

# The College Curriculum

Underlying Kenyon's curriculum is a set of policies and enrollment regulations created by the faculty to govern every student's curriculum at the College. These policies apply to all candidates for the degree.

## Semester Enrollment Requirements

Normally students register for 2 units of credit each semester. A student must enroll for a minimum of 4 units of credit each academic year, up to a maximum of 5 units. In any semester, a student may enroll for a minimum of 1 3/4 units so long as the minimum enrollment for the year is satisfied. A student may enroll for a maximum of 2 1/2 units of credit in a semester.

Seniors may enroll for as few as 1 1/2 units either semester, so long as they enroll for 3 1/2 units for the year and will have earned the necessary 16 units for graduation.

A student must be enrolled for at least 1/2 unit of credit in at least two departments in every semester until 16 units have been completed. Any of the interdisciplinary courses do serve as a "department" in this regard. Please note that one may not enroll in, for example, two French courses and two Spanish courses, as these are in the same department. The same would be true for studio art and art history courses.

## The Major Program

The major program is organized in one of the following ways:

**The major in a department or program.** The major program constitutes focused academic work undertaken in a single department or discipline. It is the responsibility of the department to determine the work necessary for successful completion of the major. An outline of departmental or programmatic requirements may be found in the

introductory paragraphs of each department's course descriptions in this catalogue. The department or program may prescribe courses in other departments or disciplines as part of the major program.

**The synoptic major.** At Kenyon, there are several ways in which students can satisfy broad and substantial interests that cut across departmental and disciplinary boundaries. Students may undertake a double major. They may combine a major in one department with a minor in another, or with any one of several interdisciplinary concentrations. Many will find their needs met by one of the interdisciplinary programs listed in this catalogue.

A great deal of care and hard work has gone into the formulation of the College's majors, minors, and concentrations, so that almost all students choose to major in one of these established departments or programs.

In exceptional cases, however, a student may have a well-thought-out and strong interest in coherent studies that do not quite fit into existing programs. In such cases, it is possible for the student to propose a synoptic major. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate such a proposal, gather faculty advice, and write and justify the proposal for a synoptic program. The proposal must be approved no later than the end of the sophomore year.

Developing a synoptic major program will require the student to do considerable synthesis in thinking through how material from the selected courses fits together. Consultation with faculty (advisor or others) should initially consider whether one or more of the established programs could not meet the needs of the student. A meeting with the associate provost at an early stage will most likely be useful. A synoptic major is likely to prove more demanding to carry out than a major chosen in the ordinary way from existing programs. Therefore, a

student proposing a synoptic major must have a cumulative GPA at or above the average GPA of Kenyon students.

A synoptic major program must be deep as well as broad. It must be coherent. The program must consist primarily of courses that are offered in the established programs, together with a limited number of independent-study courses when such courses are really needed. Normally not more than 2 units of an 8-unit synoptic major program should consist of independent-study coursework. Faculty members from at least two of the departments in which the student will work must agree to serve on the advisory committee for the student's synoptic major. Since each department may designate the core course or courses it deems necessary for all synoptic majors choosing work in that department, the student's proposal for the synoptic major must also be approved by the chairs (or members designated by chair) of the departments of the faculty advisors.

The final form of the student's proposal for the synoptic major program is the responsibility of the student and should be submitted to the associate provost, who will engage with the student and the faculty advisors in a discussion and review of the proposal. Final approval of the program will be made by the associate provost in consultation with the chairs of the departments of the student's faculty advisors (or with senior members of the departments designated by the chairs).

**Declaring a major.** Students may declare a major at any time, but not later than November 1 of their junior year. Normally students declare their majors as sophomores before spring vacation. To declare a major, students obtain and file a form in the registrar's office, after securing the necessary faculty signatures. Students wishing to declare synoptic majors may obtain complete information from the office of the dean for

academic support. Students who plan to participate in off-campus study during the fall semester of their junior year must declare a major by March 30 of their sophomore year.

