

EXPLORATORY STUDIES

The Program in Exploratory Studies (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/>) is an independent program under the Dean and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, serving first-year and transfer students who want to explore the many offerings at CU Boulder before deciding on a specific academic path. In addition, students who apply to a competitive-admission college or school may be offered admission to the program in exploratory studies, where they will work with advisors either to pursue that initial area of interest or identify related and complementary options on campus.

Students in the program eventually transfer to one of the seven degree-granting colleges, schools and programs on the Boulder campus. Advisors and coaches in the University Exploration & Advising Center (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/advising/>) work with students to develop academic pathways and explore related career options for more than 70 majors.

Admissions Requirements

Incoming First-Year and Transfer Applicants

Students applying to CU Boulder who are interested in exploring all academic options available on campus can select the program in exploratory studies as part of their application process.

Current Students and Intra-University Transfer

Current CU Boulder students interested in exploratory studies can join the program through the Intra-University Transfer (p. 2) (IUT) process.

Guaranteed Admission

Undergraduate students enrolled on the Boulder campus with fewer than 30 credit-hours earned and who are in good academic standing may apply to transfer to the program in exploratory studies. Good academic standing includes students in their first semester on campus who have not yet earned a CU Boulder GPA and students who have completed at least one semester on campus and have earned a cumulative GPA of 2.000 or higher. Students who are ineligible for an IUT into Exploratory Studies are encouraged to attend select PES drop-in advising hours (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/>) for an exploratory conversation to discuss campus majors, minors and certificates.

Policies and Guidelines

Several policies and guidelines are of particular importance to students in the Program in Exploratory Studies. For details, visit the program's academic policies webpage (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/policies-and-forms/>).

Intra-University Transfer

Exploratory studies students work closely with academic advisors throughout their first two to four semesters to establish a degree plan and move into a degree-granting program. This is accomplished through the Intra-University Transfer (p. 2) (IUT) process and generally takes place after the second or third semester. Requirements vary by college/school.

Recognition of Academic Achievement

Students in the program in exploratory studies are part of the intellectual community on the Boulder campus. The program holds academic rigor and quality in the highest esteem and encourages students to be curious

and ambitious. In recognition of high academic achievement, the Dean grants scholarly honors each term.

Students achieving a grade point average of 3.600 or higher in any given term are recognized by a letter from the Dean and receive a notation on their transcript. Honors are based on at least 12 credit-hours of coursework completed for a letter grade at CU Boulder. Once in a degree-granting program, students from the Program in Exploratory Studies are encouraged to pursue honors that are recognized by each college at commencement.

Credit Limitations and Guidelines

Declaration of Major

Exploratory studies students in good standing must IUT to a degree-granting program once they have completed four semesters of coursework. Students who have not met the requirements to IUT to a competitive program will work closely with advisors to identify programs for which they are eligible to apply.

Students who entered exploratory studies with 30 credit-hours or more as transfer students must IUT within three semesters.

Repetition of Courses

If a student takes a course for credit more than once, the course credit hours only count toward graduation once, unless a course description specifically states that it can be taken more than once for credit.

Students may also retake a course for grade replacement (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/credits-grading/#gradereplacementpolicytext>) under the grade replacement policy. When a student retakes a course for grade replacement, the grade earned in the most recent prior attempt will still appear on the transcript, but their cumulative GPA and credit totals on the transcript will only include the grade from the latest attempt.

Consecutive Withdrawals

Students in the program in exploratory studies who withdraw from all of their registered courses two semesters in a row may have a hold placed on their account, prohibiting them from further registration until they meet with their advisor to assess degree progress.

GPA Requirements, Academic Alert, Academic Warning and Scholastic Suspension

Students who fail to meet the minimum cumulative grade point requirement of 2.00 may be permitted to continue their studies on a provisional basis. See the Program in Exploratory Studies policy page or the Academic Standards section (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/academic-records/#academicstandingtext>) of the catalog.

Students on Academic Alert or Academic Warning are encouraged to work with an academic advisor to develop an academic improvement plan.

Academic records of students are evaluated at the end of the probationary semester and students are notified of their academic status (e.g., alert, warning, suspension) through official CU email.

Focus on Exploration

The program in exploratory studies helps students explore their interests across all six colleges and schools on the Boulder campus. In addition to identifying a primary major of interest, exploratory studies encourages

students to explore certificates and minors available on campus in order to create a well-rounded and personalized academic experience.

Pathways within Exploratory Studies

There are two plans of study within Exploratory Studies:

- Exploratory Studies (XXES)
- Pre-Business (PREB)

The pre-business program is by invitation only; students in PREB are advised by the Leeds School of Business.

Degree-Granting Options and Intra-University Transfer

The program in exploratory studies does not confer degrees. Therefore, students must transfer into a degree-granting program at CU Boulder via the Intra-University Transfer (IUT) process, generally after the second or third semester.

For more information, view the Intra-University Transfer (p. 2) tab.

