

# Policy on Academic Definitions

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Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Responsible University Officials: VP, Academic Affairs

Endorsed by UAAC: December 7, 2011; Updates approved April 10, 2013; Updates approved May 6, 2015

## 1.0 PURPOSE

This policy establishes/updates definitions of undergraduate-level academic programs and their curricular components, and replaces previously-adopted policies and definitions. This policy satisfies multiple institutional planning and documentation requirements of both the Higher Learning Commission and the U.S. Department of Education.

Baccalaureate Level	Post- Baccalaureate Level
Associate's Degree Associate of Arts Associate of Science	Master's Degree

- 2) are, per U.S. Department of Education requirements, intended to "prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation" as designated by one or more U.S. Dept. of Labor Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes. (Rates of student attainment of employment in SOC-designated occupations may be used by the U.S. Department of Education to determine the quality of the certificate program and its continued eligibility for Title IV funding – i.e. eligibility for federal grants and loans to be awarded to students in the program.)
- 3) are designed by a department, college, school, center or other unit authorized to offer degree and certificate programs
- 4) are composed primarily of courses but may also include non-course curricular requirements (such as completion of portfolios, engagement in academic assessment or testing, etc.)
- 5) are independent

One semester hour of credit is awarded for the attainment of intended learning outcomes resulting from \_\_\_\_:

- 1) Student engagement in a reasonable equivalent of one clock hour (typically 50 minutes) of classroom or direct facu

### Baccalaureate Credit

Baccalaureate credit is awarded for the successful completion of credit-bearing courses numbered 0000-4999 (excluding the School of Medicine), which are offered at a level of academic rigor and sophistication requiring, at a minimum, the intellectual aptitude and maturity typically evident in those who have earned a secondary school diploma or GED certificate and who otherwise meet applicable University admission requirements for undergraduate-level study. Credit awarded for courses numbered 0000-0999 may not apply toward the completion of any degree requirement nor be calculated as part of any official grade point average.

### Bachelor's Degree

A bachelor's degree is a formal academic award, conferred upon completion of all of the following University-wide requirements for the degree:

- 1) Completion of all requirements of an undergraduate core curriculum required by a College/School/Center in which in which the "first major" (see formal definition below) is administratively housed;
- 2) Completion of all requirements of one academic major;
- 3) Completion of a minimum of 120 semester hours of total undergraduate academic credit (note: unless otherwise approved by the governing dean, a maximum of 6 graduate credit hours may be applied to that total); and
- 4) Completion of any University-required non-course academic requirements (e.g. minimum score on a proficiency exam, learning portfolio, participation in assessment activities, etc.).

SLU confers the Bachelor of Arts degree and the Bachelor of Science degree.

### Major (UG)

An undergraduate major is a formal, coherent and finite curricular component of every undergraduate degree program composed of a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit. Majors are focused on undergraduate-level mastery of an academic discipline, profession, or interdisciplinary intellectual theme in preparation for entry into a career, graduate and professional school, and a life of educated inquiry and service to humanity. A major:

- 1) is designed either individually or collaboratively by a department(s), college(s), school(s), center(s) or other unit(s) authorized to offer undergraduate degree programs;
- 2) is comprised primarily of courses but may also include non-course curricular requirements (such as completion of portfolios, engagement in academic assessment or testing, etc.);
- 3) is strongly recommended to require at least 12 semester hours of credit at the 3000- and 4000-levels;
- 4) is intentionally sequenced in the context of core and, if applicable, University elective requirements of an u



