

Specialization - Frequently Asked Questions

Section I. Definition

What is Specialization? Specialization consist of 24 quarter credits of primarily upper division coursework related to your career interest.

What is FW 307 Specialization Development? FW 307 is a required, one-credit course in which you identify courses related to your career interest. Specialization courses are approved by either your faculty (Corvallis Campus) or academic (Ecampus) advisor. At the end of the FW307, the courses are incorporated into your degree program and visible as a block of courses in the MyDegrees Checklist titled, "Student Program of Study".

When should I take FW 307 Specialization Development? After you have successfully completed FW 209 Career Skills in Fisheries and Wildlife, and around the time you take BI 370 Ecology and Statistics (ST 351/352). You must successfully complete the general biology series with a C- or better before taking FW 307 Specialization Development.

I planned ahead and know what courses I want for my specialization. Can I submit these prior to taking to FW 307? Although it's always a good idea to discuss potential courses and career options with your advisor, there is a process for drafting and getting approval for your proposal and specialization in FW 307, so you may not submit your specialization prior to the class.

Is the 24-credit Specialization part of the credits required for the Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences degree program? Yes, whether you are a first degree student or a post baccalaureate student, the 24 credits are already part of your degree program – the courses that encompass these credits will be chosen by you in FW 307. It is important to note that the list of specialization courses will not be visible in your MyDegrees Checklist until the end of the term you take FW 307.

Section II. Topics

What are some examples of past specializations? General themes include: Fish Conservation and Management, Marine Ecology, Wildlife Conservation and Management, Law Enforcement/Park Ranger, Habitat Restoration/Conservation Ecology, and Animal Care/Rehabilitation. Specific examples of specialization topics and relevant courses are provided in FW 307.

I have many interests and don't want to focus on one area of study for my specialization. Do I need to specialize in one area? No. The courses you add to your specialization can be broad or specific in their scope. There are no prescribed courses and every student has a unique specialization.

What if I am not sure what my career interest is when I enroll in FW 307? That's ok! You may or may not have an idea of what your career interest is when you take this course. FW 307 will give you an opportunity to explore different careers and develop your interest, but it is not necessary to know exactly what you want to do.

Section III. Applicable Courses

What kind of courses can I put in my specialization? Generally speaking, upper division (300-400 level) courses related to your career goals or interest. You are also allowed up to four (4) lower division credits in specialization. Many students take Animal Sciences (ANS), Forest Ecosystems and Society (FES), Biology (BI), or Geography (GEOG) classes for Specialization. Courses with S/U alternative grading cannot be used in Specialization.

Can I apply courses from other FW degree requirements to my specialization? Specialization courses CANNOT appear anywhere else in your degree program.

Can I include my Writing Intensive Course (WIC) in my specialization? Your WIC can be included in your specialization as long as it is NOT being used to satisfy another degree requirement, such as an "Advanced Core" or "Human Dimensions" requirement.

Can I put transfer coursework in my specialization? If you are a first degree student, one upper division (300-400 level) course and up to four (4) lower division transfer credits may be used, as long as they are relevant to career interests and approved by your advisor. If you are a post baccalaureate student you may use up to 12 credits from your previous degree in Specialization, as long as they are related to your career interest, and with advisor approval.

Can coursework from a minor, double degree, or certificate program be added to my specialization? First degree students may use a maximum of 12 credits that are also being used to fulfill requirements toward a minor, (double) major, or certificate. However, rules established by the department offering the minor/(double) major/certificate may supercede this; check with an advisor in the department offering the minor/certificate to find out if "double counting" is allowed).

Can Research, Internship, or Study Abroad credits be included in my specialization? A maximum of 12 credit hours, in any combination, of FW 401 (research), FW 410 (International Internship only), or from a Study Abroad program may be applied to Specialization, with advisor approval. Non-credit bearing experiences (e.g., private field courses) and/or courses not affiliated with university credit are not allowed.

Can graduate courses (500-level) be included in my specialization? Yes, but keep in mind the higher cost per credit when taking graduate courses. There is an important caveat: if graduate level courses are used to meet a degree requirement, they CANNOT be used toward a graduate degree in the future.

Can I include courses in my specialization that were taken prior to taking FW307 Specialization Development? Yes, but you need to get pre-approval from your advisor before you enroll in the courses. You may take up to two courses, prior to completing FW 307. A note visible at the bottom of your MyDegrees from your advisor should indicate the courses you plan to use for Specialization.

Section IV. Approval process

What is the process for getting my specialization courses approved? In FW 307, you will write a 1-2 page proposal for your specialization and a list of courses totaling a minimum of 24 credits. You will also note the term you plan to take the courses. These will be reviewed by the instructor and advisor. Once approved, there is a process for entering course in our MyDegrees Checklist.

Where does Specialization appear in the MyDegrees Checklist? Prior to taking FW 307, Specialization is indicated above the Baccalaureate Core section, with the words, "Specialization (24 credits)".

<input type="checkbox"/> Specialization (24 credits)	Still Needed:
Click here for more information on specializations.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Baccalaureate Core	

At the end of FW 307, courses are entered by the student into the MyDegrees Checklist as a new plan, and then uploaded by your advisor as a separate block titled "Study Program of Study" above the "Baccalaureate Core" section. Specific instructions for this process are provided in FW 307. Once uploaded, specialization courses are degree requirements, and courses in the newly created block must be successfully completed in order to graduate.

<input type="checkbox"/> Student Program of Study		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT	TRAL 352	WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AVIAN CONSERVATION & MANAGEMEN	FW 451	AVIAN CONSERVATION & MANAGEMEN
<input type="checkbox"/> *SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT	Still Needed: 4 Credits in SUS 304 ±	
<input type="checkbox"/> MGMT FOR MULTIPLE RESOURCE VAL	Still Needed: 3 Credits in FES 355	
<input type="checkbox"/> ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION	Still Needed: 4 Credits in FES 445 ±	
<input type="checkbox"/> *ENVIRON LAW, POLICY & ECON	Still Needed: 4 Credits in AEC 253	
<input type="checkbox"/> WATERSHED PROCESSES	Still Needed: 4 Credits in FE 430	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Baccalaureate Core		

NOTE: In the example above, FW 451 CANNOT also be used to meet a degree requirement under "Advanced Core- Species Conservation and Management". Another course must be selected to meet the course requirement for that category under Advanced Core.

Updated August 27, 2020

Can I make changes to my specialization after completing the course? Minor changes (1-2 course changes) can be made by emailing the request to your advisor. If a course you picked for your specialization is no longer offered, or it is not feasible for you to take it anymore, those changes can also be made. Major changes require resubmission of your proposal and specialization.

Will Specialization appear on my transcript as a separate block or category? – No, specialization courses will appear on your official transcript as electives, they will NOT appear with a title or as a block of courses as they appear in your MyDegrees Checklist.