

## **Frequently Asked Questions regarding the DegreeWorks Planner**

### **Why should I use the Planner?**

You can use the Planner to create a long-term plan for degree completion, and then to check that plan to make sure that the courses you plan to take will fulfill your degree requirements. This will help you stay on track for graduation.

By using the Planner to complete a degree plan online, you will also help the University track what courses our students need to take, and when they plan to take them. Department chairs and other administrators will be able to use this information when we plan course schedules for upcoming semesters.

### **How do I get started?**

Go to <http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/degreeworks.htm> and review the Planner tutorial. Then log in to myCats, click the DegreeWorks link, and begin.

### **Do I put courses that I've already completed on the Planner?**

No. The Planner is only intended for future classes, not classes which you've completed or in which you're currently enrolled.

### **Do I have to account for every one of my requirements in my plan?**

No. You can use the Planner to map out as much or as little of your degree plan as you'd like.

### **I'm already a junior. Is it too late for me to use the Planner?**

Absolutely not. You can start using the Planner at anytime. It doesn't matter if you're a freshman planning your next four years of study, or a senior with one semester left. The features of the Planner will still help you ensure that you've identified all of the courses you need to complete for your degree.

### **I'm undeclared. Do I have to wait to use the Planner until I've picked a major?**

No. You can use it now to map out your core requirements, and make sure that you are on track for completing them during your first two years. If you are already fairly confident about what you'd like to major in, you can use the what-if option in the Planner to map out an initial plan for completing that major. See the online tutorial available at <http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/degreeworks.htm> for specific instructions.

### **Will the Planner confirm that a certain course is going to be offered in an upcoming semester?**

Not at this time. However, you can be confident that core courses that fulfill each area of the core (A-E) will be offered every fall and spring. Core courses from most core areas are also offered every

summer. For courses in your major, you should discuss your planned courses with your advisor. He or she will remain your best source of information regarding course offerings sequencing in your major. Some department offices also maintain a list of courses that will be offered in future semesters.

**If I put a course on my Planner, does that guarantee that this course will be offered?**

No. In the future, we will use this information to help us plan each semester's course schedule, but listing a course on your plan will not guarantee that it will be offered.

**If a course has prerequisites, will the Planner notify me if I place it in my plan out of sequence?**

No. You will want to review your plan with your advisor to ensure that you have courses in the proper sequence. You can also review the course descriptions in the catalog for prerequisite information for each of your courses.

You can access catalog course descriptions in one of two ways. You can click the link for any needed courses that are listed in your DegreeWorks worksheet, and a new window will open with course descriptions that fulfill that requirement. You can also go to <http://catalogs.gcsu.edu>, select the newest catalog, and choose Undergraduate Course Descriptions from the menu on the left-hand side of the screen.

**I'm planning to take a course at another institution this summer. Should I put it on my planner?**

No. Because we will use the data you enter on the Planner to help plan future course offerings on our campus, you should only list the courses you intend to take at Georgia College.

If you'd like to include a course that you will take at another institution, you can include the course as long as you place a dash (-) in front of the course prefix and number (*e.g.*, -HIST 2112). You can also include a note in the notes section about where you plan to take the course. Please note that this course will not show up when you process a new worksheet with your planned courses.

Please also remember that if you plan to complete a course at another institution, you must have approval to be a transient student. Adding a course to your plan does not constitute approval to transfer a course from another institution.

**I'm considering changing my major, and I'd like to make a plan to see if it would be possible. Can I complete a plan for a major that I'm not currently completing?**

Yes, you can. Use the instructions provided for undeclared majors in our Planner tutorial, which is available at <http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/degreeworks.htm>. This will allow you to view and use all of the courses for your intended major in your plan.

**For one of my requirements, I can take any 3000-4000 level course in a certain area. The Planner won't allow me to enter this in the course fields. What do I do?**

The Planner won't allow you to enter a range, such as POLS 3000-4999. You'll need to look in the catalog for courses that fulfill that requirement, and pick the options that you'd most like to complete. Then enter those specific courses on your planner. Include a note that you might have to take an alternate course if that particular section is not offered.

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**Some of my requirements have many options, and I'm not sure which one I want to take. What should I do?**

Pick the course in which you most likely will enroll. You can include a note in the notes section that states that you might take another course instead.

