

# ACADEMIC POLICIES

## The Major

The major is a sequence of courses in a department or program designed to prepare students, according to departmental or program objectives, for certain careers and/or for graduate work. All students are required to complete at least one set of major requirements for graduation from the University, including at least four upper-division major courses (12-16 hrs.). At minimum, a 2.0 GPA is required for graduation. A higher GPA in the major may be required by some programs.

## Declaration of Major

Students apply for a major by completing a Program Change form obtained from the dean of the college or from the Academic Services department within the Center for Academic Success & Enrichment (CASE). Approval from the chairperson of the department offering the major is required for declaration. Students are encouraged to declare their major(s) early. However, all students must declare a major before completing 58 credit hours applicable toward graduation. Transfer students who have earned more than 58 credit hours transferable to Lewis must declare a major upon admission.

Once declaring a major, the student will be assigned a faculty mentor from the major who will assist the student in preparing an approved program leading to graduation.

## Change of Major

Students may change majors by applying to the chairpersons of the two departments involved by means of a Program Change form obtained from the dean of the college(s). The change of major is not complete until it has been recorded in the Office of the Registrar. Students must meet the admission requirements of the nursing program to be accepted as a change of major to nursing.

## Double Major

A student may complete the major requirements of two departments or programs at Lewis, thus earning a double major which will be indicated on the permanent record. To do so, a student must complete all general education requirements of the college and University, as well as the requirements of each major. Application for a double major is made through the office of the dean of the college(s) involved and requires the consent of both the primary and secondary major department chairpersons. A student may apply for the double major no earlier than the sophomore year, and only after successfully beginning the program of the primary major. No application for the double major may be made after a student enters the final semester at Lewis. Requirements for the double major must be completed by graduation. All students are required to complete at least one set of major requirements for graduation from the University, including at least four upper-division major courses (at minimum 12-16 hrs.) that cannot be applied to another minor or major. Concentrations are considered part of the major.

Students seeking second concentrations are also required to meet minimum unique course requirements that cannot be counted towards other majors/concentrations within the same major. No more than 25% of courses in a concentration may be counted towards a second concentration. A second concentration in a different major must follow the above indicated upper-division major course restrictions as part of the majors.

Because of the likely financial aid ramifications, students are strongly encouraged to discuss options with their Learning Facilitators /success coach and the Financial Aid Office staff.

## Triple Major

A student may complete the major requirements of three departments or programs, thus earning a triple major which will be indicated on the transcript. To do so, a student must complete 60 credit hours, at least 20 of them at Lewis, and have a minimum GPA of 3.0. No application for a triple major may be made after a student enters the final semester at Lewis. To apply for the triple major, a student must request that his or her academic advisors form a Program Approval Committee (PAC) consisting of the chairs of each of the departments involved, as well as the dean. The student will present to the PAC a brief statement explaining the benefits of the third major, along with letters of support from advisors or faculty members in the majors. The PAC will determine on an individual case basis which classes will be required and decide upon the required number of credits for each major. A minimum of four different upper-division courses (12-16 hours) must be taken in each of the three majors. In each case, the decision of the PAC will be detailed in a written contract, signed by the department chairs, the dean and the student. Each signatory and the Office of the Registrar will receive a copy of the contract. If the PAC rejects a request for a triple major, the dean will supply the student with a written rationale for the decision. Students should consult with their respective Dean.

Students seeking second concentrations are also required to meet minimum unique course requirements that cannot be counted towards other majors/concentrations. Students seeking additional concentrations are also required to meet minimum unique course requirements that cannot be counted towards other concentrations within the same major. No more than 25% of courses in a concentration may be counted towards an additional concentration. An additional concentration in a different major must follow the above indicated upper-division major course restrictions as part of the majors.

Because of the likely financial aid ramifications, students are strongly encouraged to discuss options with their Learning Facilitators/success coach and the Financial Aid Office staff.

## Minors

Students pursuing a minor should follow the requirements of a specific minor found in this catalog. These requirements must be completed by graduation. Credit for "D" grades does not transfer toward the hours that are required for the minor. Two upper-division courses (6-8 hrs.) in the minor must be taken at Lewis. A 2.0 GPA ("C" average) in the minor is required for graduation.

## Certification

Students who want to qualify for professional certification should consult with the chairperson of their major department to learn how to meet such requirements.

