

memo

To: Academic Councils
From: Jessica Smith
Date: February 2, 2022
Re: Additional requirements for degrees

ACU offers seven bachelor's degrees that have one or more associated majors, and some of these have had degree-specific requirements on top of the general education curriculum required for all students in all degrees. A summary table appears at the end of the [University Requirements section](#) of the catalog under the heading "University Requirements for ACU Degrees."

Based on the proposed changes to the general education requirements that now have been approved by the faculty, I sought recommendations from the faculty in disciplines that offer discipline-specific degrees and have summarized the feedback in the table below. Their full responses are attached.

Degree	Current Requirement	Proposed Requirement
BA	6 hrs — Sophomore foreign language 3 hrs — Sophomore (or higher) literature	—
BBA	3 hrs — ECON 260 or ECON 261	3 hrs — ECON 260 or ECON 261
BFA	3 hrs — Sophomore (or higher) literature	No additional hours
BM	Minimum of 72 hours of music	No additional hours
BS	No additional hours	—
BSE	No additional hours	No additional hours
BSN	12 hrs — Bible total	12 total hours of Bible

The BA and BS degrees are used across a number of disciplines, so UGEC will be the right group to recommend requirements for these degrees. As a point of context for this discussion: these additional university requirements were created as ACU left a time of degree cores and created a single set of general education requirements for all students in all degrees. The additional recommendations in this cycle for no additional hours may indicate that faculty are finding success through advising and program requirements in ensuring a breadth of education.

I suggest that the recommended change to the BFA and BM requirements prompts discussion about the proposed BA requirements. We will want to consider the purpose of language and literature requirements, to what degree they should be aligned between arts and humanities programs, and how much more should be added on top of the new 9-hour arts and humanities requirement that sits alongside a 15-hour Bible and theology requirement, which is also in the humanities.

BBA degree requirements

Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu>

Mon, Nov 15, 2021 at 2:49 PM

To: Andy Little <agl95t@acu.edu>

Cc: John Neill III <jdn00b@acu.edu>, Katie Wick <katie.wick@acu.edu>, Brad Crisp <cbc06d@acu.edu>

Thanks, Andy. I'll let the UGEC council members know of your recommendation. And I hope you are all feeling good after a busy time last week with the dean's council!

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

On Tue, Nov 9, 2021 at 10:27 AM Andy Little <agl95t@acu.edu> wrote:

Thanks Jessica. Let's just leave the provision as it is.

I have conferred with Brad and our resident COBA historian--Monty Lynn--and none of us are precisely sure why that language was included in the catalog at some point in the past. Perhaps it was accreditation related back then, though none of us are sure what part of the AACSB standards would have required it. But if it's not a problem to leave it there, then let's not remove it.

Thanks,

Andy

On Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 8:41 AM Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu> wrote:

If the degree plan will ensure the requirement, then I would remove the degree requirement because then it doesn't sound like an extra requirement. I'd suspect that the degree requirement might have been added either in support of AACSB requirements or potentially in a time when the foundations were under transition as we moved from degree cores to university-wide requirements, but I have not followed that approval trail.

Right now, it's looking like the Music faculty are dropping their "72 hours of music" from the BM for similar reasons because it's ensured in the programs' degree plans. However, it will not hurt anything if you want to leave the BBA definition in place. If this is AACSB-related, it could be helpful if the BBA were ever offered on another campus. Even now, though, either 260 or 261 is required in the marketing and management B.S. degrees, so it doesn't seem like this is a hard case to make for programs in the field. -j

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

On Thu, Nov 4, 2021 at 6:17 PM Andy Little <agl95t@acu.edu> wrote:

Thanks Jessica.

I was not familiar with that part of the catalog, so I appreciate you bringing this to our attention.

All BBA students currently must take two ECON courses, 260 and 261. For the various degree plan changes we are working on this year, we expect that at least one ECON course (260 or 261) will be required, and it may be that some or all degrees will require both. With that in mind, is there a reason to change the catalog?

Andy

On Thu, Nov 4, 2021 at 11:36 AM Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu> wrote:

Hello, John, Katie, Andy, and Brad —

The final question that the curriculum councils will review after the general education revision proposal is the degree-specific requirements on top of the requirements for all students. These University Requirements for ACU Degrees are found at the bottom of the linked catalog page.

UGEC has asked for recommendations from disciplines that offer the degrees.

The BBA requires that students take ECON 260 or 261. Is your recommendation to maintain that requirement? Because both courses are in the business foundations requirements, you can continue to accomplish this without a degree requirement. However, there may be another reason that you prefer to keep this named in the degree requirement rather than the program requirements alone.

Feel free to confer and send me one recommendation on behalf of the college if you'd like. Thank you!

