

QUESTION:

For students who are pursuing multiple baccalaureate degrees, should the rule regarding overlap between major and GE be revised?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Under the Legacy General Education curriculum, ASC curricular rules do not allow overlap between a major and the GE if a student is pursuing multiple degrees. (See document detailing the differences between double major and dual degrees.) The rationale for this rule is simple and logical: a student wishing to receive multiple diplomas and degrees should be required to complete distinct programs for each of the degrees.

Under the Legacy GE, this rule did not conflict with any university-wide curricular policy, as the university's requirements for the GE stipulated that there be no overlap between majors and the GE on any degree. However, the new GE specifically allows overlap between majors and Themes. Our current policy is in conflict with this and so should be revisited.

POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS:

1. Continue the current rule; i.e., there can be no course overlap between the majors and the GE (including Themes) when a student is pursuing dual/multiple degrees.
2. Revise the rule to allow Theme courses to overlap with just one of the majors.
3. Revise the rule to allow Theme courses to overlap with both majors.
4. Revise the rule to allow Theme courses to overlap with either or both majors, but with a specific limit with respect to number of courses or number of credit hours.

See pages 2-3 for points to consider about each of these options.

OPTION 1: Maintain the same policy under GEN that exists for GEL – that is, no course overlap is permitted between majors and the GE, including Themes.

Points to consider:

- This presumably would require approval from CAA/OAA, as GEN specifically allows for course overlap between majors and Themes.
- Asking CAA/OAA to allow an exception to the university-wide rules may raise other issues that could negatively impact us.
- Many students' other degree is from a college outside of ASC, and that college may object to not allowing the Theme/major overlap. (In some units, it is critical for the students to be able to take advantage of the overlap in order to complete degree requirements in a reasonable time frame. For those units, the allowance of this overlap was one of the reasons they agreed to approve the new GE.)

OPTION 2: Restrict Theme overlap to just one of the majors.

Points to consider:

- While the two majors would no longer be completely separate/distinct, this would still allow for some measure of distinction/separation.
- This also would seem to “meet the spirit” of the new GE policy allowing Theme/major overlap (and so also should not raise concerns with CAA/OAA or other units).
- Additional questions that would need to be discussed and resolved as they arise:
 - For students whose other degree is in another college, which major (ours or theirs) will be permitted to have overlap with Themes?
 - How do we handle 4-hour Theme courses (since the student will then be required to take only one course rather than two for that Theme)?

OPTION 3: Allow Theme overlap with both majors, with no limit (other than what is specified in the university's GE rules).

Points to consider:

- This would seem to eliminate the main distinction between double majors and dual degrees, since each major could have two overlapping courses with the Themes.
- The other dual/multiple degree requirements could still be maintained (i.e., 151 credit hours, 57 upper-division hours, and no overlap between the two majors).
- Advisors (both in ASC and in other colleges) would find this easier to administer – but that isn't necessarily the best justification for making such a significant change to this policy.

OPTION 4: Allow Theme overlap with either or both majors, but with a specific limit on how many hours, or how many courses, can overlap.

Points to consider:

- This is sort of a combination of option 2 and option 3.
- While it allows overlap as required by the new GE rules, it also places a limit on the overlap, so some measure of distinction/separation between degrees is still maintained.
- This would address the question raised in Option 2 about 4-credit theme courses.
- The other dual/multiple degree requirements could still be maintained (i.e., 151 credit hours, 57 upper-division hours, and no overlap between the two majors).
- Advisors (both in ASC and in other colleges) might find this more difficult to explain and administer (but that isn't necessarily a reason to not consider this option).