

Undergraduate Degree and Graduation Information

Baccalaureate Degree and Graduation Requirements

NDSU offers a number of baccalaureate degree types; (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/academic-policies/degree-and-graduation/>) the two most common bachelor's degrees awarded at NDSU are the Bachelor Science (B.S.) and the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.). To receive a baccalaureate (bachelor's) degree, student candidates must satisfactorily complete two sets of requirements. Students are responsible for understanding these requirements and should consult the official curriculum guide (<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/curriculum-guides/>) for all programs declared. Students should also plan to collaborate with an academic advisor to help guide them in this process.

A) University-Wide Degree Requirements

1. Minimum Total Credits: Students must present a minimum of 120 semester credits before a degree can be posted to record. Requirements for some academic programs may exceed this degree credit minimum.
2. University General Education Requirements: Students must satisfactorily complete the university's general education program requirements as outlined by the university in the general education section of the Bulletin from the year of admission or readmission to the university.
3. Minimum Scholastic Standing: Students presented for graduation must meet a minimum cumulative institutional grade-point average (GPA) of 2.00. This GPA is based on coursework taken at NDSU. Coursework transferred to NDSU is not included in this GPA calculation. Some academic programs may require a higher minimum GPA, which must be clearly outlined on the official curriculum when higher than the university minimum of 2.00 is required.
4. Resident Credit Requirement: Resident credits are earned from undergraduate courses that a student has registered and paid for at NDSU. Students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 30 credits from courses offered at NDSU or via Metro College Alliance (MCA) registration as an NDSU student.
5. Upper Level Credit Requirements: Students must present a minimum of 36 credits in courses taken at the 300-400 level for degree completion. These credits may or may not be earned at NDSU.
6. Transfer Credits: Students presenting transfer credit must meet the NDSU residence credits as defined in #4 and the minimum upper level credit defined in #5. Of the 30 credits earned in residence, a minimum of 15 semester credits must be in courses numbered 300 or above, and 15 semester credits must be in the student's curricula for their declared major.
7. Satisfy All Financial Obligations: Students must satisfy all financial obligations owed to the university. Diplomas and official transcripts will not be released to students who have outstanding debts owed to the university.
8. Application for degree: Candidates eligible for a baccalaureate degree or a Doctor of Pharmacy degree must complete the *Application for Graduation* found in Academic Records in Campus Connection. When eligible, students will apply for graduation from the Graduation menu within the published semester deadline. This is a hard deadline and failure to apply by the published deadline of the planned semester could delay the awarding of the degree until the following semester. Failure to satisfy all degree requirements can also delay the awarding of a degree requiring a student to have to reapply in a future semester.

B) Major Requirements for Declared Major and Minors

1. Major Requirements: In addition to the university-wide degree requirements listed above, students must complete the requirements for all declared majors and minors outlined on the official curriculum. One major will serve as the primary major; this major will determine what college will confer the degree and what, if any, college or department level requirements also apply. Refer to the curriculum guide for specific details.
 - a. Declaring a major: Students must officially declare their degree and major intent. This is done:
 - i. at the time of admission to the University on the application form submitted to the Office of Admission; or
 - ii. at the time of readmission to the University on the *Undergraduate Reactivation/Petition for Readmission* form submitted to the Office of Registration and Records; or
 - iii. by submitting a *Major Change Request* form to the Office of Registration and Records.
 - b. Completing declared major: Student follow the curricula that is published in the catalog at the time they officially declare their degree and major intent described in 1.a.i-iii. Students follow the published curricula until graduation provided their enrollment at NDSU has not been discontinued for more than one calendar year (B.1.e) or a new major is declared (B.1.a.iii).
 - c. Declaring additional majors/minors: Students who wish to pursue additional majors/minors/multiple degrees/certificates must officially declare these programs to the Office of Registration and Records (B.1.a.iii).
 - d. Pre-requirements majors and selective admission majors: Students enrolled in majors with pre-requirements or selective admission enrollment will have their program degree status changed from the pre-program to full-degree status based on information provided to the Office of Registration and Records by the respective academic department.
 - e. Discontinue enrollment: Students who discontinue enrollment at NDSU for more than one calendar year are subject to meeting the curricular requirements published in the catalog during the term of readmission.
 - f. Degree audit: Each program of study presented by a candidate for the baccalaureate degree is formally audited for meeting degree requirements by the Office of Registration and Records. Students can also view their degree progress by reviewing the academic requirements report available in Campus Connection.