## Residency Requirement

Lewis University requires that undergraduate students fulfill a residency requirement. Bachelor's degrees require a minimum of 30 credit hours of their degree programs in Lewis courses. Associate degrees require 15 credit hours of their degree programs in Lewis courses. This includes at least 12 credit hours in the major, degree, or concentration. In addition, all courses in the graduating semester should be taken at Lewis. This

residency requirement policy fulfills one of the eligibility requirements for graduation.

## Coursework Away from Lewis

Once students have started courses at Lewis University, they may take courses at other colleges and universities with certain restrictions.

Ordinarily, once a student has started courses at Lewis, no transfer courses will be accepted for the major requirements. Exceptions require the approval of the department chairperson, as well as the dean of the college, and must still adhere to other major requirements. Students must meet all residency requirements. There is a charge for posting these credits. The non-refundable charge will automatically be assessed at the time of credit posting and balance is due immediately.

Students interested in taking an external course must first review already approved transfer articulations prior to making a request. Already approved Gen Ed articulations do not require further approval. Students may request approval of currently unarticulated courses through the following:

- General Education courses – Dean of the General Education
- All other courses (elective credits) – Dean of the course subject area.

Students requesting approval may be responsible for providing necessary materials including course descriptions and syllabi from the external institution.

For students requesting an exception to complete major or minor courses externally, the department chairperson and Dean of the college of the major/minor would need to approve the coursework away in advance of enrolling in the course. For major courses that are in a different disciplinary area the department chairperson and Dean of the course subject area will also need to approve.

For assistance with requesting a coursework away a student may contact their advisor, faculty mentor, or success coach.

Only the semester credit hours of "C" or higher will transfer. Students are responsible to request an official transcript from the external institution as soon as their final grade is posted. The grade does not transfer.

Taking external coursework in a student's graduating semester is strongly discouraged. Because of the external processing time this may result in a student being denied graduation and required to delay Lewis degree conferral until a subsequent semester. A student may not use an external course in their graduating semester towards their Lewis degree if the external coursework is not finalized by the Lewis degree conferral date.

## Undergraduate Students Enrolling in Graduate Courses

Lewis University undergraduate students may enroll and earn credit in master's level (50000 level) graduate courses with the following limitations:

### Degree Applicability Limitations

- Graduate credits earned at Lewis by undergraduate students may count toward the 120 credits required for a Lewis undergraduate degree.

- Students must complete all University graduation requirements applicable to undergraduate students and to graduate students to earn degrees at both levels.
- Students must meet all program-specific degree requirements at both graduate and undergraduate levels.
- Students must complete a minimum of 21 graduate credits at Lewis post-baccalaureate degree completion and while enrolled in a graduate degree program.
- Complete a minimum of 30 graduate credits for a master's degree beyond the baccalaureate degree, and 30 credits beyond the master's for a doctoral degree program.
- Graduate coursework taken as an undergraduate student must be taken within 7 years of Graduate degree completion.
- Including graduate coursework taken as an undergraduate student, students must earn at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA to be applicable to the graduate degree.
  - Students can earn no more than two grades of C (2.0/4.0 scale) (passing) or lower to be applicable to their graduate degree.

These are minimum University requirements. Please refer to specific program requirements for more detailed information. Programs and departments may enforce more stringent restrictions at their discretion but may not grant exceptions to the university minimum standards as outlined in this section.

### Enrollment Limitations

- Lewis undergraduate degree-seeking students must have 90+ earned credit hours (senior status) and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in order to seek permission to register for a graduate course.
- Undergraduate students are allowed to take one graduate course per semester, not to exceed a total of two 50000 level courses at Lewis.
  - Should an undergraduate student earn less than a B (3.0) in a graduate level course, the student is not permitted to enroll in additional Lewis graduate courses until fully admitted to a Lewis graduate program.
  - Undergraduates enrolled in graduate courses may not exceed 18 total credits in a semester when they are enrolled in graduate coursework.
- Undergraduate students registered in graduate courses are required to fulfill the same course requirements and grading standards as graduate students.
- Prerequisites for graduate courses are not waived.
- Graduate credits earned at Lewis by undergraduate students may count toward the 120 credits required for a Lewis undergraduate degree. See also Degree Applicability Limitations, above.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with the Degree Applicability Limitations. Students are encouraged to plan with their advisor.
- Exceptions to the Degree Applicability Limitations cannot be permitted under any circumstances.

