Undergraduate General Degree Requirements

General Requirements for all Bachelor's Degrees

The bachelor’s degree programs require students to study one field in depth (the major) and to complete general education requirements as appropriate to the major field and degree program selected. There is overlap among general education requirements, which allows students flexibility in the choice of majors and degree programs.

Every candidate for a baccalaureate degree from the university must:

1. complete the requirements of the Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship (SAGES), as described below;
2. complete two semesters of physical education through a combination of half and/or full semesters in Physical Education activity courses, as described below;
3. complete the requirements of the major field of study, as described in the relevant sections of this Bulletin;
4. complete the general education requirements of the school and degree program in which the student's major field of study fails, as described in the relevant section of this chapter of the Bulletin (Arts and Sciences) (http://bulletin.case.edu/undergraduatestudies/casdegree), Engineering, Management, Nursing);
5. complete a course of studies with a cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.00 for work taken at Case Western Reserve University; and
6. earn in residence at Case Western Reserve University a minimum of 60 credit-hours, of which at least 15 must be earned after the student has earned a total of 105 credit-hours.

SAGES

The Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship (SAGES) provides a foundation in critical thinking, written and oral communication, the use of information, quantitative reasoning, engagement with ethical issues and diversity, and exposure to experimental and theoretical approaches to understanding human culture and behavior, scientific knowledge, and methods of research.

The First Seminar

The First Seminar (4 credit-hours, taken in the first semester of enrollment) introduces students to the seminar format through reading, discussion, and intensive writing, and incorporates activities with University Circle institutions. The course focuses on the development of critical thinking and communication skills through the use of a variety of approaches, media, and perspectives to explore the human mind and the nature of inquiry. This course is designed to strengthen writing and analytical skills while building a foundation in ethics, information literacy, and cultural diversity.

Students select a course from:

- First Seminar: Natural World (FSNA 1xx)
- First Seminar: Social World (FSSO 1xx)
- First Seminar: Symbolic World (FSSY 1xx)

As an alternative to these topical seminars, some students may choose FSCC 110: Foundations of College Writing, designed to provide additional writing support.

Students for whom English is a second language and who would benefit from an initial focus on academic English will enroll in FSAE 100: Academic English (3 credit-hours) during the fall semester and then continue with FSCC 100: The Life of the Mind (4 credit-hours) in the spring to complete their First Seminar requirement. Some students for whom English is a second language will go directly into FSCC 100: The Life of the Mind in the fall semester.

*Transfer Students only: Transfer students who have completed the English composition/expository writing requirement with a grade of C or higher at the college/university at which they previously matriculated will receive transfer credit for FSCC 100-TR (3 – 6 credit-hours) and will be required to complete a supplemental 1-credit-hour SAGES introductory seminar – FSTS 100 SAGES Transfer Supplement.

University Seminars

After completion of the First Seminar with a passing evaluative grade and before the end of the second year, students must complete two University Seminars (totaling 6 credit-hours). University Seminars provide continued experience in critical reading, writing, and oral communication, as well as information literacy, ethics, and cultural diversity. Each University Seminar explores content determined according to the interests of the faculty. A student's First Seminar and two University Seminars must include a course from each of the three thematic areas: Natural World, Social World, and Symbolic World.

Students select courses from:

- University Seminar: Thinking About the Natural World (USNA 2xx)
- University Seminar: Thinking About the Social World (USSO 2xx)
- University Seminar: Thinking About the Symbolic World (USSY 2xx)

Students who complete their First Seminar requirement with FSCC 100, FSCC 110, or FSTS 100 may fulfill the University Seminar requirement by choosing courses from any two of the three thematic areas.

University Composition Requirement: The SAGES Writing Portfolio

Students develop a Writing Portfolio comprised of final graded writing assignments from the First Seminar and University Seminars. The Writing Portfolio is due the semester after completing the final University seminar.

