

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

UPDATE ON THREE-YEAR DEGREES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:
“IOWA DEGREE IN THREE”

Action Requested: Receive the presentation.

Executive Summary: Provost Barry Butler and Associate Provost Lon Moeller will provide information about the University’s three-year degrees.

The Iowa Degree in Three program helps students in select University of Iowa majors graduate in three years. Students agree to meet academic and advising milestones, while the university commits to ensure availability of required courses or alternatives.

Iowa Degree in Three is designed for students who are academically prepared to complete more semester hours per term than average or who come to the university with completed college credits. It's a flexible, affordable option developed to meet the needs of highly motivated students.

Iowa Degree in Three majors will be available to new first-year students enrolling in fall 2015 or after. Majors initially offered through the program will include:

- Communication studies (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)
- English (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)
- History (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)
- International studies (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)
- Marketing (Tippie College of Business)
- Theatre arts (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)

Each major will establish course checkpoints that Iowa Degree in Three students should meet in order to complete the major in three years. Requirements also may vary by college.

Students will be able to sign up for the program after they start classes and discuss the option with their advisers. Three-year programs require planning and preparation, and it's important for students to have the advising support they need to consider the program and get started.

Who's eligible for Iowa Degree in Three?

Entering first-year students who enroll at the University of Iowa for Fall 2015 or subsequent semesters and are interested in one of the qualifying majors choose the program during their first semester. Students wanting to add a second major, a minor, or a certificate are not eligible for the plan and should instead plan to graduate in four years.

Students required to take more than two English as a Second-Language courses are not eligible, given the program's accelerated schedule.

How does a three-year program differ from a four-year program?

Three-year programs require students to take a heavier course load and to proceed at a much faster pace. Three-year degrees require the same number of credits as four-year options and the same course work.

Iowa Degree in Three isn't right for everyone. The program is designed for students who come to Iowa with specific goals, have already earned some college credit, or are ready to complete more courses per term than average.

How do I enroll in the program?

Eligible students can choose an Iowa Degree in Three option by:

1. Meeting with an advisor to discuss the program and a qualifying major during the first semester enrolled at Iowa.
2. Declaring a qualifying major by the end of the first semester at the university
3. Signing an Iowa Degree in Three Agreement by the end of the first semester at the university

What does the Iowa Degree in Three Agreement require?

The agreement spells out students' responsibilities and the University's commitment to ensuring that participating students can access required courses. Student responsibilities include:

- Signing the agreement during the first semester of enrollment
- Meeting with an advisor at least once a semester to discuss plans and progress
- Taking courses during two summer sessions, if necessary
- Earning the minimum number of semester hours required to stay on track
- Meeting specific course checkpoints in the declared major
- Maintaining the grade point average required for the major

By signing the agreement, you state that you understand your responsibilities as a student and the steps you must take to remain eligible for the program.

What does an accelerated, three-year schedule look like?

Students who sign up for Iowa Degree in Three need to reach established milestones in order to stay on schedule. Specifics may vary by college and major, but a sample schedule looks like this:

- Earn 40 semester hours (s.h.) of credit by the end of their first year (for example, 15 s.h. during the first fall semester, 16 the first spring, and 9 the first summer)
- Earn 84 s.h. by the end of the second year (for example, by adding 18 s.h. in the fall, 17 in the spring, and 9 in the summer)
- Earn 120 s.h. by the end of the third year (for example, 18 s.h. in the fall and 18 in the spring)

Students who bring Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or transfer credit with them to Iowa can reduce the number of semester hours they must earn at the University.

What are the benefits of participating?

The University ensures that Iowa Degree in Three students can enroll in required courses in order to graduate in three years. Benefits include:

- Participating students can use the Summer Hawk Tuition Grant to cover up to 12 s.h. over two summer sessions (instead of the usual one summer).
- Colleges and departments that offer specific majors will approve alternative courses or waivers as needed when required courses aren't available.

What if I want to add a second major, minor, or certificate?

Iowa Degree in Three covers only your primary major. Students wanting to add a second major, a minor, or certificate are not eligible for the plan and should plan to graduate in four years.

What if the major I want isn't available?

Iowa Degree in Three is a new option offering majors best suited to the program's accelerated approach. Additional majors may be added over time, but some simply can't be completed in three years.

Nearly all first-year UI undergraduates are eligible for Iowa's Four-Year Graduation Plan. Students in qualifying majors (all but nine fields) are automatically enrolled in the plan and guaranteed to graduate on time if they remain on track with the plan's requirements.

Iowa Degree in Three builds on the success of Iowa's Four-Year Graduation Plan, but doesn't replace it. The four-year option remains a great fit for most students.