## The Senior Exercise

Students must satisfactorily complete the Senior Exercise in their major program to be awarded the degree. No credit is granted for the exercise. In general, the purpose of the Senior Exercise is to promote coherence within the major program of the student and, particularly, to offer each student the opportunity to articulate that coherence for himself or herself. Although each Senior Exercise is determined by the goals of the individual department and therefore may vary on that basis, a collegiate aim of the Senior Exercise is to encourage the student to achieve the following:

- Develop and demonstrate the ability to think and read critically, and to distinguish the essential from the trivial.
- Explore and refine individual interests through independent research or creative projects.
- Develop and demonstrate writing ability by the completion of a meaningful piece of newly written work.
- Develop and demonstrate speaking ability—through public presentations, roundtable discussions or symposia with peers, or through oral exams, etc.
- Develop and demonstrate the ability to synthesize prior work, and to use and critique methodologies pertinent to the discipline through exams, written papers, or special projects.
- Grapple with new ideas.
- Collaborate with others—faculty members and peers—at various stages of the Senior Exercise.

Departments may give a different emphasis to each of these goals. In cases where the above goals are not fully addressed by a department's

Senior Exercise, the department will incorporate them into other required parts of the major curriculum.

Each department must regularly inform all of its majors of the nature and purpose of the Senior Exercise and must discuss the exercise with its senior majors prior to its administration or due date(s). A student who fails the Senior Exercise will be given another opportunity to pass it before Commencement of his or her senior year. Failure on the second opportunity means that the student may not graduate or participate in the Commencement ceremonies that year. The student will be given an opportunity to satisfactorily complete the Senior Exercise after Commencement at a time mutually agreeable to the student and department.

## A Minor Course of Study (Optional)

Students may choose to complete a minor course of study. Minor courses of study are offered in some disciplines but not in all. The following policies govern such courses of study:

- Students declare a minor course of study in the Office of the Registrar just as they declare majors and interdisciplinary concentrations.
- A minor consists of a minimum of 2 units and a maximum of 3 1/2 units. A minimum of 2 units must be from within the discipline itself.
- Courses that count toward the student's major may not also count toward the minor, nor may a student undertake both a major and minor in the same discipline.
- Neither the College nor a department will plan course availability in a given year so as to enable a particular student or students to complete a minor. Students may not be given preferential admission to a course on the basis of their minor.
- Students' transcripts will note majors (at least one required), concentrations (optional), and minors (optional).

- Specific information and requirements regarding minors may be found under the section of the department or discipline in question.

## An Interdisciplinary Concentration (Optional)

Students who have declared a major may also elect to declare an interdisciplinary concentration. As with the major course of study, completion of a concentration becomes part of the student's permanent record. A description of a concentration's requirements can be found in the introductory paragraphs under the appropriate heading in this catalogue.

A concentration will require a minimum of 2 1/2 units and up to a maximum of 4 units of prescribed academic credit. Academic coursework undertaken for such a program may consist of work offered by departments and other concentrations, as well as coursework offered by the concentration. Directors of concentrations certify students' successful completion of their programs to the registrar, who will note completion on the students' records.

**Declaring a concentration.** Although coursework may begin prior to declaration, students can declare a concentration only after they have declared a major. To elect a concentration, students obtain and file a form in the Office of the Registrar after securing the necessary faculty approval. Students who wish to elect a concentration must do so before November of their senior year.

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## Honors

### The degree with college honors.

Students may receive the Bachelor of Arts degree with collegiate honors (cum laude, magna cum laude, summa cum laude) by attaining a cumulative grade point average in the following ranges:

cum laude	3.45-3.64
magna cum laude	3.65-3.84
summa cum laude	3.85 and above

Students in full-time residence at Kenyon for less than three years will be considered for honors by the Academic Standards Committee. The student's Kenyon grade average shall be the prime determinant. However, the committee will also examine the student's record at other institutions and may alter the degree of honors indicated by the Kenyon average.

**The degree with departmental honors.** Students who elect a departmental major may apply to read for the degree with departmental honors. Application should be made to the chair of the department. At any time the department may deny the student the opportunity to continue in honors. Students reading for honors are usually required to pass a special examination administered by an outside examiner.

