

General Academic Information

Program of Study

Effective Fall 2013, a total of 120 credits are required for most baccalaureate degrees. General Education requirements were revised, effective Fall 2023. The typical program includes University General Education Requirements (approximately 30 credits), Major & School/College Requirements (60 - 81 credits), and Flexible Cluster (9-30 credits), which includes a range of options such as minors, concentrations, electives/technical electives, pre-professional requirements, and more. Specific requirements vary across programs.

Knowledge of U.S. and Global African Diasporic Developments

Knowledge of U.S. and Global African Diasporic Developments is an Essential Learning Outcome (ELO) that must be met by all undergraduate students. This ELO is met by engaging in learning experiences and disciplines, including Black/African diaspora awareness, history, emerging trends, ways of life and institutions, intercultural knowledge, and cross-cultural comparative skills. Additional ELOs are outlined in the description of General Education Requirements.

Residency Requirement

The majority of the individual schools and colleges at Howard University require that students spend the last 30 credit hours of undergraduate study in residence at the University in the school or college in which the degree is awarded.

Definition of a Credit Hour

In accord with federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates:

Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester; At least an equivalent amount of work as outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Credit or credit hour

A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements for a degree, diploma or certificate, or another award.)

Change of Program: Audit, Pass/Fail

Students who wish to change a course from credit to audit must complete official change requests through the Office of the Registrar. Signatures of approval of the academic advisor and the course instructor must be obtained. The last day to add and/or drop courses is published every semester in the University calendar.

If a student is enrolled in a course for audit or pass/fail and wishes to change to credit, that student must drop the course for audit or pass/fail and add the course for credit. The last day for such a change is published every semester in the University Academic calendar.

Failure to comply with this change of program procedure may result in a failing grade for courses students have assumed they have dropped or no grade for courses they thought they added. All changes must be made in accordance with the established deadlines.

Curriculum Review

The Curriculum Committees and Deans of each School or College are charged with following the policy on credit hours in their review and approval of all courses and for certifying that the expected student learning for the course meets the credit-hour standard. The determination of credit hours is made when a new course or a revision to an existing course is proposed.

Examinations

The number of examinations administered in a course varies according to the method of instruction. Where midterm examinations are scheduled, they are given near the middle of each course. Final examinations are held at the end of each semester and are a required part of each course in most schools and colleges. For additional information and exceptions to the above, students should consult the individual schools and colleges.

Major

A major sequence of study is met by completing a series of courses, as determined by departments, in one or more closely related academic fields. Effective Fall 2023, a major typically includes 60 to 81 credits.

Minor

A minor sequence of study is a combination of courses intended to broaden students' perspectives and buttress their major areas of concentration. A minor generally consists of 15 to 24 credits earned in one or more areas outside of the major.

Elective

An elective is a course which students may choose to take for credit toward earning their degrees. Students should select electives in consultation with appropriate advisors.

Program of Study Changes

Students seeking to change majors, minors, concentrations, or other academic programs of study must obtain approval with the appropriate advisors/designees in the respective schools and colleges and submit official change requests through the Office of the Registrar. Requirements for approval of program of study changes vary. Visit <https://howard.edu/registrar> for appropriate forms and more information.

Honors

Students will be graduated with honors under the following conditions: those with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) ranging from 3.20 through 3.49 will be graduated cum laude; those with a cumulative GPA ranging from 3.50 through 3.79 will be graduated magna cum laude, and those with a cumulative GPA of 3.80 or higher will be graduated summa cum laude.

Grades in noncredit courses are not considered in determining eligibility for honors. Although the policy varies according to the individual schools and colleges within the University, generally students are not eligible to receive these distinctions at graduation if they have not completed the last half of the work required for their degree in residence at Howard; if they have repeated courses to raise their GPA; or if they have not carried at least 12 credits for each semester enrolled, with the exception of the last semester in residence.

Students who have excelled academically are honored by having their names placed on the Dean's Honor Roll. Generally, this honor roll is published annually and includes honor students from the preceding school year. The GPA required differs among the schools and colleges according to their specific policies.

Time Limitation

There is no strict regulation with respect to the total amount of time in which undergraduate students must fulfill their degree requirements, provided they maintain an appropriate grade point average and give evidence of being seriously interested in the eventual achievement of their academic objectives.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. Students who are absent from classes are held responsible, nevertheless, for the entire work of the course. Members of the faculty will hold students responsible for regular and prompt class attendance. Any student who does not take a scheduled midterm or final examination must obtain the approval of his instructor in order to take a substitute examination. A student who does not secure such approval will receive a grade of zero for the examination missed.