Area(s) of Emphasis—What it is, and what it’s not

**An area of emphasis is shaped by what you study.**

We expect that Evergreen students will gain both breadth and depth in their studies, by taking programs or courses that cover a wide range of subjects, as well as doing more advanced in-depth work in a particular area of interest. Sometimes students are very clear on where they plan to focus their in-depth study, but sometimes students want to talk with an advisor to evaluate what they've taken and and figure out how that is building towards an identifiable area they want to study in depth.

**An area of emphasis is not the same as a major. It’s not required, and is not official.**

A typical college major is defined as a single area of study. At Evergreen, we anticipate that as you work in interdisciplinary programs, you might bring together two or more areas of study in creating your own emphasis--e.g., media and gender studies, or environmental studies and political economy. Of course, you might also focus on an area that can be described by a single designator--psychology, for instance, or chemistry. An advisor would be glad to talk with you about how what you've studied could be translated into an area of emphasis.

**We expect that at least half of your credits, if not more, will be in a wide range of subjects outside of your area of emphasis.**

In a liberal arts education, breadth is as important as depth, so—especially in your freshman and sophomore years—your best approach is to explore all your possibilities by taking a wide range of subjects, without worrying about deciding on a focus area or about whether everything you take fits into that.

**Your area of emphasis will not appear in your transcript or diploma.**

Your diploma will just say "Bachelor of Arts" or "Bachelor of Science." Your transcript will show the number of your transfer credits, if any, what you've taken at Evergreen, and will include all your evaluations.

If you want to have something in your transcript that indicates your area of emphasis, you can use your Academic Statement to describe how you came to focus your studies on your particular area.

**If it's not official, why would someone want to identify an area of emphasis?**

Students are often asked "What's your major?" and it's often helpful to be able to give a quick answer that summarizes your academic focus.

Also, job or grad school applications often ask for your undergrad major. It is totally fine to enter "Interdisciplinary Studies," but again, you may want something that better describes the disciplines you focused on. If you plan to enter your area of emphasis on an official document, we strongly encourage you to meet with an advisor to verify that what you’ve taken will support that stated emphasis.

Student Instructions:

Reviewing your credits for Area(s) of Emphasis

As an Evergreen student, you won’t graduate with a specific major. However, it’s likely that over time you’ll focus your studies and gain depth of knowledge in a particular area or areas, just like someone who’s declared a major would. Sometimes Evergreen students have a pretty clear idea of what their focus is, but in other cases students want some help in figuring out how the programs and courses they’ve taken come together, or want to find a term that accurately summarizes their interdisciplinary emphasis.

This is where a review of your credits with an advisor can be helpful. If you’d like to do this, there are several steps to take to prepare.

1. If you’ve taken college level coursework at schools besides Evergreen, request a copy of your unofficial transcript. (You may be able to view an unofficial copy on line—check with the Registrar at your former college(s) if you have questions.) If you haven’t, go to step 2.

2. Log in to my.evergreen.edu and open the Academic Progress link.

3. Then, using the Area of Emphasis Worksheet, go through each class or program you’ve taken, at Evergreen or elsewhere, and enter them in the worksheet.

* For Evergreen courses and program, go to the bottom of each evaluation, and look for the Course Equivalencies. In an 8-, 12-, or 16-credit program you should have multiple equivalencies that will likely fit into different categories on the worksheet. Enter each separately.
* For non-Evergreen classes, the subject designator (e.g., “BIOL”, “ENGL”) should give you a clue as to which category it should be entered in.
* If you are unsure about a particular equivalency or course, enter it in the section at the bottom.
* If you run out of space on one sheet, start a second page.

As you work through this process, you may see some clear patterns emerging—perhaps clear enough that you feel like you now know your emphasis. However, you might still want to meet with an advisor if:

* You’re not really able to see an emphasis;
* You have several different areas of emphasis and want some help thinking through how they fit together;
* You want some advice on what to do during the rest of your time at Evergreen—programs, courses, ILCs or internships—to help round out your area(s) of emphasis.

To set up an appointment with an advisor, just call 360-867-6312 or stop by the SASS front desk. Be sure to bring your Area of emphasis worksheet with you, as well as any non-Evergreen transcripts you might have.

For more information contact Academic & Career Advising ● (360)867-6312 ● [advising@evergreen.edu](mailto:advising@evergreen.edu)

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**Area(s) of Emphasis Worksheet** Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ID #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Current student  
 Alumni

Please go through all your transcripts, and enter the credits you've earned in one of the categories below. If you're not sure where particular credits fit, or if they don't seem to fit in any of these, please enter them at the bottom of the page. Use the reverse side if you need more space.

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| **Social Sciences (e.g. political science, psychology, economics, sociology, anthropology, business)** | | **Science and Math (e.g. biology, chemistry, physics, math, ecology, computer science)** | | **Arts and Humanities (e.g. English, art, music, philosophy, languages, cultural studies, writing)** | |
| **Course title or equivalency** | **credits** | **Course title or equivalency** | **credits** | **Course title or equivalency** | **credits** |
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| **If you're not sure where particular credits should go, or if they don't seem to fit in any of the categories above, please fill them in below.** | | | | | |
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**Once you've filled out this form, please bring or send it to Academic Advising and we will set up an appointment for you to meet with an advisor.**

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| **Social Sciences (e.g. political science, psychology, economics, sociology, anthropology, business)** | | **Science and Math (e.g. biology, chemistry, physics, math, ecology, computer science)** | | **Arts and Humanities (e.g. English, art, music, philosophy, languages, cultural studies, writing)** | |
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