DEGREE DEFINITIONS

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 the University Registrar has received approval of the change by the appropriate school dean or designee. 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 in addition to the specified core requirements in the major. 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 the University Registrar has received the change of major/concentration approval by the appropriate school dean or designee. 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 prerequisite courses required for both majors and the general education requirements of the primary major. Individual degree programs may set limits on the number of credits that can be shared between two majors.

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

The double major becomes official only after the Office of the University Registrar has received the change of major/concentration approval from the appropriate school dean or designee.

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. 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 the University Registrar has received approval from the appropriate school dean or designee. A student cannot minor in a discipline 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 or designee.

Undergraduate dual degrees

Dual degree programs allow students to pursue concurrent study in two separate undergraduate degree programs and receive two separate program completion credentials (diplomas). Dual degree programs may combine two VCU programs or combine a VCU degree program with a degree offered at another regionally accredited domestic or international institution.

To earn concurrent dual degrees by combining two VCU undergraduate programs, a student must fulfill all the requirements for both majors, the general education requirements of the primary degree program and complete an additional 30 credit hours above the minimum degree hour requirement of the primary degree. A diploma is awarded for each degree, and both degrees will appear on the student's academic record. Individual programs may set limits on the number of credits that can be shared between degree programs.

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 (https://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 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 (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/ugrad/ugrad-degree-reqs/) as found in this section of the bulletin.