There are three classes of departmental honors: Honors, High Honors, and Highest Honors. The class of honors that the student receives will be determined jointly by the outside examiner and the members of the student's department. A student who fails to achieve the degree with honors may be awarded the degree without honors provided he or she successfully completes the equivalent of the Senior Exercise.

**Collegiate standard for departmental honors.** Faculty members have determined that to undertake departmental Senior Honors work a student must ordinarily have a 3.33 average in the department or program in which honors work is to be done, and a 3.20 grade point average

overall. The student must also have the recommendation of the department or program.

Students whose grades do not meet this standard but who wish to do departmental Senior Honors may petition the Committee on Academic Standards to be allowed to undertake honors. Ordinarily such a petition will be submitted no later than April 15 of the junior year. The committee will consider at least the following criteria:

- Is the student's proposal persuasive and is it supported enthusiastically by the department or program?
- Are there extenuating circumstances around the lower grade point average? Is there upward movement in the grade point average from a poor start? Or are there extenuating circumstances in a particular semester?

### Honors for synoptic majors.

Students who propose a synoptic major may also ask to read for honors. The Academic Standards Committee decides on admission to the Honors Program for synoptic majors. (An explanation of the procedure is available at the registrar's office.) At least 1 unit of credit in independent study must be included in the program, and arrangements are made for an outside examiner. The degrees of honors are identical to those described above.

## Year of Graduation

A student's year of graduation, or class, is determined by the registrar based on semesters of full-time study completed. The year of graduation may be advanced only upon approval of a plan for early graduation. The year of graduation will be set back by an appropriate amount for students returning after having withdrawn, unless they have earned credit as full-time students elsewhere. Students who fall behind the normal pace of 4 units per year by more than 2 units will have their year of graduation and class set back by the appropriate amount.

Questions about a student's year of graduation should be addressed to the registrar.

## Early Graduation

The Kenyon degree is based on work accomplished during four years of full-time academic work. In exceptional cases, students with distinguished records may be permitted to graduate in fewer than four academic years. Petitions for early graduation are submitted at least one year in advance of the proposed date of graduation. Detailed information about criteria and procedures is available from the office of the associate provosts.

## A Guide to Courses of Study

The tables on the following pages are a handy guide to the majors, minors, interdisciplinary majors, and concentrations available in the various academic departments.

Drawing from the options presented in the tables, students, in consultation with their faculty advisors, will develop and implement their chosen courses of study. In brief, the requirements and options are as follows:

- All degree candidates must successfully complete a minimum of one major course of study including the Senior Exercise.
- Students may choose to complete one or more minor.
- Students may choose to complete one or more interdisciplinary concentrations.

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**Academic  
Departments**

**Departmental  
Majors**

**Departmental  
Minors**

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Anthropology  
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Anthropology  
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Anthropology  
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Art  
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Art History; Studio Art  
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Art History; Ancient;  
Renaissance and Baroque;  
Modern; Architectural History  
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Biology  
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Biology  
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Biology; Environmental Biology;  
Molecular Biology and Genetics;  
Physiology; Plant Biology  
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Chemistry  
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Chemistry  
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Classics  
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Classical Studies; Greek; Latin  
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Classics  
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Dance and Drama  
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Drama; Dance  
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Dance  
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Economics  
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Economics  
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English  
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English  
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History  
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History  
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Mathematics  
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Mathematics  
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Mathematics; Statistics  
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Modern Languages and Literatures  
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Modern Languages and Literatures;  
French; German; Spanish  
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Chinese; Italian; Japanese;  
Russian  
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Music  
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Philosophy  
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Physics  
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Physics; Astronomy  
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Political Science  
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Political Science  
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Psychology  
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Religious Studies  
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Sociology  
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# Interdisciplinary Programs

## Interdisciplinary Majors

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American Studies  
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Biochemistry  
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International Studies  
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Molecular Biology  
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- .....  
Neuroscience  
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## Interdisciplinary Concentrations

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African and African-American Studies  
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American Studies  
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- .....  
Asian Studies  
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- .....  
Environmental Studies  
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- .....  
Integrated Program in Humane Studies  
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Law and Society  
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Neuroscience  
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Public Policy  
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Scientific Computing  
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Women's and Gender Studies  
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