Other Academic Policies

Academic Honors

The Dean's Honors List is compiled at the end of each quarter to honor undergraduate students who have completed 12 or more letter-graded units during the quarter with a 3.5 grade point average or better for that term. Units with a grade of CR do not count toward the 12-unit minimum. The President's Honors List is compiled at the end of each university year to honor those undergraduate students who have demonstrated consistent achievement, as represented by being named to the Dean's Honors List for any three of the four quarters of the university year. The university year begins with summer quarter. Candidates for bachelor's degrees with the following Cal Poly cumulative grade point averages are awarded honors at graduation. Only courses taken at Cal Poly calculate into the Cal Poly grade point averages. The GPA is officially calculated at the time the student has completed graduation requirements:

- Summa cum laude – 3.85
- Magna cum laude – 3.70
- Cum laude – 3.50

These honors are noted on both the diploma and the transcript.

Academic Minors

A minor is an integrated, coherent group of courses (24 to 30 quarter units), which gives the student knowledge in an area that lies outside of the major field of study. Please see Programs A-Z (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/programsaz) for the list of minors.

Requirements for the minor:

- At least half of the units must be from upper-division courses (300- or 400-level)
- At least half of the units must be taken at Cal Poly (in residence)
- Not more than one-third of the courses in a minor can be graded with student-selected Credit/No Credit (CR/NC), except for courses that have mandatory CR/NC grading
- A minimum 2.0 GPA is required in all units counted for completion of the minor (foreign language minors must have a 2.75 GPA)

The minor must be completed prior to, or at the same time as, the requirements for the bachelor's degree. A major and a minor may not be taken in the same degree program, and a minor is not required for a degree.

Students who wish to complete a minor are to contact the department offering the academic minor as early as possible in the program and fill out the appropriate agreement form. Students may select a minor which has requirements from a catalog that is different from that of their major. The minor form can then be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The completion of the minor is noted on the student's transcript, but is not shown on the diploma. In no case is a diploma awarded for the minor.

Blended BS+MS Programs

Blended programs provide an accelerated route to a graduate professional degree, with simultaneous awarding of both bachelor's and master's degrees. See individual programs for additional information.

Change of Major

This policy goes into effect beginning with students admitted for Fall 2010 and after. Students admitted before Fall 2010 may use either this policy or the previous change of major policy in their respective catalog.

This policy applies to matriculated undergraduate students at Cal Poly wishing to change their major. The "target" major is the major into which a student wishes to transfer.

Policy Statement

Cal Poly students are required to declare a major at the time of application. Some students find that their interests and abilities lead them in a different direction. The University must offer a transparent and timely process for all students who seek to change majors.

Process

1. General Guidelines
   a. Minimum Time at Cal Poly
      Students must complete at least one quarter at Cal Poly before requesting a change of major.
   b. Basic Criteria that may be used in advising for determining Target Major Options
      All academic departments should give careful consideration when determining target major options. The following criteria may be considered:
      i. The majors for which the student was eligible at time of admission,
      ii. College academic record (e.g., GPA, coursework, etc.), and
      iii. Remaining coursework and the student's ability to complete degree requirements in the new major within the published unit maximums for that major.
   c. One Chance to be Accepted
      Students who enter into an individualized change of major agreement (ICMA) and do not complete the ICMA requirements, either by failing to complete the terms of the ICMA, or by opting out due to a change of interest, will not be eligible to request that major again later in their career at Cal Poly.
   d. Completion of Change of Major
      The change of major will be approved once the student has successfully met all of the requirements of the ICMA.
   e. Timeframe
      The ICMA must be feasible to complete and be completed in no more than two quarters.
   f. Publication of Change of Major Criteria
      As applicable, departments' web sites should post the minimum criteria required of all students to change major into their program, including timelines.
   g. Impaction Constraints
      Per the Office of the Chancellor's The California State University Enrollment Management Policy and Practices, other admissions requirements for all transfer students (internal and external) entering the target majors on impacted campuses must be the same (e.g., portfolios, auditions, etc.).
   h. Academic Standing
A change of major agreement will be void if a student is academically disqualified prior to the completion of the agreement.

2. Requesting a Change of Major
   a. Meet with current advisor to review major options and talk about career paths. Consider, also, consulting with Career Services, other advisors, and faculty and/or department heads/chairs in both current and target majors.
   b. Sign up for a Change of Major workshop through the Change of Major channel on your portal.
   c. Meet with the department head/chair or designee in the target major to determine the likelihood of success in the new major.
   d. Review the curriculum requirements for the target major.
   e. If the target major is not a good fit for the student, the student will be advised to look at other options.
   f. If the student receives a positive assessment based on consideration of I.B., and it is clear that he/she can complete degree requirements in the new major within the unit maximum (unit maximum is 24 units above program requirements), then an ICMA will be developed (see below).

