Academic Affairs Policy Statement No. 5

Undergraduate, Professional, and Graduate Areas of Emphasis

1. References
   a. Areas of Emphasis policy statement recommended by the University Curriculum Committee, June 1992.
   c. Last updated April 2019.

2. Objective
   The objective in instituting areas of emphasis at the University of Georgia is to officially acknowledge the attainment by students of a fair measure of expertise and knowledge of a specific nature within the major field of study.

3. Policy
   a. The option to create an area of emphasis within a major or certificate and the formulation of requirements for the area of emphasis are curriculum decisions; therefore, they should originate from the faculty of the academic unit offering the major or certificate. Although graduate study by its very nature focuses on specialized areas of study, students may benefit from the formal recognition of specialized study that the official Area of Emphasis provides.
   b. The official designation shall be "area of emphasis."
   c. Only approved areas of emphasis will be included on the student’s official transcript.
   d. Proposals for a new area of emphasis should include a program of study and a list of requirements for the major.

4. Responsibility
   The faculty of the academic unit offering the area of emphasis is responsible for developing areas of emphasis. Students will select areas of emphasis in consultation with an advisor.

5. Requirements
   a. Undergraduate Area of Emphasis
An undergraduate area of emphasis is a specialty within a major or certificate. It requires 12 or more semester-credit hours of upper-division courses (numbered 3000 or above) acceptable for satisfaction of the major degree requirements.

b. Professional Program Area of Emphasis
A professional program area of emphasis is a specialty within a major or certificate. It requires 9 or more semester credit hours of professional-level courses acceptable for satisfaction of the major degree requirements.

c. Graduate Area of Emphasis
Requirements for an area of emphasis within a graduate major or certificate will be established within the individual academic departments. It requires 9 or more semester credit hours of graduate-level courses acceptable for satisfaction of major degree requirements.

6. Procedure

Establishment of an area of emphasis should begin with the department or academic unit offering the major or certificate. Proposals for areas of emphasis should be submitted using the area of emphasis program form.

Proposals for new areas of emphasis should be routed through the following approval sequence:

a. Faculty of the academic unit proposing area of emphasis
b. Department Head or Director of academic unit proposing area of emphasis
c. Dean or Vice President of academic unit proposing area of emphasis
d. Dean of the Graduate School, if the area of emphasis falls under a graduate program
e. Office of Instruction (for review)
f. Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
g. University Curriculum Committee

When a proposed area of emphasis affects another school, college, or department (by, for example, listing a course offered by another unit), the proposal should be circulated to that unit for sign-off prior to submission to the University Curriculum Committee.