**I entered that I'm going to take HIST 2111 (or 2112), but the Planner still says that I won't complete my US and Georgia History. What should I do?**

These requirements are not cleared until you satisfactorily complete the course. You won't be able to mark these requirements as planned using the Planner. However, you can include a note in the notes section of your planner that you intend to fulfill these requirements by using this particular course.

**I want to take a Topics class offered in my major (usually numbered 4950). I entered it on my plan, but it's not being applied to the requirement for which I intend to use this course. What's wrong?**

Topics courses require special coding each semester that they're offered so DegreeWorks knows how to use them. We don't have a way to enter this coding through the Planner. If you're in this situation, we recommend that you place the course on your plan, and include a note about the area in which you intend to use it. Review this information with your advisor during your next meeting.

**I plan to take an internship for 12 hours, but DegreeWorks is only giving me credit for one hour when I check my plan.**

This happens because internships, along with some special topics courses, are offered for variable credit. Variable credit means that the number of hours as course can be listed as varies from semester to semester, or from section to section. When a course that falls into this category is included in the Planner, DegreeWorks will always assign the lowest possible value to this course. We've submitted a request for this to be changed in upcoming editions of the product.

**I need to take more electives to have the total number of hours required for graduation. How do I list these?**

You can do one of two things. You can identify courses in the catalog that you'd most like to complete, and then enter those on your planner. You can also include a note for each semester that

you need to complete an elective that reminds you of this need. The latter option won't show on your worksheet, but it will help you remember to register in the courses you need.

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**I'm currently a pre-major. How can I use the Planner to create a four-year plan if I can't see all the courses I have to take?**

Use the instructions provided specifically for pre-majors in our tutorial, which is available at <http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/degreetools.htm>. This will allow you to view and use all of the courses for your intended major in your plan, not just the courses you will take as a pre-major.

**Who has access to the plans I create through the Planner?**

Your advisor, as well as faculty members and administrators who have access to DegreeWorks, will be able to access your plans.

**Will my advisor make my plan for me?**

No. In most cases, students will make plans and share them with their advisors. Your advisor will be a resource for you if you have questions, and you will want to ask your advisor to review any plan you create.

**How can I share my plan with my advisor to make sure that it's correct?**

Your advisor can log in to DegreeWorks and review your plan online. You can also print your plan by using the print link in the upper-right hand corner of the planner and take a copy of your plan to your advising appointment.

**Can I make more than one plan?**

Yes, but you can only mark one plan as active.

Because the University will gather information from these plans to help us with course scheduling, we want to be sure that we do not gather multiple sets of data from the same person. Therefore, if you create more than one plan, please check the active button for the plan that best describes your degree completion plans.

**What can I enter in the Notes section?**

There are two places for notes in the Planner. You have an option to add notes to each semester's entry when you are using the Notes view. You might want to use this predominately for notes about specific courses or requirements you need to complete during that semester. You also have

an option to add notes to your plan in the Planner Notes section at the bottom of your plan. You might want to use this to list questions you have for your advisor, or overall notes about your plan.

### **How often should I update my Planner?**

At a minimum, you should review and update your planner every semester before you meet with your advisor. You should also update your plan when you drop a course, receive an unsatisfactory grade in a course, or make any other changes that affect your degree progress.

Once a semester ends and your grades are placed on your records, you'll no longer be able to update information for that term. The information for that term will appear at the bottom of your plan as completed coursework.

### **When I view my worksheet on the Worksheet Tab, my planned courses are no longer listed.**

That's supposed to happen. Your worksheet shows you the courses you have already completed or are registered in. Your planned courses will only appear when you are in the Planner section of DegreeWorks, after you have generated a worksheet using the "Process New" button.

### **How can I learn how to use the Planner more effectively?**

First, review the online tutorial, which is available at <http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/degreeworks.htm>. It will get you started on Planner basics.

The Registrar's Office will also host a series of workshops for students prior to registration each term, which will focus on providing a hands-on overview of the Planner and answer any questions students have. The dates for these workshops will be emailed to currently enrolled students, posted on our website, and posted to our Facebook group.

### **What should I do if I have suggestions for improving this feature?**

Send an email to [degreeworks@gcsu.edu](mailto:degreeworks@gcsu.edu), or contact the Registrar's Office at 478-445-6286. Whenever you have a suggestion about how we can improve DegreeWorks or any of our services, we want to hear it.