Multiple Degrees and Multiple Majors

Bachelor’s Degree

A bachelor’s degree is an award signifying a rank or level of undergraduate educational attainment. Particular types of bachelor’s degrees identify educational programs having common objectives and requirements. Degree programs may provide academic, pre-professional or professional experiences and preparation. Majors lead to a bachelor’s degree. Each student must select a major within a bachelor’s degree type. If options are offered within a major, a student selects one. The student may also elect to enroll in a minor to supplement the major. Alternatively, the student may seek to enroll in multiple majors within the same type of bachelor’s degree or to enroll in a concurrent degree program. A bachelor’s program of study shall consist of no less than 120 credits. Students may elect to take courses beyond the minimum requirements of a degree program.

Second Bachelor’s Degree

Students and former students interested in obtaining a second bachelor’s degree and currently enrolled students interested in earning concurrent degrees must follow the stipulations as described in the following paragraphs.

Important Note #1: A student may only be awarded one degree with the same degree type (i.e., Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, etc.). For example, once a Bachelor of Arts is earned, a student may pursue a second major associated with a Bachelor of Arts but not a second Bachelor of Arts degree. In this example, the student could pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Communication because the degree type is different.

Important Note #2: Currently enrolled students are encouraged to pursue graduate level studies toward an advanced degree through the University Scholars Program in lieu of pursuing a concurrent bachelor’s degree. Students should contact their primary college of residence for additional University Scholars Program information.

A currently enrolled student may earn two different bachelor’s degrees (i.e., a B.A. and a B.S.) concurrently if he or she meets the following requirements:

- earns a minimum of 30 additional credit hours over and above the number of credit hours required for the primary degree
- earns a minimum of 60 credit hours in residence (dependent upon the number of credit hours required to earn the two degrees)
- meets all degree, college and University requirements for both degree programs
- meets all prerequisites and course requirements in the two different major fields

Courses may be counted toward meeting the requirements in more than one area unless specifically prohibited by the academic departments and so stated in the catalog. However, credit for such a course cannot be applied toward both the total hours required for the first degree and the additional hours required for any additional degree.

NOTE: Both degrees do not have to be received in the same semester provided the concurrent degree plan of study was approved prior to the receipt of the first degree; otherwise, see the next bullet below.

A student who has previously earned a bachelor’s degree from The University of Alabama and wishes to pursue further undergraduate work may complete an additional major and have it noted on the official transcript (with date of completion) or earn a second degree if it is different from the first (i.e., a B.A. if the first degree was a B.S. and vice versa). This student must apply for readmission for the second degree and then:

- earn a minimum of 30 additional credit hours in residence at The University of Alabama over and above any hours applied to the first degree
- complete all hours for the degree in the college awarding the degree except in special circumstances approved by the dean
- meet all degree, college and University graduation requirements for the second degree program in the catalog under which the student enters or in a subsequent catalog
- meet all prerequisite and course requirements in the major field(s) for the second degree

A student holding a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning may earn a second bachelor’s degree, in most instances, from The University of Alabama by fulfilling a specific set of requirements at both the college and University level. This student must apply for admission for the second degree and then:

- meet all requirements for the second degree to include all course hours, grade point, ancillary, prerequisite and residency requirements specified by the degree program
- earn 25 percent of the degree requirements (a minimum of 30 additional credit hours for a 120 hour degree) in residence at The University of Alabama over and above any hours applied to the first degree

If a student holds a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning, the University presumes all general education, core curriculum requirements are completed. This presumption does not apply to ancillary college and curricular requirements required by the college awarding the degree.

Students are responsible for declaring their intent to pursue a second bachelor’s degree by filing an approval plan of study with the primary college of residency. To ensure appropriate advising, approval is obtained at a point when no less than 30 hours of course work remains for the completion of one or both degrees. Students are also responsible for re-filing updated plans of study if changes are desired.

For degrees in different colleges, students must establish one college as their primary college of residency. If program accreditation is a component of the degree program, then the primary college of residency must be the college of the degree program whose professional accreditation requires residency. The student must pay all fees and adhere to all requirements of each college, other than residency.

Students are responsible for filing an application for each degree sought according to the published degree application submission deadlines of the colleges and/or schools recommending the degrees and within the deadlines established by the Office of the University Registrar.

Joint/Shared Degree

A joint/shared degree program involves a student working towards a degree mutually sponsored by UA, The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and/or The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) leading to a single degree which is conferred by all participating institutions. A joint degree program is unique and distinguishable from any program offered independently at any one of the three institutions. The joint/shared degree program must be established through the student’s primary institution of residency.

