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# Preparing for your first year in the Bachelor of Science Program for the 2025-26 Academic Year

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## **Understanding your responsibility for Academic Planning**

We understand that it can be challenging to figure out where to start with your degree planning, what courses you should be enrolling in, what you need to do first, and when you need to do it. This package has been designed to help you sort all that out.

In the Faculty of Arts & Science, students take charge of their own learning and degree planning. As you transition into university, you'll have the opportunity to take control of your education in a way you haven't before. From choosing your major and minor, selecting courses, and creating your own schedule, you'll be making significant decisions and gaining skills that will support a lifetime of personal and professional growth.

Understanding how your degree works is fundamental to knowing how to choose your courses, plan your schedule, and progress from one term (semester) to the next. One of our primary roles in Academic Advising is to provide you with the resources and tools to understand and plan your degree so that you can navigate through your academic career with confidence.

**The most important thing you can do for yourself as a new student is read through this package carefully.**

## The Bachelor of Science Degree Structure

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A Bachelor of Science or BSc degree consists of 120 credits. Each course is 3 credits, which means you will take 40 courses to complete your degree. These courses fall into the following 4 categories:

- Your **Major** is the main focus of your degree. Since this is the discipline you will study in the greatest detail it's best to pick a discipline (subject) you really like. With a few exceptions, most BSc majors require a minimum of 14 courses, but students can choose to complete up to a maximum of 20 courses in a single discipline.
- Your **Minor** is a secondary focus in your degree. It's only 6 courses.
- Your **Breadth Requirements** are courses that you need to meet your degree regulations, and that offer a chance to explore different disciplines. There are too many to finish in your first year, but we do recommend that you try to finish them by the end of your second year. There are 12 courses that make up the BSc Breadth Requirements. Some of them may be used towards your major or minor. There is a more detailed description of Breadth Requirements further down in this document.
- Your **Options** are other courses that you are interested in. The number of options you take will depend on which degree structure you choose as well as your choice of major or minor, and how many courses you take in your major.

For example, you will choose one of the following degree structures, each of which requires 40 courses and will affect the number of options you need to take:

- A major and a minor – will have room for several options
- A double major – will reduce the number of options
- A major with a double minor – will reduce the number of options

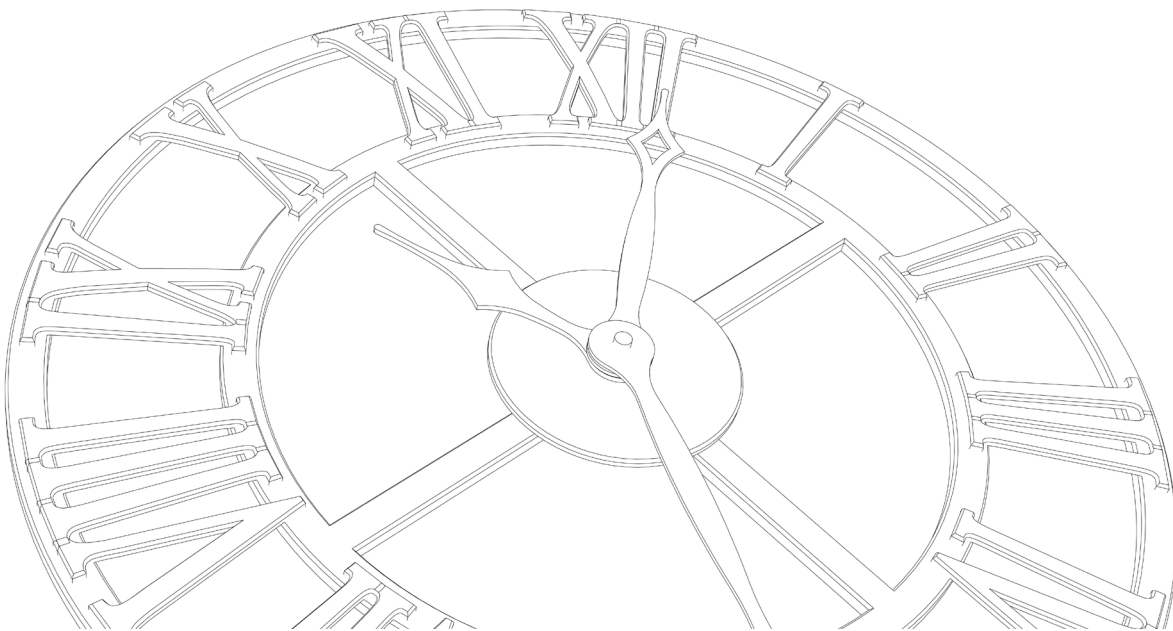
NOTE: The specific courses for your major and minor as well as a list of the Breadth Requirements, can be found in the [Academic Calendar](#).

