

# Introduction to Academics and the Course Preference Process

*Alexander M. Bruce, Associate Dean of the College  
and Director of Academic Advising*



**SEWANEE**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

# The Course Preference Process

## Outline:

- Understand the basics of degree requirements (vocabulary!)
- Understand the goals–and outcomes–for the Course Preference process
- Know the web and human resources that can help
- Work through a sample form



# Keys to success with this process

- Patience, deliberation, and intention
- Work on a desktop/laptop
  - Cannot easily be done on a small (phone) screen!



# Goals and outcomes

- Develop a list of 13 courses
  - Four courses tied to areas of academic interest
  - Six other courses of broader interest
  - Three language courses
- Explore the curriculum, venture into new areas, discover new perspectives and ways of thinking



# Academics: Degree requirements

- Earn 128 credit hours (8 semesters of 16 hours)
- While also completing General Education requirements
- And completing requirements for a major

*Second majors and minors are optional!*



# Academics: Course load and Credit hours

- Standard course load = four regular, 4-credit-hour classes
- Regular 4-hour course meets 150 minutes/week
  - 3 days at 50 minutes, or 2 x 75, or 1 x 150
  - Some classes have required labs that meet weekly—still a 4-hour course
- 1- and 2-hour courses:
  - Music lessons, ensembles; some Dance classes (add when on campus)
  - Embark
- 0-hour courses:
  - Physical Education (2 required; add when on campus)



# Academics: General Education

- Foundation of “the Sewanee experience”
- Exposure to “Ways of thinking” in seven different areas
- Plus attention to developing writing skills
- (and two physical education classes)

## *Not a focus for the Course Preference Process*

- Nearly all foundational courses carry Gen Ed credit
- Each “Encounter” course carries Gen Ed credit



# Academics: Majors and minors

- Major:
  - Focused area of study: breadth and depth
  - 10-12 courses (about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of all your courses!)
  - Emphasis on advanced courses (300- and 400-level)
  - *Officially declare in second year*
- Minor (and certificate programs):
  - 5-6 courses
  - Wide range of course levels (100 - 400)
  - *Optional!*



# Academics: Majors and minors

- What excites you?
- What do you want to learn more about?
- What do you see yourself doing in 5-10 years?
- What's the thing you enjoy doing so much that you'll spend hours on it?
- What's the “big question” you want to tackle in life?



# Academics: Pre-professional programs

- Perhaps 25% of students pursue a pre-professional program
  - Pre-health (pre-med, pre-vet, pre-dentistry, etc.)
  - Pre-engineering
  - Pre-law
- Not majors or minors but structured sequence of classes



# Help! What classes are best for majors, minors, and pre-professional?

- There's a table that offers clear guidance!
- And pre-health, pre-engineering will have the relevant classes automatically added to the list



# How does AP, IB or Dual Enrollment credit work?

- Possible credits are “banked”
- But can lead to advanced placement
- See web resource for details



# Your goals and outcomes for the Course Preference Process

- Develop a list of 13 courses
  - Four courses tied to areas of academic interest
  - Six other courses of broader interest
  - Three language courses
- Explore the curriculum, venture into new areas, discover new perspectives and ways of thinking

**With this list of 13, plus your Encounter selections,  
we will build your first schedule!**



# Our goals for the Course Preference Process

- We want you to take classes that really align with your top academic interests.
- We want you to take classes that strike you as interesting and new.
- We want you to take a wide range of classes and have exposure to a variety of disciplines and ways of thinking.
- We want you to take a language course.



# Understanding the Course Preference Form and Helpful Resources

- Patience, deliberation, and intention
  - ANY course you list could be on your schedule!
- Work on a desktop/laptop
  - Cannot easily be done on a small (phone) screen!
- Due July 1
  - Being first or last doesn't matter: we start working on all July 2



# On to the web page!

<https://new.sewanee.edu/academics/cpp/>