Multiple Institutions Bachelor’s Degree

A Multiple Institutions Bachelor’s Degree is a special degree based on a Transfer Articulation Agreement. The agreement is a contract between two institutions of higher education, allowing the student to complete a specific set of courses at each institution to complete requirements for a bachelor’s degree. The agreement is program specific and institution specific, so the courses of a specific institutional program have a guaranteed application toward a specific bachelor’s program at the other institution.

Majors

A major is an academic program of study within a degree designation. That part of a degree program consisting of a specified number of hours from a defined group of courses in a primary discipline or field. Students are expected to acquire some mastery of a particular discipline or interdisciplinary area as well as to achieve a breadth of intellectual experience. A new major must go through the College/School curriculum approval process and be approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Changes to an existing major must go through the College/School curriculum approval process and be approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Every major will have a Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code and a unique UA major code attached to it. Only formally approved majors will appear in the UA Catalog. A completed major is shown on a student’s transcript but not the diploma.

A major must comprise a minimum of 30 semester hours of course work specified by the academic department.

Multiple Majors

Students may pursue multiple majors (two or more majors) at the same time within a single bachelor’s degree or across degree types. To earn multiple majors, students must fulfill all the major requirements for each major, including any grade point and ancillary requirements. A student may share specific courses pertinent to both majors, provided an agreement has been negotiated and agreed upon between the two colleges or departments involved in granting the majors. Students are not required to complete additional general education/core curriculum requirements beyond those required for the first major, except in the case where additional lower level courses are needed to fulfill prerequisite requirements of upper level courses. Majors may be selected from multiple colleges, with approval of the college responsible for each additional major, but students must establish one college as the primary college for residency. If a major program’s accreditation requires residency in a specific college, the student will reside in the college whose professional accreditation requires residency.
Students are responsible for declaring their intent to pursue multiple majors by filing an appropriate plan of study with their college or school Student Services Office. To ensure appropriate advising, approval should be obtained at a point when no less than 30 hours of course work remain. Once approval is granted, the Student Services Office of the college of residency notifies the Office of the University Registrar of a student’s intent to complete additional major(s). The student is responsible for re-filing updated plans of study with the primary college of residence, if changes in major intent are desired.

NOTE: Students who seek multiple majors across degree types (ex. BA & BS) and earn fewer than 150 hours are awarded one degree with multiple majors. Students who earn 150 or more hours will receive multiple degrees assuming completion of all necessary requirements.

Dual Majors
A dual major program is a program in which two departments within a single college or two departments from two different colleges have formally agreed to allow a student to follow a condensed pathway, sharing specific courses pertinent to both majors. This allows the student to complete the two majors in less time than it would take to earn them separately. More specifically, dual majors are predetermined, lock-step programs defined by the two areas of interest and not self-devised. Some overlap of coursework use is allowed. Dual majors must be approved by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Minors
A minor is part of a degree program in an approved secondary discipline or field outside the major. It requires fewer hours than a major and is awarded only if approved by the major and minor department and/or college. A minor must be completed in conjunction with the degree a student is pursuing, and a student may not pursue a minor after a degree has been conferred. A new minor (by each degree level) must go through the college/school curriculum approval process and ultimately be approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. A completed minor is shown on a student’s transcript, but not on the diploma.

A minor must comprise a minimum of 18 semester hours of course work specified by the department.

Concentrations
A concentration is an approved set of courses within a major that define a specialty area or specific field of study. Unless specified by the unit offering the major, a concentration is not required. Both new concentrations or changes to existing concentrations (by each degree level) must go through the college/school curriculum approval process and be approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Only formally approved concentrations will appear in The University of Alabama Undergraduate Catalog. A completed concentration is shown on a student’s transcript, but not the diploma. Some divisions or departments may use a term different from concentration, for example, specialization or track.

A concentration must comprise a minimum of nine semester hours of specialized coursework.

Certificate Program
A certificate program at The University of Alabama complements the undergraduate degree and serves as a way to distinguish/recognize students who concentrate a portion of their course work in a particular area. Students are not eligible to complete these certificate programs without being enrolled in and successfully completing a degree program. In rare instances, there may be people who have completed an appropriate bachelor’s degree who may then need to complete a certificate for professional certification purposes — but these types of certificates are rare.

The University of Alabama Undergraduate Catalog contains information about certificate programs. Approved certificates (at all levels) are associated with a CIP code and a UA major. Undergraduate certificates are approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Completion of an approved Certificate Program is reflected on the official transcript as a texted comment but not on the diploma.

NOTE: Some certificate programs are unique to a specific division and are not documented on the transcript. Students who are unsure of whether their certificate will be noted on their transcript should check with the student services office in the division offering the certificate.

A list of Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs approved undergraduate certificate programs follows:

Construction Management Certificate
Global Studies Certificate
Manufacturing Engineering Certificate

Environmental Engineering Certificate
Ethics/Social Responsibility Certificate
Business Analytical Excellence Certificate
Leadership Communication Certificate