## Do I need to declare a major and minor right away?

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You do not need to declare a major and a minor right away, but it is a good idea to be ready to declare in your second year, or if you are selecting a competitive major or minor, to at least be working to complete the courses you need to make that declaration. To find out more about the declaration process and to explore the available majors and minors, head to the “Declaring your major/minor” section of the [Arts and Science Academic Planning page](#).

***Note that you don’t need to finish your Breadth Requirements in order to declare.***



## How many courses do I need to take every term?

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Your course load per term will depend on several factors. Course load refers to the number of credits taken in a term. When choosing how many courses you should take in a term, consider the following:

- There are 3 terms in the MacEwan academic year: Fall term, Winter term, and a Spring/Summer term. The Spring/Summer term is not a required term (more on the Spring/Summer term further down in this section).
- The maximum course load in the BSc is 15 credits (5 courses) per term.
- The majority of courses in the Faculty of Arts and Science are 3 credits.
- Full-time or part-time status is determined by the number of credits you take each term.
- To be a full-time student, you must enroll in 9 credits (3 courses) per term.\*
- If you are enrolled in less than 9 credits (fewer than 3 courses) per term, you are considered part-time.\*
- If you have a student loan, you must maintain enrolment in a minimum of 9 credits (3 courses) per term.\*
- You must enroll in a minimum of 3 credits in an academic year to remain in the BSc program.
- You must enroll in a minimum of 3 credits in the first term you are accepted to the BSc program.

\*For students on approved accommodations through Access and Disability Resources, these credit minimums may vary.

Other things to consider:

- If you intend to graduate within 4 years, you will need to complete 10 courses per academic year.
- If you are not taking Spring/Summer courses, then you will need to take 5 courses each in Fall and Winter to complete your degree within 4 years.
- The Spring/Summer term is not a required term, but students will often use the Spring/Summer term to catch up on a few courses if they have taken a lighter load in Fall and Winter or to retake a course or for other reasons.

- As a Bachelor of Science student, you will have some courses that have labs. These are called multi-component classes. A lab is an additional component to the class and will add time to your weekly schedule. For example, some labs are one hour, but others are three hours, and you need to consider the additional time when determining how many courses you want to take in a term. It is not advisable to enroll in 5 classes with labs in a single term, especially if you are working part-time or have other commitments outside of your university obligations. We recommend that you balance your lab courses with some lecture only classes for a more reasonable weekly time commitment.
- You are not required to complete your degree in 4 years and most students take longer than that.
- Remember that it is your degree, and you are in charge of your course selection and scheduling. Do not compare yourself to other students. Your degree is finished when you finish it. You have up to 10 years from when you first enroll in your program to complete the degree requirements. Most students take between 4 to 5 1/2 years to complete the degree.

Five courses per term is a very significant course load, and even more so with multi-component classes. Not every student takes a full course load per term. When deciding how many courses to take per term, consider your life and commitments outside of school as well as your academic abilities and preferences. A few examples of things to consider are:

- You have a part-time job.\*
- You are actively parenting or providing active care for family members or others.
- You are on a MacEwan sports team.
- You have other personal or life commitments that require a significant amount of your time.

\*If you are working full-time hours, please be aware that it is not possible to complete a degree at MacEwan with just online, evening, and weekend courses. Most of the courses you will need to complete your degree will be offered in person during normal weekday hours in a classroom setting.

## What are the overall degree requirements?

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While the BSc is flexible, there are still a few rules (degree regulations) that you must follow in order to graduate.

**Junior-level courses:** A maximum of 16 courses at the 100-level (junior-level) can be used towards your degree.

**Out-of-Faculty courses:** BSc students are allowed to take some courses that are not Arts or Science disciplines. You are not required to take out-of-faculty courses, but if you do, 6 out-of-faculty courses is the most you can use.

- If you declare an out-of-faculty minor, these are the only 6 out-of-faculty courses that can be used for your degree.
- Of the 6 out-of-faculty courses, only 1 course can be taken from the following: ECRP, OAAS, OADM, OALS, OAMS, PACT, or TRVL.

**Transfer courses:** A maximum of 20 courses applicable to your MacEwan degree program may be transferred from other post-secondary institutions that you attended before coming to MacEwan.

**Courses in one discipline:** You can take a maximum of 20 courses in one discipline.

**Science course requirements:** Your Bachelor of Science degree must contain at least 24 Science courses.

### **Residency requirements:**

- Your major must have at least 24 senior-level credits from MacEwan with at least 12 of those credits being at the 300- or 400-level. All 400-level requirements must be completed at MacEwan. Senior level courses are 200-level and higher.
- Your minor must have at least 9 credits from MacEwan with 3 credits at the 300- or 400-level.

**Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements:** You need a GPA of at least 2.0 in your major, minor, and overall to graduate.

For a more detailed list of Bachelor of Science degree requirements, find your major page in the “Programs A-Z” tab in the [Academic Calendar](#) then from the major page, click on *Degree Regulations*.

## How do I enroll?

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You can enroll yourself in courses by logging on to myStudentSystem and selecting the “Manage Classes” tile. For step-by-step instructions, refer to the [Using myStudentSystem Guide](#).