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
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BFA degree requirements

Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu>

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 8:47 AM

To: Dawne Meeks <dns05b@acu.edu>

Cc: gregory.straughn@acu.edu, Trey Shirley <ats01a@acu.edu>, Jonathan Camp <jwc03b@acu.edu>

It's great to have everyone in agreement! I will bring forward to UGEC your recommendation of "no additional hours" for the BFA. Thank you!

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

On Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 8:33 AM Dawne Meeks <dns05b@acu.edu> wrote:

Thank you Greg!

Dawne Swearingen Meeks
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Cell 917-207-6160
•Empathy
•Connectedness
•Ideation
•Positivity
•Strategic

On Nov 5, 2021, at 8:13 AM, Gregory Straughn <gbs00a@acu.edu> wrote:

I am supportive of these suggestions as well. I'm not concerned that students in the fine arts lack exposure to the general humanities given their coursework. Flexibility is helpful for everyone!

Greg

On Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 8:11 AM Trey Shirley <ats01a@acu.edu> wrote:

Jessica,

Thanks for bringing this up in council; I'm glad it is being addressed.

I will add my support to Dawne's recommendation that we do away with the additional literature requirement. For our context, the additional 3-hour humanities selection is sufficient.

Thanks!
Trey

—
TREY SHIRLEY, P.H.D.

Interim Chair of Art and Design | Cornerstone Director

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On Nov 4, 2021, at 11:43 AM, Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu> wrote:

Hello, Trey, Dawne, Jon, and Greg —

The final question that the curriculum councils will review after the general education revision proposal is the degree-specific requirements on top of the requirements for all students. These [University Requirements for ACU Degrees](#) are found at the bottom of the linked catalog page.

UGEC has asked for recommendations from disciplines that offer the degrees.

The BFA requires that students take an additional sophomore literature course on top of the 3 required hours for all students. Is your recommendation to maintain that requirement? For your context, in addition to the 3-hour literature requirement, UGEC has voted to add an additional 3-hour humanities selection menu, intended to be populated by literature, fine and performing arts, and perhaps history and Bible as well.

In conversations with Mike and Dawne in the past, neither were sure of the origin of the requirement for the BFA, so you can let me know what you think about continuing this requirement. Thank you!

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

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Gregory Straughn, PhD
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Abilene Christian University

BM degree requirements

Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu>

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 8:44 AM

To: Matt Roberson <mrx12b@acu.edu>

Cc: gregory.straughn@acu.edu, Rick Piersall <rick.piersall@acu.edu>, Jon Camp <jwc03b@acu.edu>

Thanks, Matt and Greg. It's helpful to have that perspective, and I'll bring forward your recommendation for "no additional hours" for the BM.

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

On Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 8:01 AM Matt Roberson <mrx12b@acu.edu> wrote:

I don't see why we'd need it. I'm not sure why it's there.

On Thu, Nov 4, 2021 at 1:53 PM Gregory Straughn <gbs00a@acu.edu> wrote:

Hi Jessica,

I'll let Matt and Rick respond to ensure I'm not missing something, but I think there's "no additional requirement" for the BM degrees. The minimum hours is, as you indicated, covered in the curriculum. NASM requires a certain percentage of the degree be in Music Courses, and we have consistently demonstrated meeting those requirements - at both the 128-hour program and (more easily) at the 120-level (which is what they define as minimum for a bachelor's degree).

I don't see any risk in revising the statement to read "no additional requirements" like it says for BS and BSE degrees.

My two cents...

Greg

On Thu, Nov 4, 2021 at 1:21 PM Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu> wrote:

Hello, Matt, Rick, Jon, and Greg —

The final question that the curriculum councils will review after the general education revision proposal is the degree-specific requirements on top of the requirements for all students. These University Requirements for ACU Degrees are found at the bottom of the linked catalog page.

UGEC has asked for recommendations from disciplines that offer the degrees.

The BM requires that students take a minimum of 72 hours of music. Is your recommendation to maintain that requirement? If you believe we can ensure that through the program requirements, then the degree requirement may be duplicative, or you can let me know if that remains helpful because of the zero-hour options that students have for their ensembles.

Thank you!

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

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Gregory Straughn, PhD
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Abilene Christian University

BSE degree requirements

Gregory Straughn <gbs00a@acu.edu>

Wed, Nov 10, 2021 at 1:59 PM

Reply-To: gregory.straughn@acu.edu

To: Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu>

I think the BSE is "no additional requirements."

Thanks!

Forwarded Conversation

Subject: BSE degree requirements

[Quoted text hidden]

From: **Lori Houghtalen** <lori.houghtalen@acu.edu>

Date: Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 4:56 PM

To: Timothy Lawrence Head <tlh07b@acu.edu>, Jonathan Camp <jwc03b@acu.edu>, Gregory Straughn <gregory.straughn@acu.edu>

Cc: Timothy Kennedy <tjk14a@acu.edu>

Hi Tim, Jon, and Greg,

Tim K and I discussed this afternoon, and we aren't aware of a planned change in the BSE degree plan that would require additional hours on top of gen ed. So, we think it's fine to maintain the current "no additional hours" approach. However, that is assuming that we would still be able to go through the academic councils in the future if we wanted to make such a change.

