

HUMANITIES, BSGS

Curriculum

Within the scope of the humanities major, students explore related disciplines, including art history, English, history, and philosophy, to develop cultural literacy and analytical, interpretive, communication, and research skills that can be applied to complex problems and issues. In curriculum taught by Northwestern University faculty, humanities disciplines are equally represented in the core courses, while research and methods courses foster engagement with key texts, scholarly sources, and academic inquiry. Advanced elective courses offer the opportunity to emphasize certain academic subjects and to engage in exploring others including African American studies, classics, music history, philosophy, religious studies, theatre studies, and film/media studies.

The bachelor's degree requirements are 45 units total and include distribution, writing, and elective courses, and the major requirements.

Humanities Major Requirements

Course	Title
Core Courses	
<i>Art History</i>	
One 200-level ART_HIST course	
<i>English</i>	
One 200-level ENGLISH course	
<i>History</i>	
HISTORY 250-A	Global History: Early Modern to Modern Transition
HISTORY 250-B	Global History: Modern World
<i>Philosophy</i>	
PHIL 110-CN	Introduction to Philosophy
Research/Methods Courses	
ENGLISH 300-CN	Seminar in Reading and Interpretation
<i>Research Seminar</i>	
One of the following:	
ART_HIST 390-0	Undergraduate Seminar
ENGLISH 397-0	Research Seminar for Literature Majors
HISTORY 395-CN	Trailer Seminar
Electives	
Six 300-level courses in English, history, art history, classics, comparative literary studies, philosophy, or religious studies ¹	

¹ At least two courses must be selected from English, history and art history. At least one course must focus on a non-western culture or non-dominant U.S. culture. At least one course must engage with culture or history primarily before 1830. Courses in African American Studies with a humanities focus may also be included with academic adviser approval. An additional research seminar may be counted as an elective.

Degree Requirements

SPS programs lead to one of three Northwestern University bachelor's degrees: the bachelor of philosophy (BPhil), the bachelor of science in general studies (BSGS), and the bachelor of philosophy in communication (BPhilCom), which is conferred by the School of Communication (<https://www.communication.northwestern.edu/>).

The bachelor of philosophy (BPhil) and the bachelor of science in general studies (BSGS) degrees are conferred by the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/>). The primary difference between the two degrees is that the BPhil includes a modern language requirement. Some majors offer a choice of the BPhil or the BSGS degree.

Bachelor of Science in General Studies

To earn the BSGS degree, students must complete 45 units, including a writing requirement, distribution requirements, a major, and electives. Minors are optional.

Courses	Units Earned
English 111 or 205 and 113	2
Humanities	4
Science	4
Social Sciences	4
Major Requirements	10-20
Electives	Up to 21
Total	45

About the Writing Requirement

The writing requirement ensures that students have the skills necessary to meet the rigorous writing demands of subsequent SPS courses in all majors and disciplines. The expository writing courses provide the tools to meet the demands of advanced academic writing; the courses may not be audited or taken on a pass/no credit basis.

Transfer and performance-based admission students must fulfill the writing requirement through one of two options:

Option 1: Complete an English composition course at SPS.

Demonstrate successful completion of English 111 or 205. A grade of C or higher is required.

Option 2: Successfully appeal the writing requirement via the Student Affairs Petition Form (<https://sps.northwestern.edu/main/login.php>).

Students who believe they have the writing skills necessary for university-level research and analytical papers may appeal the SPS writing requirement.

A successful appeal does not result in credit for the writing course. Students must complete another course in its place according to the needs and guidelines of their program. Writing will be evaluated for standards of good expository writing, including: a fully developed thesis; sound logic and adequate evidence in support of the thesis; effective organization, coherent structure and an overall unity; correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Appeal materials must be submitted by the quarter deadline (<https://sps.northwestern.edu/part-time-undergraduate/important-dates.php>) before entry.

About the Distribution Requirements

Students complete course work in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences to obtain a broad experience in the liberal arts. Courses that satisfy these distribution requirements include the following areas:

Humanities

Art history, classics, comparative literary studies, English literature, foreign languages (up to two units), history, music history, philosophy, religion, and some courses in African American studies, foreign languages with literature, gender studies, performance studies, radio/television/film, and theatre.

Sciences

Astronomy, biological sciences, chemistry, earth and planetary sciences, engineering, geography, information systems, mathematics, physics and some courses in anthropology, communication sciences and disorders, psychology, radio/television/film and statistics.

Social Sciences

Anthropology, economics, history, linguistics, political science, sociology, and some courses in African American studies, communication sciences and disorders, gender studies, psychology and statistics.