### APPROVAL PROCESS

- Students must submit an approval form, with approvals from:
  - a) the student's undergraduate academic advisor
  - b) the program director of the graduate program offering the course
- The signature of the Vice Provost of Graduate, Professional, and Continuing Education is required to demonstrate notification and communication so that records of university-wide policy can be maintained.
- The approval form is then submitted to the Office of the Registrar and the permission entered so the student may self-enroll.
- Any waiver of these requirements requires written approval from the Vice Provost of Graduate, Professional, and Continuing Education.

## Fast Track: Bachelor's to Master's Program Guidelines

The Fast Track option (this includes commonly referred to as 4+1 and similar pathway programs) offers potential accelerated pathways to graduate programs for outstanding Lewis University undergraduate students as an exception to the standard Undergraduates Enrolling in Graduate Courses policy. #Regardless of undergraduate major, students can begin taking graduate coursework towards approved graduate programs in their senior year (completion of 90+ credit hours), if they have met the prerequisite course requirements. #The student accepted into a Fast Track program may begin fulfilling selected master's degree requirements while still completing requirements for the baccalaureate degree.

### Minimum Requirements for all Fast Track Students

- Students must complete all University graduation requirements applicable to undergraduate students and to graduate students
- Students admitted to a Fast Track program may take up to 50% of the credit hours in their graduate program as an undergraduate student.
- Students must complete a minimum of 21 hours while enrolled as a graduate student.

### Eligibility to Participate

- Departments may determine program-specific prerequisites for admission into Fast Track bachelor's to master's programs in addition to University requirements.
- In addition to department-determined program admission requirements, the student must complete at least 75 credit hours before they are permitted to apply and be formally accepted into a Fast Track bachelor's-to-master's degree program.
- The student must complete an application to the Fast Track to master's program and be approved by the program/department. Final approval prior to enrolling in graduate courses must be granted by the Vice Provost of Graduate, Professional, and Continuing Education, assuring compliance with University policy.
- Students must have and maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher to enroll in graduate level coursework.

- A Fast Track program may require additional evidence of readiness, such as faculty recommendations, additional approvals, or higher GPA.

### Student Status

- The student continues to be classified as an undergraduate student, with all rights and responsibilities, until all degree requirements for the baccalaureate degree are completed.
- To maintain full-time status as an undergraduate student, 12 or more semester hours must be taken each term.
- Admission to a Fast Track program does not replace official application and admission to the graduate program. Application must be made to the graduate program consistent with University policy as outlined in the Graduate Catalog.
- Students may not enroll beyond the Enrollment Requirement limits specified in this catalog of two courses, until officially admitted to a Fast Track program and reflected on the student's academic record.

## Opt-Out General Education Policy

Effective Fall 2019, Lewis University implemented a new general education model. All students beginning during or after Fall 2019 must complete the new general education requirements set forth in the University catalog with the following exception:

- Transfer students beginning during the 19-20 and 20-21 academic years may elect to complete the previous general education requirements if they began their course of study at another institution prior to the publication of the new general education model.
- Students who matriculated to Lewis prior to Fall 2019, and who are readmitted to Lewis University after 2 or more years away, should consult with the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs and Dean of General Education for general education advising.

## Clinical, Practicum, Student Teaching, and Internship Placements Outside of Illinois

Students completing a clinical, internship, practicum, student teaching, or similar learning placement in states outside of Illinois may require additional permission by Lewis University, the placement state, or Illinois licensing boards. Students interested in learning placements outside of Illinois should consult with an academic advisor in their program and appropriate licensure agencies prior to beginning a learning placement outside of Illinois.

Furthermore, the curricular and field placement learning experiences that are a part of a student's graduation requirements at Lewis University are in alignment with the state of Illinois academic experiences. Should a student/graduate of a program choose to leave the program or move to a different state post-graduation, please be advised that each state's licensure requirements are subject to change. Lewis University updates whether the curriculum meets or does not meet the educational requirements for each state, but these may have changed since they were last updated. While a program may originally meet the educational requirements for licensure, changes in requirements could impact the program's ability to meet any new educational requirements. Students should always check with their state licensure board to confirm licensure requirements, as well as their academic advisor.