

Curriculum/Majors/Minors/Concentrations

The General Studies Program: The goal of the General Studies Program is to inform the whole of the student's undergraduate education with a structure and consistency that complement and broaden the program of major studies. Whitman recognizes that flexibility is necessary in order to accommodate differences in background, interest, and aptitude. General Studies is Whitman's method of ensuring that student programs have overall coherence and that the wide range of the college's intellectual resources are utilized without enforcing lockstep requirements.

Specifically, the General Studies Program is intended to provide: 1) breadth and perspective to allow exposure to the diversity of knowledge, 2) integration to demonstrate the interrelatedness of knowledge, 3) a community of shared experience to encourage informal continuation of education beyond the classroom, and 4) a context for further study in the many areas appropriate for a well-educated person. To achieve these goals, the faculty has devised the following curriculum:

- **First-Year Seminars:** Asking Complex Questions (GENS 175) and Making Powerful Arguments (GENS 176). GENS 175 is completed by all students during their first fall semester at Whitman College, with the exception of transfer students entering with junior standing (58 or more transferrable credits). GENS 176 is completed by all first-year students in the spring semester. While transfer students are encouraged to enroll in GENS 176 as well, they may receive equivalent credit for a comparable course at another institution.
- **Distribution Requirements:** All students must complete the Distribution Requirements (see "General Studies Program" in the *Courses and Programs* section of this catalog).

Major Studies Requirements: A major study program is a coherent array of courses designed to develop mastery of the basic ideas and skills in a particular field or area. Every candidate for a bachelor's degree must complete such a program. The major study may be an established departmental program, an established combined program, or an individually planned program.

The choice of a major can be made at any time after the student has been admitted to the college, but must be made before the end of the second semester of the sophomore year. Transfer students entering with junior standing may be eligible for a one-semester extension to this deadline. The selection of a major should be made in consultation with the student's pre-major advisor and the advisor or advisors for the proposed major study.

Whitman College offers departmental major study programs in the areas listed as follows. Departments also may provide an option for emphasis within the major.

	Economics	
Anthropology	English	
Art	Ethics and Society	Philosophy
Art History	French and Francophone Studies	Physics
Astronomy	Geology	Politics
Biology	German Studies	Psychology
Chemistry	Hispanic Studies	Religion
Chinese	History	Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse
Classics	Japanese	Sociology
Classical Studies	Mathematics	Theater
Computer Science	Music	

A combined major study program integrates work from two or more departments, from a department and one or more of the extra-departmental teaching areas, or from two teaching areas within a department, to provide concentration in an area of study. The faculty have established combined major study programs in the following areas:

Anthropology-Environmental Studies	Economics-Environmental Studies	Mathematics-Physics
Art-Environmental Studies	Economics-Mathematics	Mathematics-Statistics
Astronomy-Geology	Environmental Humanities	Physics-Astronomy
Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology	Film and Media Studies	Physics-Environmental Studies
Biology-Environmental Studies	Gender Studies	Politics-Environmental Studies
Biology+French	Geology-Computer Science	Psychology+French
Biology-Geology	Geology-Environmental Studies	Religion+French
Brain, Behavior, and Cognition	Geology+French	Sociology-Environmental Studies
Chemistry-Environmental Studies	Geology-Physics	Sociology+French
Chemistry-Geology	History- Environmental Studies	South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
	Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies	

Specific requirements for each of the established major study programs may be found by referring to the respective departmental listing in the *Courses of Instruction* section of this catalog. The requirements that apply to a student are those published in the most recent edition of this catalog at the time a student completes the second semester of their sophomore year or, in the case of junior-level transfer students, the catalog for the year of entrance to the college. These requirements may be altered as necessary in individual cases by the departments with the approval of the Board of Review.

In addition to the combined major, an individually planned major study program may be developed by students with unique interests and intentions. The individually planned major permits the development of a concentrated study in some area which crosses two or more disciplines, or which currently does not offer a standard major, thus permitting an area of concentration not available in other major study programs. During a student's second semester of their sophomore year, or equivalent, a student must select a major committee consisting of at least three faculty advisors (at least two of whom must be tenured or tenure-track) appropriate for the proposed major. With the guidance of the advisory committee, the student must specify the requirements for a coherent major study program and develop a rationale. The rationale must clearly demonstrate the need for an individually planned major rather than an established combined major or a departmental major and minor. Moreover, the proposed individually planned major must be approved by the Board of Review and subsequently assessed by the Curriculum Committee. Additional requirements appear in *Guidelines for the Construction of an Individually Planned Major*, available from the Registrar's Office.

Regardless of whether the student declares a standard, combined, or individually planned major, a minimum of two-thirds of the specific course and credit requirements for the major must be completed in the on-campus program of the college, and a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.000 must be earned by a student in all of the courses taken within the department or departments of their major study. A student with a combined major must maintain a GPA of at least 2.000 in each subject area of the major. A student with an individually planned major must maintain a GPA of at least 2.000 in the courses specified in the major.

A program of study is prepared with the advice and consent of the student's major advisor or advisory committee to ensure that all major and degree requirements are completed. At an appropriate time during the student's senior year, the major department or major committee certifies that the degree candidate has completed an acceptable program of study.

Senior Assessment in Major Study

Every candidate for a bachelor's degree must, in their senior year or subsequently, complete a senior assessment in the field of the major study.

The examination may be entirely oral, or it may be part written and part oral. The advanced tests of the Graduate Record Examination, if taken during the senior year, may be used in partial satisfaction of the written major examination. Major examinations when passed are graded "passed" or "passed with distinction." A student who fails to pass the major examination may take a second examination, but not before two weeks after the first examination. A candidate who fails to pass the second examination is not eligible to take another until three months have elapsed.

Minor Study Option

A minor study allows serious participation in a secondary interest area without the burden of designing a more comprehensive interdisciplinary program as required for an individually planned combined major. The election of a minor study program is optional.

Minor study programs include 15 to 20 credits within the particular field or area to be completed with a minimum grade-point average of 2.000. The approved minor programs are:

	Data Science	
	Economics	
Anthropology	English	Latin American Studies
Art	Film and Media Studies	Mathematics
Art History	Finance	Music
Astronomy	French and Francophone Studies	Philosophy
Biology	Gender Studies	Physics
Chemistry	Geology	Politics
Chinese	German Studies	Psychology
Classical Studies	Global Literatures	Religion
Computer Science	Hispanic Studies	Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse
Creative Writing	History	Sociology
Dance	Indigeneity, Race, And Ethnicity Studies	Theater
	Japanese	

Specific requirements for each of the minor study programs may be found in the respective departmental or area listing in the *Courses and Programs* section. Unless approved by the appropriate departments and/or programs, courses used for minor requirements may not also be applied to requirements in the major or any other minor. In addition, a minimum of three-fifths of the specific course and credit requirements for the minor must be completed in the on-campus program of the college. Refer to the specific major and minor descriptions elsewhere in the catalog.

Concentrations

Global Studies

Human-Centered Design

A Concentration is a coherent program of courses designed to develop competence in areas of study not confined to extant Departments or Programs. Candidates for a Bachelor's Degree may elect to complete a Concentration in addition to, but not as a replacement for, a major area of study.