

SPECIAL MAJOR

Division of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning

Dean: Lori Beth Way

Undergraduate Advising Center
ADM 211
(415) 338-2103

Program Scope

Undergraduate Major

The Bachelor of Arts: Special Major is offered by San Francisco State University for those students who have unique academic goals that cannot be satisfactorily attained through one of the regularly offered undergraduate major programs of San Francisco State University or other colleges and universities in the Bay Area. The special major consists of a combination of courses planned in advance to focus on an integrative and coherent theme identified by the student. A written statement must be developed which describes the goals of the proposed major. The program must be compatible with the general objectives of the university. Courses must be chosen by the student from at least three different departments in at least two different colleges of the university. (Department means any program area of the university offering coursework.)

A special major may not duplicate any existing major programs, by name or content, which are offered at San Francisco State University, nor may it be used as a means of bypassing regularly prescribed graduation requirements. It must be planned and approved in advance, not created as an afterthought to utilize previously completed courses.

Bachelor of Arts: Special Major

Admission to the Program

To apply for a special major, a student must first be admitted to San Francisco State University. Special major status is granted only after consultation with an adviser and approval of the student's proposal. Students may apply for admission to the special major program during or after their first semester of attendance at SF State.

Eligibility for the Program

Special major applicants are expected to have completed a minimum of 45 and a maximum of 90 units of university study with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B). Records of such work; e.g., unofficial transcripts, degree progress report, and Advanced Standing Evaluation (if a transfer student), must be presented to the appropriate academic adviser in the special major program. In unusual circumstances, a student may request an exception to this provision.

Advising for the Program

Advising for students pursuing a special major is provided at the Undergraduate Advising Center by academic counselors designated by the Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning, who is responsible for the coordination and overall administration of the program. Coursework in the major program must be approved in advance by departments offering the courses. Please be aware that some departments restrict course enrollment to their majors.

To initiate the special major approval process, consult the advising website at <https://advisinghub.sfsu.edu/bachelor-arts-special-major/>.

General Advising Information for Transfer Students

- Before transfer, complete as many lower-division requirements or electives for this major as possible.
- The following courses are not required for admission but are required for graduation. Students are strongly encouraged to complete these units before transfer; doing so will provide more flexibility in course selection after transfer.
 - a course in U.S. History
 - a course in U.S. & California Government

For information about satisfying the requirements described in (1) and (2) above at a California Community College (CCC), please visit <http://www.assist.org> (<http://assist.org>). Check any geographically accessible CCCs; sometimes options include more than one college. Use ASSIST to determine:

- Which courses at a CCC satisfy any lower-division major requirements for this major;
- Which courses at a CCC satisfy CSU GE, US History, and US & CA Government requirements.

Remedial courses are not transferable and do not apply to the minimum 60 semester units/90 quarter units required for admission.

Additional units for courses that are repeated do not apply to the minimum 60 units required for upper-division transfer (for example, if a course was not passed on the first attempt or was taken to earn a better grade).

Before leaving the last California Community College of attendance, obtain a summary of completion of lower-division General Education units (IGETC or CSU GE Breadth). This is often referred to as a GE certification worksheet. SF State does not require delivery of this certification to Admissions, but students should retain this document for verifying degree progress after transfer.

Credit for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or College-Level Examination Program courses: AP/IB/CLEP credit is not automatically transferred from the previous institution. Units are transferred only when an official score report is delivered to SF State. Credit is based on the academic year during which exams were taken. Refer to the University Bulletin in effect during the year of AP/IB/CLEP examination(s) for details regarding the award of credit for AP/IB/CLEP.

Students pursuing majors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines often defer 6-9 units of lower-division General Education in Areas C and D until after transfer to focus on preparation courses for the major. This advice does not apply to students pursuing associate degree completion before transfer.

Transferring From Institutions Other Than CCCs or CSUs

Review SF State's lower-division General Education requirements. Note that, as described below, the four basic skills courses required for admission meet A1, A2, A3, and B4 in the SF State GE pattern. Courses

that fulfill the remaining areas of SF State's lower-division GE pattern are available at most two-year and four-year colleges and universities.

Of the four required basic skills courses, a course in critical thinking (A3) may not be widely offered outside the CCC and CSU systems. Students should attempt to identify and take an appropriate course no later than the term of application to the CSU. To review more information about the A3 requirement, please visit bulletin.sfsu.edu/undergraduate-education/general-education/lower-division/#AAEL.

Waiting until after transfer to take a single course at SF State that meets both US and CA/local government requirements may be an appropriate option, particularly if transferring from outside of California.