

# College of Arts & Sciences

The College of Arts & Sciences is the largest undergraduate program at Washington University, offering students the most diverse range of courses in more than 50 different fields, ranging from anthropology and biochemistry to mathematics and performing arts.

The College draws on the rich and varied resources that this distinguished university has to offer: a creative and internationally recognized faculty, a diverse and able student body, a superior library, and excellent opportunities for advanced study and mentored research. As the center of intellectual life on the campus, the College of Arts & Sciences benefits from and contributes to the studies of architecture, art, business, engineering, law, medicine and social work.

Of central importance to the life of the College is the quality of teaching. Undergraduate students have the opportunity to learn from and work beside stimulating teacher-scholars who are leaders in their fields. Our nationally recognized faculty, which numbers more than 600, is made up of artists, biologists, chemists, economists, historians, philosophers and poets, all of whom bring the excitement and diversity of new ideas into the classroom.

## Governance

The College of Arts & Sciences is bound by the charter of the university and ultimately responsible to the University Board of Trustees, which delegates the administration of the university to the chancellor. In turn, the chancellor delegates the responsibility for the College's internal governance to the deans and faculty of the College of Arts & Sciences.

Because the College is continually reassessing its objectives and policies, faculty and students alike may take the initiative in proposing changes in curriculum and policies. New programs or proposed modifications are reviewed by committees with members who represent the diverse points of view of the academic community.

By action of the faculty of Arts & Sciences in January 1969 (revised in May 1971), the ArtSci Council, a student committee, shares joint responsibility with the faculty for College-wide degree requirements, the grading system, and those policies that directly affect the lives of students. The ArtSci Council appoints student representatives to various standing and ad hoc College committees.

## The Curriculum

The College of Arts & Sciences fosters the quintessential qualities of a liberal arts education in its students: a heightened spirit of inquiry, an ability to organize and synthesize information, skills in written and oral expression, and a familiarity with the ways in which thoughtful people discover those commitments and values that make life worthwhile. By incorporating the College's manifold intellectual resources — people, libraries, laboratories and studios — Arts & Sciences students "learn how to learn," developing both the flexibility and the habits of thought necessary to the ever-evolving worlds of work and global citizenship.

The College's academic program has two principal objectives. First, it provides students with an understanding of the range of human knowledge and attainment by developing an appreciation of the characteristic problems, achievements and limitations of the various fields of human endeavor. The curriculum works to ensure this understanding by requiring a minimum amount of study (9 units/three courses) in each of three broad areas of study — the Humanities; Natural Sciences & Mathematics; and Social & Behavioral Sciences — and three to four courses (9-12 units) in a fourth area, Language & Cultural Diversity. Collectively, these area requirements make up approximately one-third of the units needed to graduate.

Second, the College's academic program gives students the opportunity to study a subject or area in a sustained, intensive way. After a period of initial investigation (typically two to three semesters) during which students explore the richness inherent in the various fields of study, a student declares an area of concentration: the major. The College offers more than 30 traditional subject majors — such as chemistry, English and music — and more than 20 interdisciplinary majors — such as American culture studies; global studies; and women, gender, and sexuality studies. Students also may develop an individualized special major.

In all departments, students are encouraged to proceed as their strengths and interests lead them. Placement examinations are used in many departments to enroll undergraduates in courses at the levels their previous training warrants; in other departments, proficiency examinations are available (visit the Proficiency and Placement Examinations section of this *Bulletin* or the College's placement webpages under Credit for Test Scores and College Coursework Prior to WashU).

The degree requirements and policies in the 2024-25 *Bulletin* apply to students entering Washington University during the 2024-25 academic year. To consult catalogs from prior years, refer to our Prior Bulletins.

## Academic Advising

To assist students with their undergraduate planning, the College provides a closely coordinated academic advising program. Matriculating students have a specially selected four-year academic advisor with whom they meet regularly during the first year to help with the transition into the university and to help select courses for the fall and spring semesters. After the first year, students meet with their four-year academic advisors prior to registration each semester to discuss interests, goals and academic course work. Students are encouraged to consult with their four-year academic advisors any time they need assistance throughout the school year.

Upon declaring a major, students are also assigned a major advisor in the department of their principal area of study. The extent of the advisor's assistance depends on a student's individual needs and wishes. Consultation with a major advisor, in addition to the four-year academic advisor, is required each time a student prepares to register for courses.

Students with problems or questions related to academic issues are invited to visit the College Office at any time. One of the deans is available, on a walk-in basis every day, to answer questions or to provide references to an appropriate source of help. Individual faculty members with particular specialties are among these sources of help and may be able to answer students' questions. In addition, the Center for Career Engagement, the Habib Health and Wellness Center, the Learning Center, and the Writing Center provide a wide range of services, including individual and group instruction, interest tests and advice, individual sessions with trained counselors about educational and personal challenges, and information about the improvement of learning skills.

## Pre-Matriculation Credit

Students may earn pre-matriculation credit for college-level courses completed before enrollment at Washington University as a first-year student. Sources for pre-matriculation credit include Advanced Placement (AP) examinations, British Advanced (A) Levels, the International Baccalaureate (IB), course credit earned by proficiency (e.g., back credit), and college credit earned after the sophomore year of high school that was not applied to high school graduation. Although all accepted pre-matriculation work is noted on the transcript so that the student may go directly into advanced courses, the maximum number of pre-matriculation units of credit awarded is 15. Pre-matriculation course work does not fulfill distribution requirements but may fulfill requirements for majors and minors. If a student enrolls in and completes a course equivalent to that for which pre-matriculation credit has been granted, the pre-matriculation units for the course in question will be removed from the student's record. For more information, please refer to the Pre-Matriculation Credit Units section on the Admissions Procedures page of this *Bulletin*.