I wanted to see if any of you had differing thoughts.

Thanks,
Lori

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Lori Houghtalen, PhD

Executive Associate Dean for the Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences

Associate Professor, Engineering and Physics

Abilene Christian University

From: **Timothy Lawrence Head** <tlh07b@acu.edu>

Date: Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 5:30 PM

To: Lori Houghtalen <lori.houghtalen@acu.edu>

Cc: Jonathan Camp <jwc03b@acu.edu>, Gregory Straughn <gregory.straughn@acu.edu>, Timothy Kennedy <tjk14a@acu.edu>

As long as we can come back to councils at a later date, I don't see any reason to make changes. If we can't go through councils to make a change later, then we should probably think more carefully about this as a program/department.

Thanks,

Tim H.

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Timothy L. Head, Ph. D.
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From: **Gregory Straughn** <gbs00a@acu.edu>
Date: Wed, Nov 10, 2021 at 1:53 PM
To: Timothy Lawrence Head <tlh07b@acu.edu>
Cc: Lori Houghtalen <lori.houghtalen@acu.edu>, Jonathan Camp <jwc03b@acu.edu>, Gregory Straughn <gregory.straughn@acu.edu>, Timothy Kennedy <tjk14a@acu.edu>

There is no prohibition for future conversation, so I think we should move forward with "no additional requirements." Everyone okay with that?

Thanks
Greg

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Gregory Straughn, PhD
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Abilene Christian University

From: **Lori Houghtalen** <lori.houghtalen@acu.edu>
Date: Wed, Nov 10, 2021 at 1:55 PM
To: <gregory.straughn@acu.edu>
Cc: Timothy Lawrence Head <tlh07b@acu.edu>, Jonathan Camp <jwc03b@acu.edu>, Timothy Kennedy <tjk14a@acu.edu>

Yes - thanks Greg!

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Gregory Straughn, PhD
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Abilene Christian University

Rationale for Nursing major Gen Ed BIBL reduction

Jessica Smith <jes98k@acu.edu>

Wed, Nov 17, 2021 at 12:44 PM

To: Marcia Straughn <mlr02d@acu.edu>

Cc: Theresa Naldoza <tmn05a@acu.edu>

Thanks, Marcia. Understanding the block courses and clinical days is great context for the request. I'll provide this to UGEC.

Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2024

On Tue, Nov 16, 2021 at 5:48 PM Marcia Straughn <mlr02d@acu.edu> wrote:

Good evening,

Here is a rationale/explanation to support the request to continue with the 12 hour BIBL requirement for the Nursing major. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional clarification.

Peace

Students in the Nursing major (pre-nursing track) must have 66 hours completed before entering the Nursing track. The Nursing track is what students refer to as "Nursing School" and is completed over the four semesters in the Junior and Senior year. Once they enter the Nursing track, they cannot take any additional courses because of the very unique scheduling requirements for NURS courses in the BSN program.

NURS course schedules are fully dependent on available clinical days and are often not known until a few weeks before the start of any given semester pursuant to the policies and timing of ACU's clinical partners. Once the clinical schedule is finalized each semester for each of the four cohorts of nursing students, didactic classes and labs are scheduled around the clinical days. Each clinical day is 8-12 hours long at a facility off-campus, and nursing students attend clinical days for 1-3 days each week per semester (depending on the student level).

Because of the multiple days off-campus, a block scheduling format is used for on campus labs and classes. By necessity, NURS courses typically meet one day per week in 2-4 hour blocks that do not allow for students to take courses in other departments once admitted to the Nursing track. Students in the Nursing major (pre-nursing track) must have 66 hours completed before entering the Nursing track. The Nursing track is what students refer to as "Nursing School" and is completed over the four semesters in the Junior and Senior year. Once they enter the Nursing track, they cannot take any additional courses because of the very unique scheduling requirements for NURS courses in the BSN program.

NURS course schedules are fully dependent on available clinical days and are often not known until a few weeks before the start of any given semester pursuant to the policies and timing of ACU's clinical partners. Once the clinical schedule is finalized each semester for each of the four cohorts of nursing students, didactic classes and labs are scheduled around the clinical days. Each clinical day is 8-12 hours long at a facility off-campus, and nursing students attend clinical days for 1-3 days each week per semester (depending on the student level).

Because of the multiple days off-campus, a block scheduling format is used for on campus labs and classes. By necessity, NURS courses typically meet one day per week in 2-4 hour blocks that do not allow for students to take courses in other departments once admitted to the Nursing track.

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Marcia R. Straughn Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E.

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