# Academic Program Policies and Regulations

## Course Numbering and Course Credits

Lower-division courses are numbered 1 through 99, and upper-division courses are numbered 100 through 199. In the College of Arts and Sciences and the Leavey School of Business, most lower-division courses carry 4 units of academic credit and most upper-division courses carry 5 units of academic credit. In the School of Engineering, unit values for courses vary according to the number of hours in class per week.

## Credit Unit Policy

Academic work at Santa Clara University is measured by credit unit. A unit of credit represents that amount of time and effort both within and outside of formal settings that a student devotes to a particular class. At the undergraduate level, one unit of credit represents approximately three hours of work per week per term by the student, including time engaged in class and time committed to class preparation, studying, and assigned projects.

A unit of credit for laboratory courses, independent study, internships, practica, and study abroad is awarded on the same basis as for a lecture course: One unit of credit represents approximately three hours of work per week per term by the student.

At the graduate level, course credit is determined by the college or school and is consistent with practices in the disciplines.

## Change of Academic Major

A change of major within the same school or college requires the approval of the relevant department chair or program director. Students wishing to change their academic major within a school must submit the online Program Petition form.

## Change of School

Entering first-year students are admitted to the University and to a specific school based on the preference indicated on their admission application. Students wishing to change schools within the University may not apply for such a change until the end of their first year of attendance.

Changes between schools may be limited by the availability of space within the school and the specific academic major. Students wishing to change schools must meet the admittance criteria of the school and complete the application process specified by that school. Upon acceptance by the school, the student must submit a completed Program Petition form to the Enrollment Services Center.

## Repetition of Courses

Students may only repeat a course in which they have received a grade of less than “C-.” In such cases, the grades of both the original and the repeated course are included in the calculation of the student’s grade point average, but units are awarded toward graduation only once for each course passed. Certain courses, such as special topics courses and performance courses, are repeatable, and students will receive a grade and units for each successful completion. Students should consult the chair of the department in which the course is offered to confirm that a given course may be repeated for credit.

## Independent Study

Students may pursue independent study through directed reading, directed research, internships, practica, or cooperative education. To qualify, a student must have demonstrated a sufficient knowledge of the academic discipline involved to make independent study both possible and beneficial. No more than 20 units of independent study may be used to satisfy graduation requirements, and no more than 5 units of independent study may be taken per term. Students must enroll for the term in which the independent study occurs and complete the online Undergraduate Petition for Independent Study.

Directed reading and directed research are limited to upper-division students who undertake a research project or other well-defined study beyond the scope of a regular course under the supervision of a faculty member. Such work should be comparable to that required for courses of equivalent unit value.

Students can obtain practical learning experience through internships, cooperative education, and practica. Internships and cooperative education are approved work experiences in a non-classroom environment in industry, government, or other setting, generally available only to upper-division students. Students who enroll in an internship or cooperative education experience for academic credit must fulfill specified academic requirements in addition to the responsibilities expected by the organization hosting the internship or cooperative education experience. Practica provide practical experience in a discipline-specific field experience or an approved University program activity, such as participation on the school newspaper staff. Practica are generally available only to upper-division students, but some practicum experiences are available to lower-division students who meet specified eligibility criteria.

Students wishing to enroll in an independent study course must initiate the request for independent study with the appropriate faculty member, or with the Career Center for cooperative education experiences. The appropriate form, with the required materials and other approvals, must be submitted to the Drahmann Center for final approval prior to registering for the course.

## Challenging Courses

In rare circumstances, students may petition to challenge a course by examination in order to fulfill a course prerequisite or degree requirement. Since most courses at Santa Clara University require laboratory, studio, discussion, and/or group work, which cannot be evaluated by examination, approval to challenge courses will be unusual.

Departments have full discretion to determine which of their courses, if any, may be challenged. To challenge a course, a student must demonstrate mastery of the course content and learning objectives, as well as any additional requirements specified by the department that offers the course being challenged. A successful challenge neither earns units toward graduation nor contributes to the fulfillment of residency requirements.

In order to be eligible to challenge a course, a student must have completed at least one term at Santa Clara, have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.3, and receive permission from the course instructor and the chair of the department in which the course is offered. Only currently enrolled students are eligible to challenge a course. Students may not attempt to challenge a particular course more than once.

Students wishing to challenge a course must complete a Course Challenge Petition (available from the Office of the Registrar), which provides evidence of circumstances justifying the challenge, and submit the form to the chair of the department in which the course is offered. If approved, the department chair arranges the examination after the student files the Course Challenge Petition with the Office of the Registrar and pays the applicable fee. The examination will be administered and evaluated by the department that offers the course. If successful, the department chair will notify the Registrar that the requirement has been fulfilled.

## Undergraduate Class Attendance Policy

Students are responsible for completing all course requirements as set forth by the instructor. Class attendance expectations and consequences for absences from class are left to the discretion of individual instructors subject to restrictions imposed by law, including, but not limited to, policies associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA) and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) (see below). The instructor’s policies will be communicated clearly in writing. Students are accountable for all course assignments, whether or not the assignments were announced during an absence, and for meeting assigned deadlines, even when the deadline falls on the day a student is absent from class. For details on grading, see the Grading Policies and Regulations section in this chapter.

In certain situations involving unavoidable absence, students may be offered the opportunity to make up a missed assignment/activity or to complete an alternative assignment, unless the design of the course offers no opportunity for in-class work to be made up. These include both foreseen and unforeseen documented and verified situations such as:

* Serious personal illness
* Death of immediate family member
* Participation in significant religious observances
* Participation in events or activities as official representatives of Santa Clara University

In cases of unforeseen, unavoidable absence, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Under certain circumstances, the Cowell Center or the Office of Student Life may contact the instructor on behalf of the student.

In cases of foreseen absence due to significant religious observances or official representation of the University in events, students should discuss the conflict with the instructor well in advance of the absence in order to determine possible alternate arrangements. Class attendance expectations and consequences for absence are left to the discretion of individual instructors. Instructors may require documentation from the appropriate University personnel regarding the reason for the intended absence.

## Title IX: Pregnant and Parenting Students

Santa Clara University is committed to maintaining an equitable learning environment and supporting the academic success of pregnant and parenting students. The University prohibits discrimination based on parental status, pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from related conditions in all of its educational programs and activities pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Students may request an accommodation for pregnancy-related conditions or parenting responsibilities by contacting the University’s Director of Equal Opportunity and Title IX Coordinator, Loyola Hall, Suite 140, 425 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95050, [bguthrie@scu.edu](mailto:bguthrie@scu.edu), (408) 554-3043, [www.scu.edu/title-ix](http://www.scu.edu/title-ix).

## Final Examinations

A final examination, if given in a course, must be given on the date and time scheduled by the Office of the Registrar. If the final examination is a take-home examination, it may not be due before the scheduled final examination time or any later than the last day of the examination period. Similarly, other end-of-quarter assignments (papers, projects, for example) may not be due any later than the last day of the examination period. Exceptions to this policy require approval of the department chair and the relevant academic dean.