Departmental Seminar

The Departmental Seminar (3 credit-hours), generally taken in the junior year after the completion of the University Seminars, focuses on discipline-specific methods and modes of inquiry and communication characteristic of the Departmental Seminar's discipline. The Departmental Seminar may be taken in the department of the student's major or in another department. A course used to fulfill the Departmental Seminar Requirement may not also be used to fulfill a Breadth Requirement. Courses meeting this requirement include the designation "Approved SAGES Departmental Seminar" in their course descriptions. Some majors include a specific Departmental Seminar as part of their requirements.
Senior Capstone

The Senior Capstone assimilates the knowledge and skills gained throughout the educational process. Students engage in a unique one- or two-semester experience (3 - 6 credit-hours) designed in consultation with a faculty member. Each Senior Capstone must include key elements:

1. Demonstration of critical thinking and writing skills;
2. Regular oversight by the Capstone advisor;
3. Periodic reporting of progress;
4. Regular writing (e.g. drafts, progress reports, critiques) throughout the project including a final written report which may be a thesis or equivalent document associated with the project or activity (e.g., such pursuits as performance, experiment, live case analysis, or creative writing), as approved by the department of capstone origin; and
5. Oral reports including a final public presentation at the Senior Capstone Fair, a conference, a performance, a public lecture, a teaching presentation, or another setting, as approved by the department of capstone origin.

Courses meeting this requirement include the designation “Approved SAGES Capstone” in their course descriptions. Some majors include a specific Senior Capstone course as part of their requirements.

Physical Education

All students must complete two full semesters of Physical Education activity courses at zero credit-hours. Students may choose from half-semester and full-semester course offerings. If possible, a student should begin meeting this requirement in the first semester and complete it early in his or her undergraduate years.

Requirements for Specific Degrees

Students are expected to complete a bachelor’s degree in a timely fashion and will ordinarily be subject to the degree requirements in place at the time of matriculation at Case Western Reserve University, although they may chose to update their requirements to those included in a later General Bulletin.

If a student extends study towards a bachelor’s degree beyond 10 years after first matriculating as an undergraduate student, the major-field department(s) will review the student’s academic record and may update major field requirements. Also, if the student has not already completed the applicable general education requirements in place at the time of matriculation, the appropriate dean in the school offering the major will also review the student’s academic record and may update general education requirements.

Double Majors, Secondary Majors, and Dual Undergraduate Degrees

Only one major is required for a student to satisfy degree requirements, and most students complete their degrees having met the requirements for a single major. However, some students wish to complete more than one major in order to address their interests and academic goals.

Several opportunities exist for a student to complete more than one major.

A student may double major in two (or more) Arts and Sciences majors for the BA degree, or two (or more) Engineering majors for the BS in Engineering degree, or two (or more) Management majors for the BS in Management degree. No additional credit-hours beyond those ordinarily required for the specific degree are required, but students may need additional credit-hours to meet all requirements of the two (or more) majors. Students pursuing multiple majors within a single degree will receive one diploma corresponding to the degree earned and each major will be noted on the diploma and the transcript.

A student whose interests span majors that fall under two different degree programs (the BA degree program and a BS degree program or two different BS degree programs) may complete one degree program, including its general education requirements, and the requirements for the two (or more) majors. The major for which the student does not complete the associated general education requirements will be designated as a secondary major. If the field chosen as a secondary major has different requirements for the BA and BS degrees, the requirements to complete the secondary major are those associated with the BA degree. No additional credit-hours beyond those ordinarily required for the degree for which the student completed general education requirements are required, though students may need additional credit-hours to complete all requirements of the two (or more) majors. The student will receive one diploma corresponding to the degree for which the student completed general education requirements, and that degree will be recorded on the transcript. Each major will be noted on the diploma and the transcript, but a secondary major will be designated in that way.

To qualify for two (or more) undergraduate degrees, i.e., a BA and a BS degree or two BS degrees, as a dual degree student, a student must satisfy all requirements for each degree, including each degree’s associated general education requirements, and complete for each additional degree 30 credit-hours of study beyond the hours required for the first degree. Students who seek a dual-degree program that involves the Bachelor of Music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music must meet Cleveland Institute of Music and Case Western Reserve admission requirements, and must seek approval of both institutions.

A student wishing to pursue two degrees is encouraged to meet with a dean in the Office of Undergraduate Studies, 357 Sears Bldg., to discuss requirements.