

GUIDE TO A BACHELOR OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES DEGREE

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BACHELOR OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES DEGREE

www.ndsu.edu/univ_studies

INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor of University Studies (BUS) degree is a baccalaureate degree program offered through the College of University Studies. Each degree is individually tailored to meet the unique needs of a particular student. On the average, NDSU grants between 30 and 40 such degrees annually. Each degree plan is designed by the student with assistance from an academic advisor and is later approved by a committee composed of campus-wide representation.

The goal of the Bachelor of University Studies degree is to provide a unique, nontraditional degree for students whose goals and objectives cannot be met via a traditionally established academic major or minor. The program allows flexibility in designing a degree, allowing students to meet unique personal and career goals. This degree is not designed to replace existing NDSU majors, and all students should seek an existing campus major when such a major is available. Upon graduation, no major, minor, option, or area of concentration is shown on the transcript or the diploma of a BUS degree student. Students are advised to visit with academic advisors, graduate school representatives, employers, mentors, and others in order to assess the appropriateness of such a degree. For those interested in meeting the challenge of creating a degree program, the College of University Studies will provide advice, support, and guidance during all phases of its implementation.

THE DEGREE PLAN PROPOSAL

Each student will prepare a degree plan with the help of an academic advisor. This degree plan will contain (1) a cover form; (2) a statement of goals; (3) a listing of all courses completed, in some cases including a request for nontraditional learning credit; and (4) a plan of study listing all courses in progress and those proposed for the future.

The degree plan must be submitted to the Academic Policies/Program Review Committee through the Office of the Director of University Studies by guideline due dates (October 1 for spring and summer graduation; February 1 for fall graduation). No fewer than 15 credits must be proposed (remain to be taken after approval) and included in the proposal. Students who submit proposals after the due-date will not be considered for graduation the following semester. Students are encouraged to submit a proposal during their junior year with approximately 30 credits proposed.

The Academic Policies/Program Review Committee meets approximately three times each semester. Each degree plan is individually reviewed with particular attention paid to the analysis of student goals and relevance of the courses designed to meet those goals. The committee retains the authority to accept, reject, or modify each proposal. After evaluation, students will be notified in a timely manner of the committee's decision.

BACHELOR OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Each degree candidate is required to meet the NDSU graduation requirements. These requirements are enumerated in Sections I and II, and include minimum credit requirements and specific general education criteria. In order for the student to obtain maximum benefit from this degree, following the review, the advisor or the committee may require additional credits in any area. This degree is unique in its requirement of the individualized Plan of Study referred to in Section III. Students should refer to *The North Dakota State University Bulletin* for additional graduation requirements.

I. Minimum Course Requirements for all Students

- A. A minimum of 122 semester credits, which may include college credit for nontraditional education experiences and credit for learning through experience. At least 36 semester credits must be taken from NDSU departments. (Tri-College credits will not count toward this 36 credit requirement.)
- B. A minimum of 37 upper division credits (300-400 level courses).
- C. A minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 based on work taken at NDSU, for which grades have been assigned, is required for graduation. When a course is repeated, only the last grade and credits acquired will be used in computing the cumulative grade-point average.
- D. Transfer students from two-year colleges must earn a minimum of 60 credits at any four-year institution(s). Approved experiential learning credit may be used toward the satisfaction of these 60 credits. At least 36 of the 60-credit minimum must be earned from NDSU.
- E. Satisfactory completion of the 36-37 credit general education requirements as outlined in Section II.

II. Minimum General Education Requirements

- A. For all students entering NDSU Fall Semester 1994 and after, and for those entering before that date who are returning after having discontinued enrollment at NDSU for one year or more.

	Credits
First-Year Experience Course (F)	1
(Required of all entering freshmen and new students who transfer fewer than 24 semester credits to NDSU)	
Category 1: Communication (C)	9
• Comm 110: Fundamentals of Public Speaking	(3)
• Plus Six Credits in Writing (Credits must be taken from the list of approved courses).....	(6)
Category 2: Quantitative Reasoning (R)	3
• CSci 122 or 125, Programming, e.g., BASIC, COBOL or 159, Comp Sci. Problem Solving	
• Math 104: Finite Mathematics or 146 or 165	
• Stat 330: Intro Statistics	
Category 3: Science and Technology (S)	10
➤ Courses in the areas of the natural sciences, the physical sciences, and technology are included in this category.	
➤ A minimum of four general education credits must be in natural or physical sciences.	
➤ A one-credit laboratory course must be taken as a co-requisite with one of the general education science and technology courses unless the course includes an embedded laboratory experience equivalent to a one-credit course.	
Category 4: Humanities and Fine Arts (A)	6
➤ No more than three of the six credits may be in fine arts performance.	
➤ Any performance courses must be in addition to those required for the student's major.	
Category 5: Social and Behavioral Sciences (B)	6
Category 6: Wellness (W)	2
• Required is a two-credit course focused on wellness that integrates at least two of the four following areas of lifelong wellness: emotional well-being, nutrition, physical activity, and psychological development.	
REQUIREMENTS WITH NO ADDITIONAL CREDITS:	
Category 7: Cultural Diversity (D)	
• This requirement may be met by 3 credits taken in any department as part of the 37 credits required for general education in a course approved for cultural diversity.	
Category 8: Global Perspectives (G)	
• This requirement may be met by 3 credits taken in any department as part of the 36-37 credits required for general education in a course approved for global perspectives.	
Category 9: Communication Activities in Upper-Division Major Courses	
Category 10: Comprehension of Personal and Professional Ethics Integrated into Majors	
Category 11: Capstone Experience in all Majors	1
TOTAL	36-37

