

Guidelines on Concentrations within Majors

Definitions

- 1) A **Concentration** is a significant subdivision (at least 12 units, usually more) of a Major that will satisfy at least one Student Learning Outcome beyond the core SLOs for the Major. Concentrations will appear on student transcripts (but not the diploma).
- 2) An **Emphasis** is a smaller subdivision of a Concentration (or rarely of a Major; if the emphasis is a subdivision of a Major and not of a Concentration, the emphasis will usually involve 12 or fewer units.) Concentrations will not necessarily have their own SLOs – although the courses found within each Concentration should assist students in achieving mastery of the Major’s core SLOs. Emphases do not appear on student transcripts.
- 3) In general, Majors will not have any subdivisions further than Emphases. If a program wishes to propose further subdivisions, they must demonstrate that the further subdivisions will be beneficial to student learning and understanding of their pathway through the degree program.

Policy on Concentrations

- 1) Any Major that has Concentrations (or Emphases) must have a set of Core Courses that all students in the Major complete. The Core curriculum should address SLOs that substantially develop central skills within the major.
- 2) Each Concentration within a Major must be sufficiently distinct to have at least one Student Learning Outcome specific to the Concentration.
- 3) The number of Concentrations that a program may offer will be dependent upon sufficient student demand to consistently fill all the required program courses. In addition, all required Concentration courses must be offered frequently enough to allow for timely completion of degrees.
- 4) When proposing a new Concentration, the program shall demonstrate
 - a) how the proposed curriculum is distinct from other Concentrations within the Major
 - b) that there is sufficient student demand to support the new Concentration (and to justify the costs of new courses, creating new advising materials, setting up the DARS, etc.) *OR* provide an explanation of what existing Concentration will be eliminated to make space for the new Concentration.
 - c) why HSU needs this new Concentration. For example, possible explanations might include: new directions in the field, job opportunities, a cohort of faculty with expertise, student suggestions/requests, increased student enrollment, etc.

Implementation

- 1) By the Fall 2015 catalog, consistent terminology should be in place with “Concentration” used for major divisions of degrees, and “Emphasis” for smaller subdivisions. This initial revision will only change terminology *not* any other aspects of curriculum (creation of a core, for example).
- 2) In the Fall of 2014, all Majors with subdivisions of any type will submit to the ICC revised catalog copy showing use of the appropriate terminology and their program SLOs (with revisions if needed to include Concentration SLO(s).)
- 3) All programs proposing new Concentrations will be expected to satisfy these Guidelines.