

UC Santa Cruz Three Year Pathways

Purpose:

The development of three year pathways is a system-wide initiative designed to offer an accelerated option to students who hope to graduate early. Our goal is to have 5% of students system-wide pursuing these pathways by summer 2017. Developing three year pathways will give our students another option, and may support campus time-to-degree goals.

Participating Majors:

- Anthropology
- Art
- Business Management Economics
- Economics
- Environmental Studies
- Film and Digital Media
- History
- Legal Studies
- Literature
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology

Process:

1. Student meets with major adviser to develop academic plan using the campus academic planning form.
2. When student develops a realistic plan, major adviser will enter "Student Group" for their 3-year pathway in the student's record, for both verification and reporting purposes.
3. Student should verify all non-major requirements with college adviser.

Outreach:

- Workshops will be held each quarter, focusing not on developing an academic plan but helping students decide if a three year pathway is a good fit for them. Students will then be referred to their major adviser to develop a plan.
- Targeted email outreach prior to each workshop will go to first year students who appear to be best positioned to pursue these plans.
- Advisers for participating majors should mention this option during Summer Orientation.

- Information and sample plans are at <http://advising.ucsc.edu/success/3-year-pathways/index.html>.

Adviser FAQs:

Q: Can a student in a non-participating major develop a three year plan?

A: Sure! If it's realistic to complete the degree in three years, you can work with a student to develop a plan.

Q: What should advisers be taking into account when developing an accelerated plan with a student?

A: Major advisers will need to be sure the plan includes all requirements, not just major requirements. There are many majors on campus whose curriculum can be completed in three years – but adding in credit and GE requirements makes it more of a challenge. After developing the plan, the student should meet with their college adviser to ensure all requirements outside the major are met. Advisers will also want to be sure that the plan they develop is realistic for the student. Beginning upper-division courses too early, or taking too many upper division courses in one quarter, are not likely to lead to success.

Q: Can my major develop a three year pathway?

A: Absolutely. Contact Stacey Sketo-Rosener at ssketo@ucsc.edu if you'd like to develop a plan and participate.

Q: What happens if the student doesn't graduate in three years?

A: That's OK. We are not requiring anyone to graduate in three years, we are just helping them identify a plan to do so if that's their goal. A student pursuing one of these plans will likely make timely degree progress, even if they don't finish all requirements in three years.

What we're sharing with students on our website:

Some of the most popular majors at UC Santa Cruz have developed pathways that allow a student to complete requirements in three years. Although a three year pathway is not for everyone, some students find it's a perfect fit for them.

Three year pathways are most appropriate if you:

- plan a single major, and don't change your major,

- satisfy the Entry-Level Writing Requirement by the end of your first term, and
- are committed to enrolling in Summer Session after your first and second years.

Students with transfer credit from AP exams or college classes taken while in high school are particularly well positioned to pursue an accelerated plan.

What should I expect from a three year pathway?

The primary benefit of completing a degree in three years is financial – by paying tuition, fees, and housing costs for fewer quarters, the cost of earning your degree will be less. And by graduating early and getting a head start on graduate school or your career, you can maximize your lifetime earnings.

A challenge of an accelerated degree pathway is that you'll have to make some important decisions earlier than your classmates. To stay on track, you'll need to choose and qualify for a major earlier, and you'll need to commit to the three year pathway in your first year. Since most students who pursue an accelerated pathway will have to enroll in Summer Session every year, it may mean there are fewer opportunities for summer work or internships.

It's important to weigh the benefits and challenges involved in an accelerated plan. Your academic advisers can help you decide whether a three year pathway is best for you.

Are there other accelerated programs at UC Santa Cruz?

For students interested in law, the 3+3 B.A./ J.D. Program provides students an opportunity to complete three years at UC Santa Cruz, and then three years at UC Hastings College of the Law. At the conclusion of the program, students earn both a B.A. and J.D. degree. See more information here.

How can I explore what a three year pathway would look like for me?

Sample plans for many of our most popular majors are posted to the left – but your plan may look a bit different! Contact your major/program adviser to devise a plan that takes into account your AP, IB, and transfer credit, interests, and career goals.