NOTE: Only courses approved by the University Senate Standing Committee on General Education and by the University Senate may be used to fulfill category requirements. These requirements apply to all students who enter NDSU in pursuit of a baccalaureate degree. Refer to www.ndsu.edu/registrar for a current and complete listing of General Education course offerings, policies and transfer procedures.

III. The BUS Degree Plan Proposal

A. This degree plan proposal must include:

1. A cover form: "Cover Form for the Bachelor of University Studies Degree Plan."
2. A statement of goals.
3. A listing of previous education/may include experience for which credit is requested.
4. A plan of study listing all current and proposed courses.

B. The degree plan proposal must be:

1. Typewritten or electronically entered.
2. Submitted to the Academic Policies/Program Review Committee through the Office of the Director of University Studies by guideline due dates (October 1 for spring or summer graduation; February 1 for fall graduation).
3. Composed of no fewer than 15 credits remaining to be taken beginning the semester after receiving committee approval.

GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING BUS DEGREE PLAN PROPOSAL

Proposals are expected to communicate the culmination of your thinking and reflection on the appropriateness of the BUS degree to your life time goals. Proposals must be typewritten or electronically entered and prepared in a scholarly manner. Degree proposals are expected to be free of errors with attention to writing style and presentation. In addition to the cover form which can be found on-line (www.ndsu.edu/univ_studies/bus_forms.htm), there are three parts to every proposal: Statement of Goals, Listing of Education and Experience, and proposed Plan of Study.

I. Statement of Goals

The Statement of Goals serves to introduce the candidate and to orient the Academic Policies/Program Review Committee to the focus of the degree. A portion of the statement should be devoted to providing the committee with an understanding of who the student is and what circumstances led to the choice of the BUS degree. Each candidate is then expected to articulate future goals and the manner in which the proposed degree will assist the student in achieving these goals. The committee will be looking for a consistency of focus; e.g., will the student be capable of reaching the stated goals based upon the choices made during the attainment of the degree? It is suggested that this section be limited to no more than two pages, and one is often sufficient. Please remain focused and succinct.

It is impossible to provide an example of a Statement of Goals due to the unique nature of each proposal. However, as you prepare the statement, focus on what you hope to achieve and the manner in which your degree will prepare you for that future. Be reflective as well as proactive as you equate the value of your degree to your future goals. Once the General Education requirements have been met, the unique nature of this degree allows the student to choose each course based upon its contribution to the proposed outcome. Attention may be given to personal growth and interests as well as to the growth and changing needs of a specific profession and the need to be prepared for lifelong learning. Extreme care should be taken when making such choices. Guidance may be sought from professionals in a chosen field, mentors, instructors, colleagues, advisors, and the Director of the College of University Studies.

II. Listing of Education and Experience

In this section, provide a listing of the educational achievement you have completed to date. Depending upon your background, this section may include two parts: (a) traditional, baccalaureate-oriented course work for which you have earned credit from NDSU or another accredited institution presented in column format as indicated on the following page; and (b) nontraditional education or experience for which you are requesting credit. All education and experience in your proposal must be verified.

A. Previous Academic Work

1. Transcripts - You must request that complete transcripts of all of your records from all other educational institutions be sent to the Office of Registration and Records.
2. Summary - A written summary of your transcripts must be included in your proposal and presented in the following order. Previous academic work must be arranged by courses in related subjects. Group titles include, but are not limited to, the following:

First-Year Experience
Communication
Quantitative Reasoning
Science and Technology
Humanities and Fine Arts
Social and Behavioral Sciences
Wellness
Capstone Experience
Other

This written summary of your transcripts assists in providing an overview of the distribution of courses completed. Be sure to convert quarter to semester credits. (Each semester credit equals .67 quarter credit.) Make sure the totals in this grouping agree with the total credits on the cover form. For each of the above categories, use the following format when listing your courses:

GROUP TITLE: HUMANITIES and FINE ARTS

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Course</u>		<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Term Enrolled</u>
U of Minn	Theater	4550	Video Technology	3	Spring 06
NDSU	English	222	Intro to Poetry	3	Fall '05

GROUP TITLE: OTHER

U of Minn	MUED	1201	Intro to Music Ed	1	Spring '06
NDSU	CDFS	450	Adolescent Development	3	Fall '05

B. Learning Derived through Life Experience

1. **Formal Education Experience:** This section includes all nontraditional formal education programs the student wishes to have considered for credit toward a BUS degree. Use the NONTRADITIONAL, FORMAL EDUCATION REQUEST form found on-line.* Verification of this learning must accompany the request, e.g., a copy of a certificate of completion.