## Major Fields of Study

A major consists of both introductory course work and a minimum of 18 advanced (300-level and greater) units, all of which must be letter-graded and completed with at least a C-. Individual departments may specify additional units or stricter minimum-grade requirements. Students should refer to the department program pages in this *Bulletin* for program-specific requirements.

A student graduating with a Bachelor of Arts (AB) may receive no more than a total of two majors and a minor or one major and two minors.

Major declaration is initiated online through WebSTAC. The relevant department or interdisciplinary committee will receive notification of the student's request to declare the major. The declaration of major will not be processed until the student completes any action(s) required by the department as indicated in the WebSTAC application. When the declaration of major is complete, the new major will appear in the Current Programs section of the student's Major Programs page in WebSTAC, and an advisor for the new major will be assigned by the department.

## Second Majors

Students may complete more than one major, including a second major in the College of Art through the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, in the McKelvey School of Engineering, or in the Olin Business School. (Programs of study in the School of Continuing & Professional Studies, including minors and certificates, are not permitted.) A second major is not required to earn a degree.

Students with two majors may count only introductory (100/1000- and 200/2000-level) courses, where relevant, toward the requirements for both majors. Advanced (300/3000-level and greater) courses may not count for both majors. If both majors require the same course, a departmentally-sanctioned elective must be chosen to replace the course in one of the programs.

Students may not earn multiple credentials (e.g., a second major or a major and a minor) in the same discipline. Two credentials may be earned within the same department (e.g., Romance Languages and Literatures or Comparative Literature and Thought) but not within the same discipline (e.g., a major in French with a minor in French is not permitted, but a major in French with a minor in Italian is permitted).

Students in architecture, art, business or engineering may choose to pursue a second major in the College of Arts & Sciences. These students will receive one degree, a BS or BFA, with two majors: one in the professional school and one in the College of Arts & Sciences.

## Minor Fields of Study

Students who develop a significant interest in one or more fields of study beyond the major may choose to pursue a minor in those fields. A minor is not required to earn a degree. Minors may be fulfilled in an area closely related to the major or, to add more breadth to the student's educational program, in a very different area of study. A minor consists of a minimum of 15 units of credit, all of which must be letter-graded and completed with a grade of C- or higher. Individual departments may specify additional units or stricter minimum-grade requirements. At least 9 of these units of credit must be at the 300 level or above, and at least half of the courses must be completed in residence at Washington University. Specific course requirements for a minor are determined by each department or program and are detailed in the department program pages in this *Bulletin*.

Students with a major and one or two minors may count only introductory (100/1000- and 200/2000-level) courses, where relevant, toward the requirements for the programs. Advanced (300/3000-level and greater) courses may not count for more than one of the programs. If more than one program requires the same course, a departmentally-sanctioned elective must be chosen to replace the course in the other program(s).

In addition to pursuing the broad array of minor programs offered through the College, students may undertake minors in the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, in the McKelvey School of Engineering, or in the Olin Business School. (Programs of study in the School of Continuing & Professional Studies, including majors and certificates, are not permitted.)

Students may not earn multiple credentials (e.g., a second major or a major and a minor) in the same discipline. Two credentials may be earned within the same department (e.g., Romance Languages and Literatures or Comparative Literature and Thought) but not within the same discipline (e.g., a major in French with a minor in French is not permitted, but a major in French with a minor in Italian is permitted).

Minor declaration is initiated online through WebSTAC. The relevant department or interdisciplinary committee will receive notification of the student's request to declare the minor. The declaration of minor will not be processed until the student completes any action(s) required by the department as indicated in the WebSTAC application. When the declaration of minor is complete, the new minor will appear in the Current Programs section of the student's Major Programs page in WebSTAC.

## Part-Time Study: Nontraditional Students

The university recognizes that, for certain students with high educational goals, full-time study may not be feasible or appropriate. Employment in demanding positions, extensive family responsibilities or other obligations may prevent an otherwise serious and competent student from completing the bachelor's degree at a rate of 15 units a semester. With their varied experiences outside the university, such students make valuable contributions to the classroom environment as they pursue programs of study suitable to their special circumstances. Please contact the School of Continuing & Professional Studies at 314-935-6700 for more information about part-time study.

## Tuition Reduction

Students who have completed eight full-time semesters, excluding summer terms, in the College of Arts & Sciences and paid full tuition for their eight semesters may seek reduced tuition for a ninth or subsequent semester, provided that they have fewer than 12 units remaining to complete their degree. Students must petition the College Office, Arts & Sciences, Cupples II Hall, Room 104. Students who successfully petition for tuition adjustment for the ninth or subsequent semester will pay only for the units of credit that they attempt (proportionate to the full-time standard for tuition). Students approved for reduced tuition under this policy will have their term bills adjusted after the semester's add/drop period has concluded.

## Army ROTC and Air Force ROTC

Students have the opportunity to participate in either the Air Force ROTC Military Aerospace Science Studies program or the Army ROTC Military Science program. Scholarship information for both programs can be found in the Scholarship Funds section of this *Bulletin*. For information about counting ROTC course work toward the degree, refer to the Academic Regulations page of this *Bulletin*.