REQUIREMENTS FOR A
BACHELOR’S DEGREE

Requirements for a Bachelor’s Degree

NOTE: The information below describes the academic requirements for students entering JHU as degree-seeking students in Fall 2024. Students who entered JHU as degree-seeking students prior to Fall 2024 should view the appropriate archived catalogue (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/archive/).

There are multiple categories of degree requirements that comprise an undergraduate degree at Hopkins.

1. Total Degree Credit Requirement (KSAS and WSE students)
   The total degree credit requirement is considered a distinct degree requirement, and ranges from 120-130 credits depending on the degree. It is not merely a cumulative tally of courses used to satisfy requirement areas 3-7.

2. Residency Requirement (KSAS and WSE students)
   Students are required to complete a minimum number of credits in residency at JHU, therefore a limit is imposed on how many exam and transfer credits can be counted towards the total degree credit requirement.

3. Departmental Major Requirement and Minor Requirement (KSAS and WSE students)
   Every student who earns a bachelor’s degree must satisfy the requirements for each of their declared major(s) and minor(s). These requirements may include courses in other disciplines that provide skills and information of importance to professionals in the major field.

4. First-Year Seminar Requirement (WSE students)
   Except for students transferring to Hopkins after their first year at another institution, all Whiting School of Engineering (WSE) students are required to complete a first-year seminar (FYS) with a grade of S.

5. Distribution and Writing Intensive Requirements (WSE students only)
   Engineering students must earn a minimum number of credits in academic areas outside of their primary major. The academic areas in the Hopkins curriculum are humanities (H), natural sciences (N), social and behavioral sciences (S), quantitative and mathematical sciences (Q), and engineering (E). Additionally, students are required to complete writing-intensive courses. These courses are identified by a “W” in the JHU course schedule.

6. First-Year Foundation Requirement (KSAS students only)
   Arts and Sciences first-year students must complete a two-course requirement of a First-Year Seminar and a Reintroduction to Writing course. Arts and Sciences transfer students must complete an approved seminar and the Reintroduction to Writing course (or an equivalent transferred course).

7. Foundational Abilities Requirement (KSAS students only)
   Arts and Sciences students must earn a minimum number of credits in six Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication; Science and Data; Culture and Aesthetics; Citizens and Society; Ethics and Foundations; and Projects and Methods.

"D" Grade Restriction

University policy allows no more than 18 credits from courses with grades of D or D+ to be counted toward the total degree credit requirement for graduation. Departments may set a lower limit on the number of permissible D or D+ grades for a specific major. Many departments do not accept any D or D+ credits for major requirements.

Ten-Year Degree Completion Limit

A student must fulfill all degree requirements for graduation within 10 academic years from the date of matriculation at the University.

First-Year Seminar Requirement

Except for students transferring to Hopkins after their first year at another institution, all Whiting School of Engineering (WSE) students are required to complete a first-year seminar (FYS) with a grade of S. These courses are designed to foster academic curiosity, build meaningful connections among peers and faculty, promote exchange of views across disciplines, and lay the foundation of critical thinking that students will build on throughout their time at Hopkins.

WSE students must enroll in an FYS in either the fall or spring semester of their first year of matriculation. They may select a first-year seminar from two available models:

1. A 3-credit seminar designed around the unique interests of a faculty member:

   Providing a discussion-based inquiry into an academic discipline or debate, these courses are capped at 12 students and are graded S/U. They are offered only in the fall, and may not be designated as writing-intensive. Students may choose to take a seminar taught by faculty in WSE (EN.501.xxx), or in Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (AS.001.xxx).

2. A 2-credit seminar focused on multidisciplinary engineering design:

   These hands-on courses introduce students to approaches various disciplines use to define design problems and contextualize user needs, plan and complete experiments, manage projects, and build prototypes. These seminars are capped at 15 students and are graded S/U. They are offered in fall and spring semesters. They may not be designated as writing-intensive.

   WSE students who receive a U grade in their FYS must enroll and satisfactorily complete a 2-credit seminar focused on multidisciplinary design (described above) in their second year.

   Students who change their primary major from the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences to the Whiting School of Engineering may use the satisfactory completion of a KSAS FYS to meet the WSE FYS requirement.