Courses

The Office of Undergraduate Education hosts several academic course offerings that are particularly appropriate for students in exploratory studies:

FYSM 1000 First Year Seminar (3) – Have you ever wondered about the origins of the universe? Or what exactly "fake news" means? Or wanted to write a fairy tale? First-Year Seminars tackle these and many other topics by approaching critical thinking and academic curriculum on a completely new level. We asked our inventive professors to develop courses that focus on unusual and thought-provoking topics (e.g., political dialogue, toxic chemicals, morality, and Batman), and then to structure the topics to meet our rigorous academic standards. The First-Year Seminar courses are small, interactive classes that are a great way to explore intriguing topics and establish connections with a faculty member and other students who share similar interests. Most First-Year Seminars are offered in the fall semester with several topics from which to choose.

FYXP 1000 Academic Exploration & Critical Decision Making (1) – Taught by advisors in the University Exploration & Advising Center (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/advising-coaching/>), the Academic Exploration Seminar is a one-credit course designed for first-year students in the Program in Exploratory Studies. Students will work through the major exploration process in a guided and intentional way and be introduced to a variety of college success strategies as they critically evaluate their strengths, interests, and goals. Students can expect to leave the course well-equipped to declare a major of interest in a timely fashion and to make a plan for supplementing their degree with opportunities for education abroad, undergraduate research or other co-curricular experiences that best match their interests, skills and abilities.

FYXP 1100 Academic Success Seminar (1) – The Academic Success Seminar is a one-credit course designed for students in the Program in Exploratory Studies and is taught by highly experienced academic advisors in the University Exploration & Advising Center (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/advising-coaching/>). In this seminar, students develop the skills needed to succeed in college. The class focuses on developing learning strategies, improving executive functioning (time management, organization, self-monitoring, etc.), and setting SMART goals. Students will identify their strengths and

participate in peer-to-peer interaction to foster collaboration and positive outcomes.

FYXP 1500 First Year Success Seminar (1) - The First Year Success Seminar is designed to assist first-year students with their successful transition to the University of Colorado Boulder. This course is required of all new first-year students and provides a supportive environment for new students to engage with peers, staff, and faculty to support the first eight weeks of the transition to college.

FYXP 2200 Design Thinking Seminar (1) - The Design Thinking Seminar introduces students to the principles of the design thinking framework and its application toward solution development and personal brand building. This course is required of all students participating in the Design Your Path Living Learning Community (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/academic-enrichment-programs/undergraduate-residential-programs/#livingandlearningcommunitiestext>) and provides a shared space for students to develop tools to craft their own path at CU and beyond.

FYXP 3000 Transfer Success Seminar (1) - The Transfer Success Seminar is designed to assist first-semester transfer students with their transition to the University of Colorado Boulder. Students learn about various campus and academic resources applicable to an upper-division student; evaluate their skills, interests, strengths and education as they relate to overall career goals; and establish an encouraging transfer student community.

General Education Requirements

Each college/school on the Boulder campus has a different set of general education requirements. Students in exploratory studies run degree audits (<https://www.colorado.edu/registrar/students/degree-planning/audit/run/>) by clicking on the "Select a Different Program" option and then running an audit from the degree program they select. Students with interests that span multiple colleges work closely with advisors in the University Exploration & Advising Center (<https://www.colorado.edu/exploratorystudies/advising-coaching/>) to select courses that meet requirements for multiple degree pathways.

Intra-University Transfer

Moving from the program in exploratory studies into one of the six degree-granting programs at CU Boulder generally requires completion of specific prerequisite coursework, attainment of a specific GPA and submission of IUT requirements (varies by college/school).

For more information about the IUT process, view the Intra-University Transfer (<https://www.colorado.edu/office-undergraduate-education/intra-university-transfer/>) webpage.

To filter through all of the majors, minors and certificates offered at CU Boulder, see the undergraduate Programs A-Z (https://catalog.colorado.edu/programs-a-z/#filter=filter_19&filter_20&filter_21) section, or search by the related college/school sections of the catalog:

- College of Arts & Sciences (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/policies-requirements/#creditandenrollmenttext>): includes majors in the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities.
- Leeds School of Business (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/business/policies-requirements/>)

#creditandenrollmenttext): includes areas of emphasis in accounting, finance, management and marketing.

- School of Education (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/education/policies-requirements/>): includes majors in elementary education or leadership & community engagement as well as teacher licensure at all levels.
- College of Engineering & Applied Science (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/engineering-applied-science/policies-requirements/>): includes majors in various engineering fields, computer science, creative technology and design, and applied sciences.
- College of Communication, Media, Design and Information (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/media-communication-information/>): includes majors in advertising, PR and media design, communication, critical media practices, information science, intermedia art, writing & performance, journalism and media studies.
- College of Music (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/music/policies-requirements/> #creditandenrollmenttext): includes majors in various areas of music education and performance.