3. III. Individualized Change of Major Agreement (ICMA)
   The change of major will receive final approval once the student has successfully met all of the requirements of the ICMA. The ICMA will cover no more than two quarters. The ICMA may include the following components:
   a. Maximum of three specified courses or 12 units in the target major.
   b. Additional courses and/or units to allow the student to meet minimum progress standards and complete degree applicable units in both majors, whenever possible (e.g., GE courses or electives a student could use to meet degree requirements in both current and target majors).
   c. GPA requirements, as determined by the department (e.g., overall/term GPA, GPA in major-specified courses, GPA in past two quarters).
   d. If applicable, specific steps to be met to resume good academic standing status.

General Information
As much as possible, entering students are encouraged to make careful and informed decisions about the initial application to their declared majors. All majors at Cal Poly are impacted and it will be difficult to change into some majors despite a student’s best efforts. Nevertheless, sometimes students will find that their interests, abilities, or talents will take them in a different direction than they had identified when they originally applied to Cal Poly and they may seek to change to a different major. Depending on the degree of impactation of the target major (i.e., the relationship between the number of applicants to the major and the number of places available), there might only be a few spaces available for change of majors, or no spaces at all. Students who are unable to change into their desired majors might also need to consider applying to another university in the major of their choice.

If a student makes the decision to change major, doing so early in the academic career will better allow a student to make degree progress in a timely manner and stay within the University’s minimum progress to degree standards (see the Expected Academic Progress policy in the “Academic Standards” section of the catalog); major changes late in the academic career will be restricted by the University’s minimum progress standards, including the unit maximum.

All students, whether lower division (those with fewer than 90 Cal Poly units) or upper division (those with more than 90 Cal Poly units or 90 transfer units), intending to change majors must demonstrate that they can complete the new major within the minimum progress standards and the unit maximum set forth by the University. This is likely to be a greater challenge for upper division students, who will have fewer remaining degree requirements. Further, students need to be aware that not all departments can accommodate upper division change of majors.

Course Substitution
Although a curriculum is specified for each major, under certain conditions a student may be permitted some deviation from the established curriculum. See the major department for substitutions involving major or support courses.

All Cal Poly students are expected to complete the GE courses specified in their degree program. Cal Poly GE courses must be selected from the GE requirement list. Substitutions are not permitted except in extraordinary circumstances. Students requesting exceptions must follow petition procedures, outlined on the GE web site. This process may take several weeks.

Double Majors or Degrees
If a student has completed the requirements for two or more majors leading to the same baccalaureate degree (e.g., two BS degrees), those majors are acknowledged on a single diploma. The major which the student requests as her/his primary major will appear first on the diploma. If a student has completed the requirements for two or more majors leading to different baccalaureate degrees (e.g., a BS and a BA), those degrees and the completed major or majors leading to each degree are acknowledged on two separate diplomas. If a student has completed concurrently the requirements for two or more degrees, at least one of which is a graduate degree, Cal Poly issues a separate diploma for each degree earned.

A student who adds a second major to her/his degree objective is expected to fulfill all requirements for both majors. However, a student may be allowed to use one senior project to fulfill the requirements for two majors. The program in which the student seeks to replace the senior project must grant permission before the student begins the project. Permission must be obtained using a major/support substitution.

Students who have declared two majors will be awarded both degrees for the term in which all requirements are completed for both majors.

Final Examinations
Graduate Courses Taken by Undergraduates for Graduate Credit
Cal Poly undergraduates who have achieved senior standing may take courses in the 400 or 500 series for possible graduate credit while still undergraduates. If they subsequently enter a Cal Poly master’s or credential program, they may petition to have such course credit applied toward their master’s degree or credential program, if the units were not used in any way for the baccalaureate degree. A Graduate Petition for Special Consideration is the means of petitioning for this allowance.
Student Classification/Standing

Undergraduate students are assigned a classification level according to the number of quarter units earned:

**Lower Division**
- Freshman ................... fewer than 45 units
- Sophomore................. 45 to 89 units

**Upper Division**
- Junior ....................... 90 to 134 units
- Senior....................... 135 or more units

For the purposes of this calculation, earned units include transfer and Advanced Placement credit, in addition to Cal Poly units.