Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders  
From: William Flores, President  
Subject: Majors, Minors, Double Majors and Second Degrees  

1. PURPOSE

This 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 Dual Degree: A student can earn two different degrees by simultaneously completing the requirements for two academic programs of study that award different degrees as defined in 2.1. Within each degree, students will also select a major and, thus, will graduate with two majors as well as two degrees. However, the fact that each major is awarded with a different degree establishes students on this path as students seeking a “dual degree.”

2.5 A student’s academic home of record is the degree designated by the student as primary.

2.6 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.
2.7 Double Major: A student can earn a double major by simultaneously completing two academic programs as defined in 2.2, both of which award the same degree. The majors may or may not be housed in different colleges. The fact that each major is awarded under the same degree as defined in 2.1 establishes students on this path as students seeking a “double major.”

2.8 Additional Degree: A subsequently awarded bachelor’s degree that is awarded to a UHD student who already possesses one UHD bachelor’s degree.

2.9 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.

2.10 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.

2.11 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.

3. POLICY

3.1 A bachelor’s degree contains a minimum of 120 semester credit hours (SCHs), comprising 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 at least 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 simultaneously pursue majors in two distinct disciplines with different degrees (a dual degree) or in two distinct disciplines with the same degree (a double major). Students submitting such petitions must have an overall UHD GPA of at least 2.5.

3.3.1 Students may simultaneously pursue no more than two degrees or two majors within the same degree.

3.3.2 Students may not declare a dual degree or a double major in a program for which they have already filed an application for graduation. That is, all declarations for dual degrees or double majors must be completed before any applications for graduation
for one of those degrees or majors have been filed.

### 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 Dual Degree: Students wishing to graduate with majors in two different degrees 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 The courses taken to satisfy core curriculum, general education, and all other common lower-division requirements can be counted to meet the completion requirements of both degree programs.

4.3.2 Students declaring dual degrees 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.

4.3.3 If a student declares a dual degree, after having already declared a major in one degree, normally the first one that a student declares will be designated as the primary degree program. The secondary degree program will normally be the second degree which students declare while remaining in the first degree program. Reversal of this normal sequence will require permission from the dean or his/her designee under whose jurisdiction the new primary degree program would fall. Students declaring the secondary degree must indicate that they are seeking a dual degree.

4.3.4 Students must complete all courses required for each degree in a dual degree program. Each degree must consist of at least 30 unique hours taken in residency 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.

4.3.5 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 a dual degree may be charged out-of-state tuition for the excess hours as defined by the state of Texas.

4.3.6 The degree plans for the majors in both the primary and the secondary degree programs will be housed in an electronic form accessible to advisors and administrators in both programs.
4.3.7 Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet all requirements of both degree programs and that they do not repeat courses unnecessarily.

4.3.8 If the primary and secondary degrees are housed in two different colleges, each college will certify students separately for the degree to be awarded through that college. The college of the secondary degree is also responsible for certifying compliance with provisions 4.3.5 and 4.3.7 of this policy.

4.3.9 Students who have satisfied all requirements for a dual degree will receive two diplomas.

4.3.10 Both degrees and any majors within those degrees will be noted on the transcripts of students who are certified for dual degrees.

4.4 Double Majors: Students wishing to graduate with majors within the same degree program 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.

4.4.1 Students submitting such petitions must have an overall UHD GPA of at least 2.5.

4.4.2 The courses taken to satisfy core curriculum, general education and all other common lower-division requirements can be counted to meet the completion requirements of both majors.

4.4.3 Students declaring double majors should indicate which major will be considered the primary major or curriculum and which will be the secondary major or curriculum. The primary major will serve as the academic home of record, and the dean or his/her designee of the college housing the primary major will be responsible for monitoring students’ compliance with all university rules and regulations.

4.4.4 If a student declares a double major, after having already declared a major, normally the first one that student declares will be designated as the primary major or curriculum. The secondary major or curriculum will normally be the second major which a student declares while remaining in the first major. Reversal of this normal sequence will require permission from the dean under whose jurisdiction the new primary major would fall. Students declaring a second major must indicate that they are seeking a double major.

4.4.5 Students seeking a double major must complete at least 18 upper-level hours in residency at the University of Houston-Downtown for each major. These 18 hours must be unique to each major and must be applicable to the upper-level requirements of each major. Completion of degree requirements will normally ensure that this stipulation is automatically met.
4.4.6 The state has imposed a limit of 120 hours for all degrees (except in cases where the university has received permission for additional hours). Students working towards a double major may be charged out-of-state tuition for the excess hours as defined by the state of Texas.

4.4.7 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.

4.4.8 Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet all requirements of both majors without repeating any course unnecessarily.

4.4.9 If the primary and secondary majors or curricula are housed in two different colleges, the certifying official in the college of the primary major will ensure that requirements have been met in both majors by examining updated degree plans and will certify successful completion of the degree.

4.4.10 Both majors will be noted on the transcripts of students who are certified with double majors.

4.5 Failure to Complete Requirements for Dual Degrees or Double Majors:

4.5.1 A student may elect to stop pursuing the dual degree or the double major at any time before certification for graduation. The student must notify in writing the dean(s) or designee(s) of this decision.

4.5.2 If a certifying official determines that a student has not met all requirements for one of the degrees in the dual degree sequence or one of the majors in a double major, 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.

4.6 Additional Bachelor’s Degree: To qualify for a second UHD bachelor’s degree, a candidate must:

(1) meet the general and specific requirements for each degree.

(2) 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. EXHIBITS

There are no exhibits associated with this policy.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party: (Reviewer): Senior VP for Academic & Student Affairs & Provost

Review: Every 5 years on or before July 1, or as otherwise necessary.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

7. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 05/28/2013
Issue #2: 11/20/2014
Issue #3: 06/22/2015

8. REFERENCES

Texas Legislation HB 3025
Texas Education Code (TEC) §61.0515