



To: SUNY Cortland Faculty  
From: Educational Policy Committee  
Date: February 2025  
RE: Revisions: Upper-Level Major and Degree Requirements for Undergraduate Programs

SUNY Cortland needs to revise major and degree requirements in order to align our campus policy with SUNY requirements regarding upper-level coursework (i.e., 300+). More specifically:

1. Every major must include 24 credit hours of upper-level coursework.
2. Every degree must include 45 credit hours of upper-level coursework.

Given that we will need to edit our policy, we also propose removing the following requirement of discipline-specific courses as it is prohibitive to some curriculum development (e.g., interdisciplinary):

Majors must have a minimum of 15 credit hours of **discipline-specific** courses at the upper level — 300 or above

### Background

The requirement for upper-level courses in the major and degree has existed for a long time, but was not strictly followed by SUNY in their program approval. In more recent years, they have clarified the policy and it is a requirement for any new program or program alteration at SUNY. Since we have learned of this, we have been working to update curriculum as it goes through any change process.

The new Registration Compliance Tracking (RCT) acknowledges these upper-level requirements and it is part of the validation of progress for students receiving financial aid.

### Suggested Revisions

The revisions will be to the [Bachelor's Degree Requirements](#) section of the Undergraduate University Catalog as follows:

Current Catalog – <a href="#">Academic Major</a>	Proposed changes to Academic Major
<p>All students must complete a major with a minimum of 30 credit hours of discipline-specific courses. Majors must have a minimum of 15 credit hours of discipline-specific courses at the upper level — 300 or above.</p> <p><a href="#">Terminology Guide</a></p> <p><b>Majors</b> A major is an approved program of study leading to a bachelor of arts (B.A.), bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.), bachelor of science (B.S.), or bachelor of science in education (B.S.Ed.). Majors require a minimum of 30 credit hours of discipline-</p>	<p>All students must complete a major with a required minimum of 30 credit hours. Majors must include a minimum of <del>15</del> <b>24</b> credit hours. of <del>discipline-specific</del> coursework at the upper-level (<del>i.e., at the 300 level or above</del>).</p> <p>A major is an approved program of study leading to a bachelor of arts (B.A.), bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.), bachelor of science (B.S.), or bachelor of science in education (B.S.Ed.). Majors require a minimum of 30 credit hours of discipline-specific</p>

specific courses. Majors must have a minimum of 15 credit hours of discipline-specific courses at the 300 level or above.	courses. Majors must have a minimum of <del>15</del> <b>24</b> credit hours of <del>discipline-specific</del> courses at the 300 level or above
<b>Current Catalog</b> N/A	<b>Upper-level credit hours</b>  All students must complete at least 45 credit hours of their baccalaureate degree at the upper level (i.e., 300 or above).

## Implementation

In order to assess the impact of this on our current programs, the Vice Provost office has begun a review of all programs to determine which ones are affected and would need clarification or revision. We will work with those departments to expedite any needed changes they identify.

We will explore the ability of Degree Works audits to track the upper-level requirements.