



Policy AC009: Second Majors and Degrees

Recommended for Approval by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott E. Miller", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Scott E. Miller, VP for Academic Affairs and Provost,
Pennsylvania Western University

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson, President,
Pennsylvania Western University

Effective Date: 07/01/2022

A. Intent

To provide information regarding options for students to obtain simultaneous majors, simultaneous degrees, and additional degrees.

B. Definition(s)

Undergraduate degree: An award conferred by the University signifying that the recipient has satisfactorily completed a course of study leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree. Examples of degrees are the Associate of Science (AS) and Bachelor of Arts (BA).

Undergraduate major: An academic discipline constituting the main area of study for an undergraduate degree. As an example, in the case of a BA in History, the BA is the degree and History is the major.

C. Policy

Associate Degree – Simultaneous Degrees

Students may simultaneously earn up to two associate degrees simultaneously from Pennsylvania Western University by completing all coursework for those degrees. There is no requirement for completing additional coursework beyond what is needed to meet all requirements for both degree programs. In some prescribed programs, the associate degree can be earned prior to the awarding of the Bachelor's degree.

A student may also earn an associate and Bachelor's degree simultaneously by completing all program requirements for both degrees within the credits required for the Bachelor's degree (e.g., 120 credits). In some cases, all credits for the associate degree will not fit within the minimum credits needed for the Bachelor's degree, so that some additional credits may need to be taken to meet program requirements for both degrees.

Returning for an Additional/Subsequent Associate Degree

For students who have already earned an associate degree or a Bachelor's degree and return to earn an associate degree, a minimum of 15 additional credits must be successfully completed beyond the awarding of the first degree, and all course and other program requirements for the associate degree must be met. An associate degree will not be awarded to a student who already holds a baccalaureate degree in the same area of study, as determined by the registrar. This determination by the registrar may be appealed to the Provost.

Bachelor's Degree – Simultaneous Majors

Students may pursue multiple simultaneous majors within a single degree award. For instance, if a student wishes to pursue two different majors during their undergraduate education and receive one degree (e.g., a BS degree), then both majors must fall within that same degree designation at Pennsylvania Western University. For instance, if the student wishes to earn both a BS in Biology and BS in Chemistry, the student would complete all course and other program requirements for both Biology and Chemistry; the student would be awarded one BS degree, with two majors: Biology and Chemistry. The student may use the same courses, as possible, to meet program requirements for each major.

The student cannot earn simultaneous majors using this method if the majors have different degree designations (e.g., BA and BS); in this instance, see below for the case of simultaneous degrees, rather than simultaneous majors.

Bachelor's Degree – Simultaneous Degrees

Students may simultaneously earn multiple undergraduate degrees from Pennsylvania Western University by completing all course and other program requirements for those degrees. This situation applies where the degrees of interest have different designations (e.g., a BA and BS degree). In this case, the student will receive a diploma for each degree earned. The student must successfully complete the minimum number of credits needed for the degree requiring the most credits, and then only the additional credits needed to ensure that all course and program requirements have been met for each of the degrees. The student may use the same courses, as possible, to meet program requirements for each degree.

If the degree designations are the same (e.g., two BS degrees), the student would receive one degree and have multiple majors within that degree; see above section for Bachelor's Degree – Simultaneous Majors.

The student should also consult with the Financial Aid Office if pursuing this option, since aid may not be available for semesters beyond which the requirements for the first degree have been met.

Post-Baccalaureate Students Returning for an Additional/Subsequent Bachelor's Degree

For students who have already earned a Bachelor's degree, whether from Pennsylvania Western University or elsewhere, and return to earn an additional Bachelor's degree, a minimum of 30 additional credits must be successfully completed beyond the first baccalaureate degree, and all degree requirements in effect at the time of matriculation for the second undergraduate degree must be met. The minimum of 30 additional credits is required regardless of the number of credits earned in the first Bachelor's degree.

Graduate Degree – Simultaneous Degrees

Graduate students pursuing two graduate degrees simultaneously must complete all degree requirements at the time of matriculation for the both degrees, a minimum of 15 credits beyond the minimum credit requirements for the degree program with the most required credits. This requirement does not apply for students pursuing multiple concentrations within the same degree.

Post-Masters Students Returning for an Additional/Subsequent Master's Degree

Students returning for a second master's degree must complete all degree requirements at the time of matriculation for the second degree, and a minimum of 15 additional credits beyond the first master's degree. The minimum of 15 additional credits is required regardless of the number of credits earned in the previous Master's degree.

D. Procedure(s)

Not Applicable.

E. Related policies

Graduation Requirements Policy (AC028)

Subsequent Degrees, PASSHE Procedure/Standard 2018-34

F. Contact Information

For additional information, please contact the academic dean of the program or the Office of the Provost.

G. Policy Review Schedule

All policies will be reviewed every two years or on an as needed basis if a change in BOG, PASSHE or Pennsylvania law would create the need for an immediate change.