## What courses should I enroll in for my first year?

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**Breadth Requirements** (also called exit requirements) cover several disciplines and are designed to broaden your horizons and expand your skills. They also give you a grounding in different fields and disciplines to help you determine your interests and strengths, which may help you decide on a major and minor. Most students complete their Breadth Requirements over their first 4 terms of university.

**Science Breadth requirements are divided into the following categories:**

**Biological or Earth and Planetary Sciences** - 6 credits in BIOL or EASC (not including BIOL 101, 102, or 103)

**Chemistry or Physics** - 6 credits in CHEM or PHYS

**English** - ENGL 102 and 3 credits in university ENGL (not including ENGL 108, ENGL 111, or ENGL 211)

**Humanities** - 6 credits in CLAS, COMP, HIST, HUMN, PHIL, or a Language other than English

**Mathematical Sciences** - 3 credits in MATH 114, MATH 120, or MATH 125

**and:** 3 credits in CMPT, MATH, or STAT (not including CMPT 104, MATH 099, or MATH 160)

**Social Sciences** - 6 credits in ANTH, ECON, GEND, LING, POLS, PSYC, or SOCI

Check out the [Academic Calendar Courses A-Z](#) for course descriptions.

## **More information about breadth requirements**

You do not need to complete your Breadth Requirements before taking other courses. If you know what you are going to major and minor in, you can be taking those courses at the same time. When you are building your course schedule for each term, it can be made up of Breadth Requirements, Major and Minor courses and options. We do recommend that you try to complete your Breadth Requirements within your first 4 terms at university.

Note: A single course cannot be used to fulfill more than one Breadth Requirement.

Unless otherwise specified, breadth requirements can be taken at any level and completed in any combination. For example:

- You could take EASC 101 and BIOL 107 to complete the Biology and Earth and Planetary Sciences Breadth Requirement.
- Courses used to fulfill the Breadth Requirements can also count towards the major(s) or minor(s). In our example, EASC 101 can be used for a Physical Sciences major, and BIOL 107 can be used for a Biological Sciences major.
- If you know what you want to major and minor in, that will also help you determine which elements of a particular Breadth Requirement you want to complete. For example, if you are going to major or minor in Biological Sciences, you will want to take BIOL 107 and BIOL 108 as they are required to declare the BIOL Major and as they will be the required pre-requisites for most of the senior-level BIOL courses. You will use the Academic Calendar Programs A-Z to determine the entry level courses for your major(s) and minor(s).

All breadth requirement courses will count toward the 120 credits of the overall degree.



## What if I need more help?

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The academic advisors in the [Arts & Science Advising Office](#) are your first point of contact for academic planning resources and other Arts & Science program-related questions.

### Faculty of Arts and Science online Academic Planning Sessions

Because we have so many students, we are not able to help individual students build a schedule one-on-one. All first-year students are expected to attend an online [Academic Planning Session](#), where you will learn how to

- Use the Academic Calendar
- Plan your degree
- Choose the right courses for your specific degree program
- Find enrolment resources
- Declare your major and minor
- Organize and keep track of your academic progress

Academic planning sessions are offered throughout the year for both new and returning students and you should plan to attend at least one in your first year.

### myAdvising Compass Course

Once you are a Bachelor of Science student, you will also have access to the myAdvisingCompass course on your mêskanâs page (mêskanâs is MacEwan's digital learning environment). The myAdvisingCompass course is an online degree planning resource that you can complete on your own time at your pace.



## The Faculty of Arts and Science Academic Planning page

The [Arts & Science Academic Planning](#) page is a resource page for all Faculty of Arts and Science students, and includes information on:

- Planning your degree
- Additional planning assistance
- Choosing your courses
- Enrolling in courses
- Managing your progress
- Declaring your major/minor or applying to Honours
- Planning sheets

### A few important tips:

- Check your myMacEwan email account regularly for any messages from the Arts & Science Program Services Office, the Arts & Science Dean's Office, the MacEwan Office of the Registrar, etc. When you are emailing us, please be sure to use your myMacEwan email account and include your student ID number.
- Shortly after you have started in your program, you will have access to the Arts & Science "Stuff You Should Know Newsletter." You will find it on your [mêskanâs page](#). The newsletter is updated on a weekly basis and is where we will let you know about any course and/or program changes, upcoming important dates, and events being hosted by various Arts & Science departments. We recommend that you check the newsletter at least once a week, and more frequently during enrollment periods and the drop/add periods.
- You can also follow us at [Instagram @macewanartssci](#)

### Connecting with a Faculty of Arts & Science Academic Advisor

You can connect with an Arts & Science academic advisor in one of the following ways:

1. Stop by our office in 6-211
2. Submit your question by email to [artsandscience@macewan.ca](mailto:artsandscience@macewan.ca)
3. [Book an appointment](#). You can choose an in-person, online