Examples: Bible colleges, technical schools, and company-sponsored training programs.

2. **Work or Life Experiential Learning:** Use the EXPERIENTIAL-LEARNING CREDIT REQUEST form found on-line,* and follow the guidelines included here. Each credit request must be verified with a letter from your employer, a certificate of participation, or some similar document. For each request, the candidate must be able to articulate the learning which resulted. Requests will be evaluated by the committee, and credits requested may be approved, denied, or modified.

Note: To assist in evaluating the worth of your nontraditional learning, it is suggested that you approach the process in two phases: (1) Prepare a work and life experience resume in chronological order, noting possible learning events. When complete, discuss the learning with your advisor; (2) If you and your advisor agree that college-level learning resulted, prepare the Experiential Learning Credit Request form with the assistance of your advisor.

Characteristics of appropriate learning:

- * learning, not experience
- * theoretical and practical understanding of the subject
- * general applicability
- * publicly verifiable
- * independent of credits planned or previously earned
- * related to educational goals
- * non-routine
- * college level

Note: Experiential credit requests will only be considered to meet the required 122 credits for graduation (or required upper-division requirement). Credits granted for experiential learning are valid toward the BUS degree only and are not transferable to any other program at NDSU.

***Note:** Experiential-Learning Request forms and Formal Education Request forms can be located/completed on the following web site: www.ndsu.edu/univ_studies

III. PROPOSED PLAN OF STUDY

In this part of the proposal, list courses and credits remaining to be completed as part of the planned degree. Courses remaining to be taken must be listed by group title in the same format as the summary of the student's previous academic work. (See page 6.) Be aware of possible duplication; for example, it would not be acceptable to propose the Principles of Accounting course if one had requested credit for a nontraditional learning equivalent to such a course.

Capstone Experience:

General Education requirements specify a Capstone Experience in all majors. University 489 has been designated as the Capstone Experience for students planning to graduate with a BUS degree. All proposals must include Univ 489, 1 credit, to be taken during the last term of enrollment before graduating from NDSU (summer graduation requires spring semester enrollment). The Univ 489 capstone experience consists of a reflective paper designed to provide the student with the opportunity to integrate and synthesize the cumulative academic experience as it relates to the approved Statement of Goals. Additional assignments relate to development of professional skills.

Upon receiving committee approval, the student's BUS Degree Plan details the requirements for graduation. No amendments or substitutions may be made to the plan without prior approval by the academic advisor and the Academic Policies/Program Review committee. Consideration for such approval must be made in writing using the REQUEST FOR CHANGE form found on-line.

Students are responsible for supplying their academic advisor with a copy of the degree plan and keeping that advisor updated as any changes are made.

It is the policy of the College of University Studies that students seeking a BUS degree will, following approval of the BUS proposal, be expected to make continual progress toward completion of the BUS degree. If a student discontinues enrollment for a period of two academic years or more, it indicates lack of progress. The proposal will no longer be considered valid for graduation with a BUS degree. If the student chooses to continue to seek a BUS degree, it will be necessary to submit a new proposal for consideration by the committee. Current university policies concerning General Education requirements also apply. NDSU requires that any student who discontinues enrollment for more than one year will be required to complete the General Education requirements in effect at the time of re-entry.

All candidates for a baccalaureate degree must submit notification or confirmation of degree candidacy with the Office of Registration and Records no later than "advising week" during the semester that immediately proceeds the student's last semester of enrollment. Refer to Campus Connection for advising week dates. Students are also responsible for submitting any name and address corrections for diploma processing.

Students are expected to carefully study *The North Dakota State University Bulletin* for additional requirements and expectations. Additional questions may be directed to the College of University Studies, Morrill Hall 112, North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota, 58105; (701) 231-7014; or via fax (701) 231-8482. Students With Disabilities: Information will be made available in alternate formats upon request.

Checklist: Bachelor of University Studies Degree Proposal

___ Cover form (Bachelor of University Studies Degree Plan Proposal)

___ Statement of Goals

___ Listing of all courses completed

Including

___ General Education**

___ Additional Areas of Focus/Emphasis

___ Miscellaneous

___ (Optional) Experiential Learning Credit Request Form

___ (Optional) Nontraditional, Formal Education Request Form

___ Listing of all courses in progress and proposed courses

Including

___ General Education**

___ Additional Areas of Focus/Emphasis

___ Miscellaneous

___ Student signature

___ Advisor signature

**Listing of courses must include all General Education categories

Note minimum credit requirements for each category

___ First Year Experience (when applicable)

___ Communication

___ Quantitative Reasoning

___ Science and Technology

___ Humanities and Fine Arts

___ Social and Behavioral Sciences

___ Wellness

___ Capstone Course

Requirements with no additional credits

___ Cultural Diversity

___ Global Perspectives

___ Minimum of 122 credits

___ Minimum of 60 credits from a four-year institution

___ Minimum of 36 NDSU residency requirement

___ Minimum of 37 upper division credits

___ Minimum of 15 credits remaining to be taken after approval of Plan of Study

Note requirement related to submission deadline (minimally before mid-term of the semester before planned graduation, e.g., Oct 1 or Feb 1)