   WSE students who transfer to the university after their first year are not required to complete a first-year seminar and do not have an alternative requirement.

   For students with a primary major in the Whiting School of Engineering, all approved credit earned through exams or at other colleges and universities may be used to meet distribution requirements, the writing-intensive requirement, engineering departmental major and minor requirements, and to satisfy course prerequisites.

Academic Area Distribution Requirements

The distribution requirement in the Whiting School of Engineering stipulates that students must earn a minimum of 18 credits (minimum
of six 3-credit courses) in academic areas outside of their primary major: Humanities (H) and Social and Behavioral Sciences (S). Area designators represent an association between the course and an academic area. Courses with area designators are expected to do more than employ basic techniques, they are to advance knowledge and increase a student’s understanding of the theory. Courses that are teaching a basic skill, and therefore do not expose the student to modes of analysis and scholarship that represent the essence of a given discipline, will not be assigned an area designator. If taught within a Homewood academic department, the department is responsible for assigning area designators to their courses. Courses not offered through Homewood academic departments will be reviewed for proposed area designators by the appropriate dean’s office.

The academic areas in the Hopkins curriculum are: humanities (H), natural sciences (N), social and behavioral sciences (S), quantitative and mathematical sciences (Q), and engineering (E).

The area designations of courses (H, S, N, Q, and E) are included in the course information in the departmental pages of the catalogue and in the online schedule of classes. The area designation also appears beside the course title on a student’s unofficial transcript. When a course has more than one area designation (HS, EN, EQ, etc.), students may use only one of the designations to satisfy the distribution requirement.

Only courses or other credit-bearing opportunities with area designations may be used to satisfy the distribution requirement. Area designators are not assigned to the following:

- Independent study
- Research
- Internships
- Music performance (unless taken as part of a music minor, in which case the course will be designated H)
- Dance performance
- Foreign language elements courses (see additional foreign language rules (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/ksas-wse/undergraduate-policies/academic-policies/registration-policies/#restrictionstext))
- Medical tutorials

Area designations can be assigned to courses taken elsewhere, to courses taken in other divisions of the university, or to graduate courses taken by undergraduates. These assignments are made by the appropriate dean’s office based on the course content and the recommendations of the faculty. The most useful criteria for determining an appropriate area designator will be the course description and a similar JHU departmental offering.

The following courses at the Peabody Conservatory have H designations:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Designator</th>
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<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Constructive Listening &amp; Analysis/ Jazz History</td>
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<td>610.321</td>
<td>History of Music 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
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**Writing-Intensive Requirement**

To encourage excellence in writing, the Whiting School of Engineering requires its undergraduates to take a number of writing-intensive courses. A writing-intensive (W) course is one in which students complete multiple writing projects/assignments of varying formats, lengths, and purposes throughout the semester (examples: traditional academic papers/essays, reports, resumes/cover letters; instructors respond to students’ work in written comments or in conference, or both; and students have at least one opportunity to receive their instructor’s feedback on a draft and then revise. A writing-intensive course guides students’ practice in writing and makes writing an integral part of the course. While there is no specific requirement for total pages of writing for a course to carry the writing-intensive designation, 20 pages of writing across all assignments has been used as a guideline.

Candidates for a B.A. degree in the School of Engineering must complete 12 credits (four courses at least 3 credits each) in writing-intensive courses, while candidates for a B.S. degree in Engineering must complete 6 credits (two courses at least 3 credits each) in writing-intensive courses. Courses taken to satisfy the writing requirement must be taken for a letter grade and passed with a grade of C- or better. Please note, this requirement is based upon a student’s degree; students are not required to complete a separate writing requirement for any additional majors.

Writing-intensive courses are indicated by a "W" in the JHU course schedule and an asterisk (*) on a student’s unofficial transcript. Writing-intensive courses taken to satisfy major, minor, or distribution requirements may also count toward the writing requirement. All course registrations at the 500 level, which is by definition customized academic learning, are not allowed to be writing-intensive.

For information about transferring writing-intensive credits to JHU, please see the External Credits section of Academic Policies.

