DEGREE OPTIONS

Major

A major is a student’s principal field of study. Majors are in specific disciplines or are interdisciplinary groupings of courses that are designed to make a coherent whole. The department or program administering the major specifies required and optional courses. Undergraduate students must declare a major no later than the semester in which they are enrolled in their 60th credit. Some majors require course sequences that necessitate earlier selection of the major in order to earn a baccalaureate degree within four years of full-time study. Therefore a registration hold will be placed on any undeclared undergraduate student enrolled in their 60th credit. The hold will not be removed until the student meets with an adviser for major selection.

The major becomes official only after the Office of Records and Registration has received the Change of Major/Concentration Form approved by the appropriate school dean, department chair or program head. The major will appear on the student’s permanent record at the time of graduation.

The following minimum requirements are needed for completion of a major:

- A minimum of 30 credits in the major area, at least half of which are at the 300 or 400 level
- Any special requirements stipulated by the major

A minimum major GPA of 2.0 (grade of C) is required for graduation. The major area GPA will be calculated from all attempts in courses that are designated as required or optional in the student’s major area, regardless of assigned grade. Exceptions to this calculation will be grades omitted due to a historical academic repeat or the grade exclusion policy. Students should consult with their department or program to determine if a higher GPA is specified for graduation. Only course credits taken at VCU are computed in the major GPA.

Concentration

A concentration is a set of courses that provides structured study in a topic within the major. Concentrations require a minimum of nine credits, with a normal maximum of 15 credits. The department or program administering the concentration specifies required and optional courses. The concentration may be used to fulfill career needs or to facilitate in-depth investigation in a topic related to an area of interest to the student. The concentration becomes official only after the Office of Records and Registration has received the Change of Major/Concentration Form approved by the appropriate school dean, department chair or program head. A concentration will appear on the student’s permanent record at the time of graduation. All courses in the concentration must be completed before graduation with a bachelor’s degree.

Double major

A double major is the concurrent fulfillment of the requirements of two majors. To earn a degree with two majors, the student must complete the courses required in each major, any collateral/prerequisite courses required for both majors and the general education requirements, including the University Core curriculum, of the primary major.

The primary major is the major that appears on the transcript as the degree awarded and the second major will appear as an accompanying note. One diploma is awarded and both majors will appear on the student’s academic record.

The double major becomes official only after the Office of Records and Registration has received the Change of Major/Concentration Form approved by the appropriate school dean, department chair or program head.

Dual degrees

Dual degrees are the concurrent fulfillment of the requirements of two majors and two degrees. To earn dual degrees, the student must fulfill all the requirements of the degree programs in both majors, the general education requirements of the primary degree, including the University Core curriculum, and complete an additional 30 credit hours above the minimum hour degree requirement of the primary degree.

Second baccalaureate degree

A student who already has earned a baccalaureate degree from VCU or another institution and wishes to earn a second baccalaureate degree at VCU must complete the admissions process outlined in the Admission to the university (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/admission-university) chapter of this bulletin.

Students who have earned a baccalaureate degree at another regionally accredited institution but who wish to acquire a second baccalaureate degree from VCU will be considered to have fulfilled the University Core Curriculum as well as the university general education requirements for the second degree. Such students will be expected to meet all college, school and departmental requirements.

Students seeking a second baccalaureate degree must earn, at VCU and after acceptance into the second baccalaureate degree program, a minimum of 30 additional credits applicable to the second degree program. Each additional baccalaureate degree pursued requires an additional 30 applicable credits. Prior to undertaking the second degree, students must have their accumulated credits evaluated and approved by the Transfer Center.

In addition, students must meet the degree requirements for all undergraduate students (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/academic-regulations-general-degree-requirements/degree-requirements-undergraduate-students) as found in this section of the bulletin.

Minor

A minor is a set of courses analogous to and named for an existing major or discipline, or an interdisciplinary grouping of courses not represented by a major. Although a minor is not required for completion of most degree programs, a student may elect an approved minor. Minors require a minimum of 18 credits, with a normal maximum of 21 credits. Unless approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, at least nine of the credits in a minor must be in 300-level or higher courses, unless a greater number is specified. Students must achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0 in designated course work in order to earn the minor. The department or program administering the minor specifies required and optional courses. The minor may be used to fulfill career needs or to facilitate in-depth investigation in a discipline of secondary interest to the student.

The minor becomes official only after the Office of Records and Registration has received approval from the appropriate school dean, department chair or program head. A student cannot minor in a discipline
Degree options

identical to the major. A minor will appear on the student’s permanent record at the time of graduation if the student has completed all requirements for the minor and approval has been granted by the appropriate school dean, department chair, program head or designee. All courses in the minor must be completed before graduation with a bachelor’s degree.

Change of academic program (major, concentration, minor)

Before initiating a change of major, concentration or minor, students should contact the office administering the program of study to carefully review the requirements and prerequisites. In certain programs — including those in the schools of the Arts, Business, Media and Culture, and in the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program — a candidate must fulfill additional requirements before authorization to enter the program is granted. Credits previously earned at VCU or at another university may or may not be applicable to the new academic program.

The academic program change becomes official after the Office of Records and Registration has received authorization from the appropriate school dean, department chair or program head. Changes in academic program may occur for the current semester only through the add/drop period. Changes processed after the add/drop period are effective for the following fall or spring semester, and changes processed during the summer sessions are effective for the following fall semester.

Students currently enrolled in an MCV Campus program who wish to change to a curriculum on the Monroe Park Campus should follow the process mentioned above. Such students are subject to the continuance policy of the Monroe Park Campus after the academic program change has occurred. Students currently enrolled in an MCV Campus undergraduate program who wish to change to another MCV Campus undergraduate curriculum must go through the admission process outlined in the Admission to the university (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/admission-university) chapter of this bulletin.

Undergraduate degree-seeking students who wish to enter a graduate or professional program must go through the admission processes outlined in the Graduate or Professional Programs bulletins online. Students enrolled in a graduate or professional program of study at VCU who wish to return to a previous undergraduate program in which a degree has not been awarded may do so through a change in academic program as outlined above. Such students should consult the Graduate or Professional Programs bulletins regarding the process for withdrawing from their current graduate or professional program of study. If a degree already has been awarded in an undergraduate program of study, graduate or professional students must go through the admission process to re-enter an undergraduate program as outlined in the Admission to the university (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/admission-university) chapter of this bulletin.

Nondegree-seeking students intending to enter a degree-seeking status must go through the admission process outlined in the Admission to the university (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/admission-university) chapter of this bulletin or the admission processes outlined in the Graduate or Professional Programs bulletins online.