciplinary field demonstrating a secondary interest or competence of a student seeking a bachelor's degree. In most UHD degree programs, minors are optional. Students and advisors should consult the catalog for descriptions of minors in the various fields.
- 2.4 A student's academic home of record is the degree designated by the student as primary.
- 2.5 Primary Major or Curriculum and Secondary Major or Curriculum: UHD's student information system associates students with a primary degree and a primary major, called a curriculum, associated with the college that offers the major. For students who complete an additional degree or major, these programs are labeled by the information system as secondary degrees or secondary majors.

- 2.6 Simultaneous Majors: An undergraduate may pursue two majors simultaneously. If a student's simultaneous majors are of two different types of degree (e.g. a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Science), then the degree named on their diploma will be that of the major chosen to be their primary degree program (see 4.3.1 below).
- 2.7 Additional Degree: A subsequently awarded bachelor's degree that is awarded to a UHD student who already possesses one UHD bachelor's degree.
- 2.8 Pre-major: The major degree program which a student intends to complete, as selected by the student on the Texas Common Application, by applying for a UHD major either online or with an advisor to declare a major, or by communicating to an academic advisor or college advisor the student's intended degree.
- 2.9 Filing a Degree Plan: For purposes of complying with the requirement of [HB 3025](#), a student confirms their intent to pursue a particular major and receives an electronic degree audit from the university's degree audit system either from an advisor or through self-service in the university's student information system. Prior to Fall 2014, students applied to colleges, which filed a degree plan for the major of interest.
- 2.10 Electronic Audit System: An online application linked to the university's student information system that electronically checks the student's academic record for completion of degree requirements.
- 2.11 Semester Credit Hour (SCH): An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates one hour of classroom or faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time.

### 3. POLICY

- 3.1 A bachelor's degree contains a minimum of 120 semester credit hours (SCHs), comprising of the 42 SCHs of university-approved core curriculum, and required courses, prescribed electives, and free electives (if available). Some bachelor's degrees may vary in the allocation of hours. Bachelor's degrees requiring more than 120 SCHs must be approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

3.2 Minors typically require some lower division and some upper-division courses and total between 15 and 18 hours. Student may use a combination of required or elective courses in their major to achieve a minor.

3.3 Students may petition to pursue two majors simultaneously. See 4.3 below.

#### 4. PROCEDURES

##### 4.1 Declaring a Major

To avoid enrollment in excessive hours and to speed degree completion, students should select and declare a suitable major as early as possible. Upon admission to UHD, students who meet college requirements may declare a major.

4.1.1 Students may apply for a major through the UHD website or with the assistance of an advisor. Students may seek counseling about the selection of a major with the assistance of an academic advisor member in their academic home of record or UHD faculty.

4.1.2 Students can select pre-majors when they cannot declare a desired major immediately upon admission because they must meet additional college requirements.

4.1.3 To ensure timely completion of a degree and comply with [HB 3025](#), all UHD first time in college students must declare a major no later than the semester after they complete 45 SCHs. A student who fails to meet college requirements for a major in this semester must confirm their major of interest with an academic advisor. The advisor will file a degree plan by assisting the student to run an electronic degree audit, listing the requirements necessary to complete the major of interest.

4.1.4 To ensure timely completion of a degree and comply with [HB 3025](#), all UHD transfer students with more than 45 SCHs must declare a major no later than their second regular semester of enrollment at UHD. A student who fails to meet college requirements for a major in this semester must confirm their degree of interest with an academic advisor. The advisor will file a degree plan by assisting the student to run an electronic degree audit, listing the requirements necessary to complete the major of interest.

4.1.5 Undeclared students who have completed 90 or more SCHs, have not been accepted into a UHD college, are on probation or suspension, or who do not meet

college requirements for their major of interest must meet with an advisor to decide on and apply for a major. A student will select a major for which he or she qualifies that allows the student to graduate in a timely fashion and avoids undertaking excessive hours. The advisor will file a degree plan by assisting the student to run an electronic degree audit, listing the requirements necessary to complete the major of interest. A student subsequently may change majors if they successfully satisfy all college requirements to declare.

## 4.2 Declaring a Minor

Students selecting a minor should consult with the academic advisor in their College or faculty member who assists them with their major degree program. The advisor will file a degree plan by assisting the student to run an electronic degree audit, listing the requirements necessary to complete the major and minor of interest. The college advisor or advising office will enter the selected minor in UHD's student information system.

4.2.1 After applying for graduation, a student who fails to meet the requirements for the minor through their current registered courses may choose to drop a minor in order to qualify for graduation in that semester.

## 4.3 Simultaneous Majors

Students wishing to graduate with two majors must officially declare each major, must be admitted into each major, and must satisfy all the requirements of each major as well as those set forth in this policy.

4.3.1 Students declaring simultaneous majors must indicate which degree will be considered the primary degree program and which will be the secondary degree program. The primary degree program will serve as the academic home of record, and the dean or his/her designee of the college housing the primary degree will be responsible for monitoring students' compliance with all university rules and regulations.

4.3.2 The state has imposed a limit of 120 hours for all degrees (except in cases where the university has received permission for additional hours). For more information [See Texas Education Code \(TEC\), Chapter 61, Subchapter §61.0515](#). Students working towards simultaneous majors may be charged out-of-state tuition for the excess hours as defined by the state of Texas.

- 4.3.3 The degree plans for the majors in both the primary and the secondary majors will be housed in electronic form accessible to advisors and administrators in both major fields.
- 4.3.4 Both majors will be noted on the transcripts of students who are certified with simultaneous majors.
- 4.3.5 Failure to Complete Requirements for Simultaneous Majors
- 4.3.5.1 A student may elect to stop pursuing simultaneous majors at any time before certification for graduation. The student must notify in writing the dean(s) or designee(s) of this decision.
- 4.3.5.2 If a certifying official determines that a student has not met all requirements for one of the simultaneous majors, that official must notify the certifying official of the other college. The official in the college housing the student's primary degree or major will notify the student. The student will choose among: 1) certification in only the successfully completed degree or major; 2) changing the yet-to-be-completed major or degree program to a minor, if such a minor exists; or 3) delaying any certification until such time as requirements for both degrees and majors are met.

#### 4.4 Additional Bachelor's Degree

To qualify for a second UHD bachelor's degree, a candidate must:

- Meet the general and specific requirements for each degree.
- Take at least 30 unique hours, including 18 hours needed for the major, in residency for each degree at the University of Houston-Downtown, with a minimum of 18 of the unique hours in each program being upper-level and applicable to the upper-level requirements of the degree.

## 5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

Review: Every five years on or before July 1, or as necessary.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

## 6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 05/28/13

Issue #2: 11/20/14

Issue #3: 06/22/15

## 7. REFERENCES

[Texas Legislation HB 3025](#)

[Texas Education Code \(TEC\) §61.0515](#)