**Foundational Abilities Requirement**

The Foundational Abilities requirement is designed to ensure that students earn a number of credits in academic areas outside of their primary major, developing breadth as well as depth. There are six Foundational Abilities.

**Overview of the Foundational Abilities**

**Foundational Ability: Writing and Communication (FA1)**

Students should develop a command of language as writers, readers, and speakers. They should be able to write about and respond to varied texts accurately and subtly; argue lucidly and effectively to diverse audiences in a variety of forms; and adapt their writing, reading, and speaking to new and complex contexts.

**Foundational Ability: Science and Data (FA2)**

Students should develop facility with scientific and quantitative reasoning and be able to apply computational and analytical methods to evaluate hypotheses about the natural world and in other contexts. They should be able to assess the degree to which arguments are supported by empirical evidence and sound reasoning as they arise in various contexts.

**Foundational Ability: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)**
Students should recognize the importance of complex creative expression in literature, music, visual arts and other forms, including in other languages, and be able to interpret them. They should cultivate their analytical and emotional responses to aesthetic and cultural experiences, be able to situate various forms of creative expression in historical and contemporary contexts and identify their social and cultural meanings.

**Foundational Ability: Citizens and Society (FA4)**

Students should engage effectively and reflectively as citizens of a diverse world and understand the forces that shape civic life. They should develop historically informed, dynamic understanding of inequality and inequity, democracy and its institutions, and of local, national and global societies, including through the study of languages. They should demonstrate openness to the beliefs, practices and values of others and be able examine and articulate the evidence for their own beliefs, practices, and values.

**Foundational Ability: Ethics and Foundations (FA5)**

Students should be reflective, effective ethical agents in their personal and professional lives. To this end, they should explore various perspectives on ethical, moral, social, and political questions and their philosophical foundations. They should develop the capacity for critical reflection, reasoning, and judgment necessary for constructing and comparing complex positions on such matters and engage situations of ethical consequence across the curriculum.

**Foundational Ability: Projects and Methods (FA6)**

Students should be able to conceptualize, develop, and deliver projects of consequence. They should learn about and harness relevant methods and means of inquiry for the creation of new knowledge, sustain work independently or collaboratively, and articulate the goals, results, and importance of their projects to broad audiences.

If taught within a Homewood academic department, the department is responsible for assigning area designators to their courses. Courses not offered through Homewood academic departments will be reviewed for approval by the appropriate dean's office.

**Credit Requirements**

Students must earn a minimum number of credits for each foundational ability:

- FA#1: Writing and Communication (15 credits)
- FA#2: Science and Data (15 credits)
- FA#3: Culture and Aesthetics (15 credits)
- FA#4: Citizens and Society (15 credits), including 3 credits of coursework that explores democracy and civics
- FA#5: Ethics and Foundations (15 credits)
- FA#6: Projects and Methods (6 credits)

These credits may overlap with major or minor requirements. When a course has more than one Foundational Ability identifier, students may use only one of the designations to satisfy the requirement, unless the additional tag is either Writing and Communication or Projects and Methods. For the rare course that is designated Writing and Communications, Projects and Methods, and a third Foundational Ability, the student may apply the course towards all three requirements.

Courses taken for the Foundational Ability of Writing and Communication must be taken for a letter grade and a grade of C- or better is required for the course to apply towards the requirement. The other Foundational Ability course requirements may be taken for a letter grade or for Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory credit. Courses completed with a letter grade of D or better, or passed with a Satisfactory grade, will fulfill the requirement.

**Writing and Communication in the Major**

Students must complete at least 6 credits of Writing and Communication foundational ability coursework in one Arts and Sciences major. This could be in either the student’s primary major or an additional major. These courses overlap with the 15 credits required of Writing and Communication courses and requirements of the major itself (they may double count).

**Note for Peabody Double Degree Students**

Students participating in the Peabody double degree program will have the Foundational Ability of Culture and Aesthetics waived.