Undergraduate Majors, Minors, and Certificates

Majors and minors form a core component of a bachelor's degree. The North Dakota University System (NDUS) State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Policy and Procedure 409 (<https://ndus.edu/sbhe-overview/sbhe-policies/400-heading-policies/>) outlines the minimum credit requirements for both. Students must adhere to the specific requirements in effect when they formally declare their major or minor with the university.

Detailed curriculum information for each major and minor can be found in the undergraduate curriculum (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/curriculum/undergraduate/>) section of the university catalog. Certificates are a stand-alone credential and can be completed on their own or in conjunction with a baccalaureate's degree.

Majors

Majors: An undergraduate major represents a structured set of courses within a specific academic area, known as a curriculum, that a student formally commits to studying by declaring it. Each major requires a minimum of 32 semester credits. Furthermore, departments are responsible for ensuring that each major includes at least 15 credits that are distinct from any other major offered at the University during the development process. While most majors lead to a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree, some specialized degree options exist with specific majors. A comprehensive list of all NDSU degree types can be found in the Degree Types (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/academic-policies/degree-and-graduation/>) section of the university catalog.

Second or Multiple Majors: Students have the option to pursue a second or multiple majors while earning a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree. In such cases, one major will be designated as the primary major, and the college associated with this primary major will award the degree. To successfully complete multiple majors, students must fulfill all curriculum requirements for each declared major, in addition to meeting all other undergraduate degree requirements. *Important Note:* If a student declares majors with different degree types (e.g., a BA and a BS), the requirements for earning a second degree will apply. Please refer to the Second Degree section below for more information.

After a Bachelor of Science or a Bachelor of Arts degree has been awarded, students can still complete additional majors or minors within that specific degree type. These subsequent majors or minors will be noted as a milestone on the student's academic record after the term in which all requirements are satisfied.

Dual Major: A dual major distinguishes itself from a second or multiple majors by formally integrating two majors into a single, cohesive curriculum. This combined structure typically results in fewer overall required courses compared to pursuing each major separately. Departments seeking to establish a dual major must obtain formal approval through the university's governance process. Students can declare a dual major through the standard major change procedure. Officially approved dual majors are clearly listed in the university catalog's undergraduate curriculum (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/curriculum/undergraduate/>) section.

Minors

Minor: Minors are focused programs of study within an academic discipline that undergraduates can choose to declare to enrich their bachelor's degree. Completing a minor requires a minimum of 16 credits, with at least eight of those credits earned through NDSU resident coursework. It's important to note that minors are not independent credentials; they are always awarded in conjunction with a bachelor's degree. A list of eligible minors is available in the curriculum (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/curriculum/undergraduate/>) section of the catalog.

Students can also complete additional minors after they have already earned their degree, and these will be noted on their academic record as a milestone following the semester of completion.

Undergraduate Certificates

Undergraduate Certificate: Undergraduate certificate programs offer focused study in a specific area, requiring a minimum of 9 credits. These certificates can be pursued concurrently with a degree program or as a separate, stand-alone program. Details regarding the curriculum for each certificate can be found in the undergraduate curriculum (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/curriculum/undergraduate/>) section of the catalog. Individuals interested in enrolling in an undergraduate certificate program must apply to the University through the Office of Admission.

Second Degree

At NDSU, students can pursue a second bachelor's degree type under these conditions:

- Each baccalaureate degree earned must be of a different type (for example, a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Arts, or a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering). Students cannot earn two degrees of the same type. However, students can complete the requirements for multiple majors within a single degree type, if offered (refer to the Second or Multiple Majors above).
- All curriculum requirements for the second degree must be successfully completed.

Bachelor of Arts Requirement Using a Second Language

The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree at NDSU signifies completion of a major and functional proficiency in a second language, typically demonstrated through at least the intermediate level. This requirement emphasizes practical language skills and a comparative cultural perspective, preparing students for an internationalized world. Proficiency is assessed continuously across speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension.

To fulfill the B.A. language requirement a student must demonstrate competence equivalent to that normally attained after four semesters of college study (NDSU level 202). Competency may be demonstrated in the following ways:

1. Completion of SPAN 202 with a grade of 'C' or better. Note that this requirement cannot be fulfilled by coursework taken pass/fail.
2. For students having previously passed the CLEP Examination (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/academic-policies/undergraduate-policies/credit-by-examination/#newitemtext>) in French, German or Spanish with a CLEP score high enough for second-year college credit (59 in French, 60 in German and 63 in Spanish) or the AP exam (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/academic-policies/undergraduate-policies/credit-by-examination/#apexamtext>) with a minimum score of 4 in French, German or Spanish, taking one additional college-level language class at the equivalent of the 202 level or higher in order to demonstrate competency in all four skill levels. Official score reports and/or transcripts must be submitted to the Office of Registration and Records.
3. English satisfies the B.A. language requirement for students whose official, certified transcripts demonstrate that their secondary or higher education was completed in a language other than English. It is the responsibility of the student to provide all necessary untranslated, official documentation to the School of Humanities (<https://www.ndsu.edu/schoolofhumanities/>) for verification. No credit will be awarded. To apply this to degree completion, the School of Humanities would complete and submit a waiver form to the Office of Registration and Records.
4. Students who are unable to provide the documentation mentioned above but who are native speakers of languages other than English may fulfill the second language requirement through proficiency in English by successful completion of the three-semester General Education English composition sequence and by passing an additional English (ENGL) course with a 'C' or better. Students having completed this sequence may apply to the School of Humanities for a waiver of the Second Language requirement. To apply this to degree completion, the School of Humanities would complete and submit a waiver form to the Office of Registration and Records.
5. Requests for determination of proficiency in languages not taught at NDSU are considered by the School of Humanities. If a student would like to demonstrate proficiency through testing in a language that is not taught at NDSU, it is his/her responsibility to arrange for such testing. The proficiency test must be completed by a faculty or staff member at a college or university; the evaluator must hold at least a master's degree (in any discipline). The test must evaluate reading, writing, listening and speaking through the fourth semester (intermediate NDSU 202) college level. The student must provide documentation from the evaluator which includes a copy of the test, a letter from the evaluator assessing the level of proficiency, and a statement of the evaluator's credentials, including an explanation of his/her expertise in the language being tested, if the evaluator does not teach that language at the college level. No credit is awarded but proficiency requirement is fulfilled.

Graduation with Honor

Graduation with honor applies to students earning a baccalaureate degree. Candidates are eligible for graduation with honor if they have completed a minimum of 60 undergraduate resident credits at NDSU and earn a minimum institutional cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.50 or higher. Transfer credit and graduate coursework are not used in the calculation of graduation with honor. Students who meet these academic criteria will graduate according to one of the following honor levels:

Honor	Criteria
Summa Cum Laude	60 undergraduate credits in residency and a CGPA equal to or greater than 3.90
Magna Cum Laude	60 undergraduate credits in residency and a CGPA equal to or greater than 3.70 and less than 3.90
Cum Laude	60 undergraduate credits in residency and a CGPA equal to or greater than 3.50 and less than 3.70

Graduation with Honor Recognition for the Commencement Ceremony

The commencement program acknowledges graduation with honor based on completed and in-progress coursework (for residency consideration) and the student's current NDSU cumulative GPA at the time of the ceremony. The specific honor level attained is not announced when the student's name is read during the ceremony.

Official Degree Audits

A degree audit is the university's official assessment of a student's progress toward graduation and their eligibility to graduate. Undergraduate students nearing completion of approximately 70% of their primary major requirements will receive an email from the Office of Registration and Records, prompting them to submit a degree audit request form. A Degree and Records Analyst will then conduct a thorough audit and notify both the student and their academic advisor when the official results are available for review in Campus Connection.

It's important to understand that degree audits are not automatic due to the diverse educational and degree goals of students (e.g., multiple degrees, majors, minors). Failure to submit an official audit request could lead to delays in graduation if crucial requirements are overlooked.

Students have continuous access to tools for monitoring their degree progress. The Academic Requirements Report in Campus Connection provides an automated, real-time audit of all degree requirements. Additionally, students can collaborate with their academic advisors using Bison Advise to create an interactive, semester-by-semester course plan that integrates with the Schedule Planner registration tool. Both resources utilize up-to-date enrollment data, showing completed, in-progress, and remaining degree requirements.

Exceptions to Academic Program Requirements

NDSU's academic policies regarding degree requirements, graduation, transfer credit, and general education, along with official curriculum requirements, are in place to maintain consistently high program quality. Students are expected to fulfill all curriculum requirements for their degree, including overall University requirements (such as general education) and the specific curriculum for their officially declared program.

However, limited exceptions may be approved by the chairperson of the department offering the program. Students can request a course substitution or waiver for a curriculum requirement in consultation with their academic advisor. The advisor initiates this process by completing and submitting a Substitution/Waiver form, which is then sent to the relevant department chairperson or curriculum coordinator for formal approval.

Academic departments are responsible for planning to offer all courses within a major program, enabling students to graduate in a timely manner. If required major courses can no longer be taught, the academic unit has two options to ensure students can complete their degree:

1. The department chairperson or curriculum coordinator can file individual substitution/waiver forms for students needing a curricular adjustment.
2. The department can request to transition the student to a more recent, updated curriculum within the same major.

Students must be clearly informed about whichever option is chosen.