

Major, Minor, Option, Concentration, Area of Study and Directed Electives

The college shall have as its objectives and purposes:

Teaching in the science and practice of environmental science and forestry in its several branches including landscape architecture; environmental design; environmental and resource engineering; environmental and resource management; wildlife studies; biology; chemistry; ecology; the manufacture and marketing of forest products; and the technologies appropriate to these branches of environmental science and forestry.

[McKinney's Consolidated Laws of NY Annotated, Book 16: Education, § 6002.]

Major: A cohesive combination of courses, including introductory, intermediate, and advanced course work that designates a student's primary area of specialization; the principal field of study of a student, typically synonymous with an undergraduate degree. *[Per policies and standards of the SUNY Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs]* As an example, upon completing degree requirements, a student who is "a chemistry major" will receive the bachelor of science in chemistry. Upon successful completion, majors are identified on student transcripts and the diploma.

SUNY allows for no fewer than 120 semester credit hours to be awarded for the completion of a degree program. *[SED Title 8, Chapter 2, Part 50, §52.2]*

Proposals for majors shall include:

- * program announcement;
- * list of required and elective courses to complete the major;
- * curriculum outline; and
- * list of required resources including faculty, technology, instructional and reference needs.

The College Faculty approves all majors, which must also receive approval from the State University of New York (SUNY) and the State Education Department (SED) prior to inclusion in the College catalog and other communications.

Minor: An academic minor is a curricular component that enables a student to make an inquiry into a discipline or field of study, or to investigate a particular theme. It is

organized around a specific set of objectives or questions. The objectives of a minor are achieved through an ordered series of courses. Minors are intended to provide general insight in the subject. Course offerings in a minor may be centered in a specific Faculty or drawn from several Faculties as in the case of a topical or thematic focus.

The term "minor" in baccalaureate programs at ESF designates an approved use of 12-18 credit hours that constitute a coherent plan of study.

Minors may be a Faculty minor, an interdisciplinary minor, or a minor centered at Syracuse University. Faculty minors are defined by a program Faculty. Interdisciplinary minors are defined by two or more Faculties with oversight provided by a committee consisting of faculty from each participating Faculty. Minors centered at Syracuse University involve the ESF Dean of Instruction and Graduate Studies as such minors impact on inter-institution arrangements

Students elect a minor by application to (a) the Faculty offering the minor; (b) the committee overseeing an interdisciplinary minor; or (c) to the Dean of Instruction and Graduate Studies through their program Faculty for a minor centered at Syracuse University. Interdisciplinary minors and minors centered at Syracuse University are open to all qualified students, however, students may not pursue a Faculty minor offered by the program in which they major. Requirements of interdisciplinary minors should be structured to ensure that course work taken within the student's home program is minimized.

Proposals for minors will include:

- * the prerequisites required (courses and/or GPA);
- * specific courses requirements to complete the minor; and
- * how the courses will be chosen from among lower and upper division courses, general education courses, professional prerequisites, major requirements, and electives.

Upon successful completion, minors are identified on student transcripts.

The College Faculty approves all minors prior to description in the College catalog and other communications. *[Policy on Minors Approved by the ESF College Faculty, 22 March 2001]*

Option: A subdivision of a major that provides a greater specificity within the broad body of knowledge. The curriculum requirements may include both specific required

courses and (directed) elective courses from which the student makes selections in order to meet the total credit hour requirements for the major. At the graduate level, examples of options within the Environmental and Resources Engineering degree are: forest engineering, wood products engineering and paper science and engineering.

Concentration: An approved set of courses within an undergraduate major that define a specialty area or specific field of study. A concentration is specified by a Faculty for certain majors. For example, ESF students who major in environmental studies must specify an upper division concentration by the end of their sophomore year of studies. The concentration requirements may be met by completion of a set of directed electives. At other institutions, synonymous terms may be: degree track, emphasis, sub-field, area of special concentration, major areas, specialty/ specialized area, curriculum stream, option, disciplinary focus, individual specialization, or area of study.

Area of Study: A student's primary area of specialization within the graduate degree, synonymous to undergraduate concentrations. At ESF, areas of study are a subset of graduate options.

Directed Electives: A set of courses selected by the Faculty (department) that provide depth of understanding in a specific area. Directed electives usually grouped by sub-topics of the major.

Last revised: August 4, 2004