**Restrictions**

Only credit-bearing courses may be used to fulfill the Foundational Ability requirements. The following courses are not assigned a Foundational Ability:

- Credits earned by exam, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or GCE.
- Internships
- Music performance (Unless taken as part of a Music minor. Students completing a Music minor may request those credit-bearing experiences, such as music lesson at Peabody, be designated as Culture and Aesthetics.)
- Dance performance
- Medical tutorials
- Reintroduction to Writing and First-Year Seminars
- Customized Academic Learning credits, with the exception of Honors Thesis and Senior Essays that programs elect to designate as Writing and Communication.
- Courses offered by WSE, with the exception of those designated with the Foundational Ability of Science and Data.

**Assignment of Foundational Abilities to Courses**

If taught within a Homewood academic department, the department is responsible for assigning the appropriate Foundational Ability(ies) to their courses. Courses may be assigned two Foundational Abilities; however, a third Foundational Ability may be assigned only if one of the abilities is Writing and Communication or Projects and Methods.

Foundational Abilities can be assigned to courses taken elsewhere, to courses taken in other divisions of the university, or to graduate courses taken by undergraduates. These assignments are made by the appropriate dean's office based on the course content. The most useful criteria for determining the appropriate Foundational Ability will be the course description and a similar JHU departmental offering. While transfer courses may be articulated as directly equivalent to a JHU course, the Foundational Ability tags of Writing and Communication and Projects and Methods will not automatically apply to those courses.

Students should speak to their academic advisor about how to have transfer courses apply to these two Foundational Abilities.
First Year Foundation

Arts and Sciences students are required to complete two foundational courses: (1) a First-Year Seminar (AS.001.xxx) and (2) Reintroduction to Writing (AS.004.101).

First-Year Students:

All KSAS students who enter Hopkins must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) in the fall of their first year. Each FYS is unique and based on the interest of the faculty teaching the course, but all share common goals.

FYS courses, numbered AS.001.xxx, are graded S/U. After enrolling in an FYS, students may not drop their FYS without adding a different one. Students who earn a U grade in their FYS or switch to AS from EN after the add period ends in the fall of their first-year must take a 19-person or small seminar in a later semester. These courses must be offered by KSAS and the course may apply to additional degree requirements. EN FYS courses will not apply towards the KSAS FYS requirement unless the course was previously approved to count towards the KSAS FYS requirement.

The second foundation requirement, also required in a student's first year, is the completion of AS.004.101 Reintroduction to Writing. This course must be taken for a letter grade and passed with a C- or higher. This course does not fulfill the Writing and Communication requirement.

Transfer Students:

All KSAS transfer students will be required to take at JHU a 19-person or smaller seminar in lieu of a FYS. These courses must be offered by KSAS with the following specifications:

1) A course that has only one section and the seat limit is 19 or less.
2) A course that has multiple sections, each section seat limit is 19 or less, and the sections never meet combined into a larger lecture course.
3) Reintroduction to Writing (AS.004.101) may not count as the seminar course.

Transfer students may take the seminar either for a letter grade or graded S/U. The course additionally may fulfill a foundational ability or a major or minor requirement (or both).

Like first-year students, transfer students must complete an AS.004.101 Reintroduction to Writing course and transfer students are strongly encouraged to complete this requirement in their first semester at JHU. This course must be taken for a letter grade and passed with a C- or higher. Transfer students who wish to have a similar writing course from a prior institution reviewed to serve as a substitute for this course should speak to the University Writing Program. To ensure remaining seat availability in the course at JHU, students must request this review prior to transfer student registration day in the summer.

School Affiliation (KSAS or WSE)

Your school affiliation and degree are determined by your primary major. Each school has unique degree requirements that students must satisfy. Your school affiliation determines your school-specific requirements and students will change their school affiliation if they change their primary major to one offered in the other school.

Academic Advising and Faculty Mentoring

Each KSAS and WSE undergraduate student is assigned an academic advisor during the summer preceding their first semester of attendance. This academic advisor will remain the same until graduation if the student remains in the same school. The academic advisor is a professional staff member dedicated to each advisees' academic success. Faculty members in both schools provide faculty mentoring to students based on the model adopted by the student's program of study(ies). If students change their school affiliation, their academic advisor and faculty mentors will adjust.

