Electives

In addition to the core requirements and the major requirements, many students will meet part of the 124 points required for the bachelor's degree with elective courses chosen from a range of programs and departments.

Students are encouraged to choose as electives those courses that will broaden their knowledge base, provide an opportunity to acquire or improve certain skills, introduce them to a new field of inquiry, or give them access to a unique Columbia strength or resource.

Personal interests as well as professional objectives often inform the selection of elective courses.

Electives may be taken Pass/D/Fail; however, GS students may only elect the P/D/F option six times, for a total of eighteen points, during their undergraduate careers at Columbia and may only choose the P/D/F option in one course per term.

Professional Courses

GS students are permitted only 6 points of professional studies coursework toward their GS degrees. These six points may be counted in transfer credits or courses taken at Columbia, or a combination thereof. “Professional studies” include professional level courses in law, business, journalism or any of Columbia’s other professional schools, as well as any comparable courses clearly professional in orientation.

GS students are not allowed to count professional courses in any of the professional studies programs offered through Columbia’s School of Professional Studies toward the degree. Undergraduate cross-registration in courses offered by Columbia’s graduate and professional schools is restricted and requires special approval.

Any professional course that is listed or cross-listed as an undergraduate course in business, public health, international and public affairs, journalism, or within a Columbia Arts and Sciences department is excluded from the six-point limit. The final decision of whether or not a course is professional rests with the GS Committee on Academic Affairs.

Physical Education Courses

The Physical Education (P.E.) Department offers a variety of courses in the areas of aquatics, dance, fitness, martial arts, individual and dual “lifetime” sports, team sports, and outdoor education which are available for academic credit. Since P.E. is a requirement for undergraduates in Columbia College and the School of Engineering and Applied Science, preference is given to CC and SEAS students when registering for P.E. classes. If space is available, undergraduate General Studies students are permitted to take courses in the Physical Education academic credit program. The grading in all physical education courses is Pass/Fail. Students who fulfill the attendance and participation requirement receive a Pass.

Normally students may take only one P.E. course per semester; enrollment in more than one P.E. course per semester requires the approval of the Director of Physical Education Programs, to whom students should submit a petition. GS students may count up to two points of Physical Education toward the degree requirements.

Dance Technique Courses

A maximum of six (6) points of dance technique courses may count to the degree for GS non-dance majors. GS students registering for a dance technique class must register for at least one credit. GS students may not register for a 0-credit dance technique class.