

# POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR SPECIALIZATIONS Michigan State University

## Definition:

"An interdisciplinary program of thematically related courses" separate from the major.  
– *Academic Programs* catalog

At Michigan State University specializations:

- include courses drawn from several department, schools, or colleges.
- are designed to complement approved departmental or interdepartmental majors or to provide an interdisciplinary perspective on a topic of interest.

## Target Student Audience:

The targeted audience for a specialization may be:

- open to students from a wide variety of majors.
- limited to students from particular majors or colleges.
- designed for either undergraduate or graduate students.

## Credits and Requirements:

The recommended number of credits for a specialization is twelve to eighteen credits.

- Students are more likely to complete the specialization if the credits do not exceed eighteen.
- Credits earned toward a specialization may also be counted toward requirements for a major or degree program, unless indicated otherwise.

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## PROCEDURES

### Transcriptability:

A specialization is "transcriptable" (eligible to be listed on a student's transcript).

### Certification:

- The Associate Dean of the college responsible for administering the specialization will inform the Office of the Registrar when the student has completed the requirements of the specialization.

### Relationship to Other Award Types:

What is the relationship between a specialization and a major?

- A specialization and a major are separate components in a student's degree program.
- All students are required to select a degree program in the major of their choice. A major is a primary field of study with its own set of requirements.
- A specialization is designed to complement approved departmental or interdepartmental majors or to provide an interdisciplinary perspective on a topic of interest.
- A specialization has its own set of requirements.

How is a minor different from a specialization?

- A *specialization* is an interdisciplinary program of thematically related courses separate from an academic major. A minor is a secondary field of study available for students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs.

### Request to Establish or Change a Specialization:

Specializations must be approved and/or changed via the academic governance system using the *Request for a New Academic Program* or *Request for Changes in an Academic Program* form.

- Each unit responsible for any course included in the specialization must be given the opportunity to approve or not approve the inclusion of said course in the specialization.

Departments, schools, and colleges with administrative responsibility for offering degree programs may decide to offer a specialization.

- The department, school, or college may specify admission requirements for the specialization.
- Any approved Michigan State University courses may, with the approval of the unit offering the course, be included in a specialization.

### More Information:

See the University Curriculum and Catalog web page: [www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/ucc.asp](http://www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/ucc.asp)