Completing a Major and Minimum Grade Point Average

Every student who earns a bachelor's degree must satisfy the requirements of a major. A major is a structured curriculum, usually within the confines of a particular academic field. Generally, the requirements for a major provide a student with a broad overview of the field through introductory courses, followed by more specialized courses tailored to meet the student's interests in the field. The requirements for the major may also include courses in other disciplines that provide skills and information of importance to professionals in the major field.

Courses that are used to satisfy major requirements must be taken for a letter grade. In some programs, courses only offered using the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading system (i.e., there is no option for a letter grade) may apply towards specific requirements. Students must have a grade point average of at least 2.00 in the letter-graded courses used to satisfy major requirements. Many majors require a grade of C- or better in required courses.

Departmental Directors of Undergraduate Studies

For every major and minor that is offered at Johns Hopkins, there is a faculty member, or their designee, who serves as the program's Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS). They are available to answer questions about their major(s) and/or minor(s).

Information about KSAS DUS is located here (https://advising.jhu.edu/people/directors-of-undergraduate-studies/).

Information about WSE DUS is located here (https://engineering.jhu.edu/ug-academic/dus/).

Declaring a Major in Arts and Sciences

Students who enter the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences from high school are classified as pre-majors during their freshman year. In April, freshmen in Arts and Sciences will meet with an academic advisor to declare their primary major in Arts and Sciences. To declare a major at a later time, see Changing Majors or Advisors section below. Students must declare a major by April 15th of their sophomore year in order to assure that they will complete requirements for graduation in four years.

Arts and Sciences students may declare second majors and minors offered through the School of Engineering beginning their freshman year. It is strongly recommended students declare by the spring registration date of their Junior year to ensure timely graduation.
Declaring a Major in Engineering

Students who enter the Whiting School of Engineering declare a specific engineering major on their application for admission. A student must take direct action to change the major. To change a major, see Changing Majors or Advisors section below.

For students with a primary major in the Whiting School of Engineering, all approved credit earned through exams or at other colleges and universities may be used to meet distribution requirements, the writing-Intensive requirement, engineering departmental major and minor requirements, and to satisfy course prerequisites.

Students cannot change their major into Biomedical Engineering. Students must be accepted into the program at the time of admission to the University.

Undecided engineering students must select a specific major no later than the end of freshman year.

Engineering students may declare second majors and minors offered through the School of Arts and Sciences beginning their freshman year. It is strongly recommended students declare by the spring registration date of their Junior year to ensure timely graduation.

Changing Primary Major

In order to change a primary major within a student’s current school, students complete the online Program of Study change form. In Engineering, students will receive a faculty mentor based on this new primary major. In Arts and Sciences, faculty mentoring relationships will be adjusted per mentoring model being used by the major. In both schools, the student’s academic advisor will not change.

When students change their primary major to a major in the other school, after initiation of the Program of Study change form, students are required to meet with an academic advisor in the new school. Because students are required to fulfill the school-specific degree requirements of their new school, the purpose of the meeting is to communicate what school-specific requirements they need to meet and how this change may impact their timely graduation. If, after the meeting, the student wishes to continue with the primary major change, the major change will be processed. Students are then assigned an academic advisor in their new school and faculty mentoring will adjust per the mentoring model used by the program of study.

Students cannot change their major into Biomedical Engineering.

Declaring Additional Majors (Optional)

Students who wish to complete the requirements of more than one major are expected to declare the additional major(s) by April 15th of their junior year. Students may add a minor by completing the online Program of Study Form. The completion of a minor is recorded on the transcript, but the minor does not appear on the diploma.

Official recognition with notation on the academic record is not given for completion of majors or minors at other schools within the university, except for the Business minor offered through the Carey Business School, or at other colleges.

Restrictions Applying to Double Majors and Minors

Within the Hopkins curriculum, requirements for the completion of undergraduate majors and minors are established by academic departments and approved by the Homewood Academic Council, acting on recommendations from the Curriculum Committees of the Krieger and Whiting Schools. Students who fulfill the necessary prerequisites and satisfy the specified course requirements for a major/minor will be certified as having completed that major/minor. While departments are free to designate the range of courses that may satisfy major/minor requirements for their own academic programs, they may not prohibit the use of coursework presented for their department’s major/minor from being used to satisfy the requirements of other majors or minors. In other words, students may “double count” coursework that independently meets the requirements of more than one major/minor.

