

# MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY

## Academic program

Can consist of majors, minors, and certificates. All requirements to complete the major, minor, or certificate must be explicit, including a clear list of all prerequisites. There may be multiple pathways in which to complete these requirements.

Academic programs can be from a single discipline, cross-disciplinary or interdisciplinary. Programs must have a unique contribution to the college/university, especially if there is overlap in courses from another program. Some courses may be used to fulfill the requirements of both a major and minor, or two majors, though a department/program may impose restrictions.

Students should be able to access any major, minor, or certificate of their choosing, even if their educational plans change while they are enrolled, so that majors, minors, and certificates are available to all students while they attend the institutions. Note that this does not guarantee a student acceptance to a particular major, minor, or certificate, just that they can choose to pursue any major, minor, or certificate while enrolled.

## Majors

The major supplies depth to the liberal arts education, providing students with a concentrated study of a discipline or well-defined cross-disciplinary or interdisciplinary area. This depth is just as crucial as the breadth that also characterizes the study of the liberal arts. Through the major, students learn the specialized content and skills that come with sustained, rigorous study of a subject.

Courses in the major move the student from foundational to advanced work. The curriculum is guided by clearly articulated learning goals that lead students to master the hallmarks of the field, including (but not limited to): concepts and ideas; models and theories; methods of research and modes of inquiry.

A program is defined as a major if it meets the following criteria:

- Minimum of 36 credits with a minimum of 16 credits of upper division coursework;
- Clearly defined set of learning goals and a program of assessment.

## Minors

The minor supplies another kind of breadth to a liberal arts education, providing students with a focused package of courses in a discipline or well-defined cross-disciplinary or interdisciplinary area that complements their academic major. A minor provides an opportunity for students to explore interests outside their primary major and gain specialized knowledge and skills in another area of study, broadening their educational experience.

A typical liberal arts education consists of roughly three parts: general education, a major, and elective courses. The minor can be a valuable part of the student's electives as it provides an organized set of classes that can supplement their academic major and broaden a student's education.

A program is defined as a minor if it meets the following criteria:

- Minimum of 20 credits with a minimum of 8 credits of upper division coursework;
- Clearly defined set of learning goals and a program of assessment.

## Certificates

Any certification program proposals should address target audience and why this particular course collection meets demands and generates a set of skills that allow anyone in a certificate program to achieve goals outside of CSB and SJU.

A certificate is a narrowly focused set of courses designed to develop skills and enhance expertise and employability in a particular area or serves to provide continuing education within a narrow focus. It differs from a minor in that it is typically more compact and aimed at supplementing a liberal arts education with targeted occupational skills. Certificates enhance someone's knowledge and skills in a specialized way, targeting a specific career path or adding competencies sought by employers or industry standards through continuing education. They can be tailored for undergraduate students pursuing degrees and/or anyone else who aims to develop their skills within a narrow focus.

A program is defined as a certificate if it meets the following criteria:

- Minimum of 12 credit hours of coursework
- Certificates are not required to be but are encouraged to be interdisciplinary in nature
- Clearly defined set of learning goals (minimum one) and a program of assessment.

Upon successful completion of the program, students receive an official notation on their academic transcript recognizing their achievement and specialization in the field. How successful completion of the program will be officially notated for non-students is not yet determined. If such a program is adopted, the process for how official recognition will occur will need to be detailed.

## Acceptance to Major Study Field

Early in the spring semester of the sophomore year and before registration as a junior, each student must choose a major field of study and make application as a degree candidate to the chair of the appropriate department or division. To be accepted into a major, a student must have achieved a C (2.00) cumulative grade point average by the end of the first three semesters and a C cumulative grade point average in the courses of the intended major. Some departments may require a BC (2.50) or higher cumulative grade point average.

Acceptance to a major is required to be able to register for the first semester of the junior year. A student will be admitted to a major field if the departmental chair of that major approves the application. That acceptance may be conditional. Conditional acceptance means that the student may proceed with registration but must satisfy conditions stipulated by the department before the next registration period. A student not accepted into a major may consult Academic Advising for possible alternatives in proceeding with registration.

## Individualized Major

Students may choose from two tracks to create an individualized major at CSB/SJU:

1. Individualize an existing major, or
2. Design their own interdisciplinary major.

Students must select a faculty advisor to work with as they design the major. The student must apply for the major no later than the end of the first semester of their junior year. The following criteria are requirements for approval of the major:

- Minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average at the time of application;
- Minimum 2.0 major grade point average in courses already completed for the major at the time of application;
- Minimum of 40 credits designated for the individualized major, with a minimum of 16 credits of upper division coursework;
- No more than 8 credits can be counted toward another major or minor;

- Law
- Medicine
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician's Assistant
- Priesthood Studies
- Public Health
- Veterinary Medicine

A capstone experience:

1. If individualizing an existing major, the student may use the capstone in the host department if the chair deems it appropriate,
2. If designing an interdisciplinary major, the student must include a proposal for a capstone experience in the written rationale noted below;

A written and detailed rationale for the individualize major that includes:

1. A title for the individualized major,
2. A statement of the student's educational and career goals, along with an analysis of why the existing majors offered by the institutions do not fit these educational and career goals,
3. A listing of proposed courses, followed by a thorough discussion of how this particular set of courses uniquely meets the student's educational and career goals;

Approval by the faculty advisor, the chair of a host department, and the Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising:

1. If individualizing an existing major, signatures of those listed above is sufficient,
2. If designing an interdisciplinary major, the persons listed above must convene in order to hear the student's proposal.

Any appeals to these requirements and the timeframe for submission must be directed in writing to the Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising.

## Pre-Professional Programs

Saint Benedict's and Saint John's offers the following pre-professional programs, some of which are also part of dual-degree programs with postgraduate schools. The below table lists these pre-professional programs. See also Pre-Professional Programs (<https://catalog.csbsju.edu/catalog/academic-departments/pre-professional-programs/>) under Departments and Programs.

- Athletic Training
- Chiropractic
- Dentistry
- Divinity
- Engineering
- Forestry