Students are encouraged to choose additional areas of study to complement their major. However, students may not choose a minor with an identical name to their major. For example, a student majoring in Africana Studies may not declare a minor in Africana Studies.

Other prohibited combinations include:

1. Students may not major in Molecular and Cellular Biology and Biology.
2. Students majoring in the Natural Sciences Area may only double major or minor in a program outside of the natural sciences (see Major Requirements for a complete listing of disallowed double majors).
3. Students majoring in Medicine, Science and the Humanities may not double major in Natural Sciences Area.
4. Students majoring in Romance Languages may not major or minor in one of the individual Romance Languages (except for the Spanish for the Professions minor).
5. Students majoring in Spanish may not minor in the Spanish for the Professions minor.

Closely-related majors and minors that are allowed include:

1. Economics majors may complete a Financial Economics minor.
2. Romance Languages majors may complete the Spanish for the Professions minor.
3. Computer Science majors may complete a Computer Integrated Surgery minor.
5. Students majoring in Environmental Engineering may major in any major offered through the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences.

The examples provided above may not be an exhaustive list and students who have questions about combinations of related programs should consult an advisor in their respective advising office.

**Residency Requirement for Freshmen**

Students who enter the university from high school must complete at least 100 credits at JHU. This includes courses that are taken after matriculation as a degree-seeking student:

- in fall, intersession, spring, or summer at JHU
- in other divisions of the university
- through the Baltimore Student Exchange Program (BSEP) during the fall and spring semesters only
- through an approved study abroad program (up to 30 credits)

In addition, credits earned through JHU courses prior to matriculation as a degree-seeking student are applied to the 100-credit residency requirement.

All students must complete a minimum of four semesters in residence as a full-time student. Students must be in residence for at least two of the final four semesters, including the final semester prior to graduation.

**Residency Requirement for Transfer Students**

Students who enter the university as transfer students must complete at least 60 credits at JHU. This includes courses that are taken after matriculation as a degree-seeking student:

- in fall, intersession, spring, or summer at JHU
- in other divisions of the university
- through the Baltimore Student Exchange Program (BSEP) during the fall and spring semesters only
- through summer and intersession study abroad programs sponsored by Hopkins departments

In addition, all transfer students must complete at least four full-time semesters in residence at JHU. Study abroad programs offered during fall and spring semesters do not count towards this four-semester requirement. Transfer students must be in residence for at least two of their final four semesters, including the final semester prior to graduation.

**Residency Requirement for Peabody Double Degree Students**

Students earning a double-degree at Peabody must complete at least 48 credits in either the Krieger School of Arts & Sciences or the Whiting School of Engineering.

**Degree Credit Totals**

The Bachelor of Arts degree requires 120 credits.

The Bachelor of Science degree, whether in Arts and Sciences or Engineering, requires from 120 to 130 credits, depending on the major.

No program may require more than 130 credits.

For a degree requiring 120 total credits, a maximum of 20 approved credits from other sources may be counted towards the total degree credit requirement, even if more than 20 credits from external sources have been used to satisfy other requirements.

All approved exam credits earned will be posted to the transcript. For students entering from high school, up to 12 approved transfer credits will be posted to the transcript. See the External Credits (https://ecatalogue.jhu.edu/ksas-wse/undergraduate-policies/academic-policies/external-credit-policies/) section for details.

Example:

A student has a total of 32 external credits posted to the transcript:

- 8 transfer credits from another university
- 24 credits from AP exams

All 32 of these credits may be applied to other requirements as permitted by their school-specific requirements. See the External Credits (https://ecatalogue.jhu.edu/ksas-wse/undergraduate-policies/academic-policies/external-credit-policies/) section for details.

If the student’s total degree credit requirement is 120, only 20 of those 32 credits will count toward the 120 total degree credit requirement (120-100=20).

If the student changes to a degree program whose total degree credit requirement is 126, only 26 of those 32 credits will count toward the total degree credit requirement (126-100=26).