- CSUSB ART & DESIGN –

10 Tips for Academic Advising & Choosing Courses

*Here are **10 handy tips for choosing the right courses** to complete your degree:*

1. Check out the Roadmap for your degree program - These can be found on our department website, here:
https://www.csusb.edu/art/ba-bfa/ba-road-maps

2. Get to Know Your PAWS Report - Here is a handy video on how to read and navigate your PAWS Report:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rcm7e0ULh50

3. Follow the Course Numbering System - Typically, it should be possible for you to take 1000-courses first (mostly for Freshers), then 2000-level courses, then 3000-level, and so on. Leave any 5000-level courses until your final year or final semester. Sometimes this doesn't work out, but try as best you can to stick to the progression of courses. If you need help reach out to an advisor (see below).

4. Understand Course Prerequisites - Many upper-division courses (3000-, 4000-, or 5000-level) have prerequisites. You can learn what these are here:
https://bulletin.csusb.edu/colleges-schools-departments/arts-letters/art/#courseinventory
[NB. this is a very long list of all our courses, so make sure to scroll down to the end]

5. Spread out your GE courses - *DON'T* do all your GE courses first, leaving all your major courses to the end. *Instead*, consider spreading out your GE courses across all 4 years of your time at CSUSB (see Roadmaps above). GE requirements have lots of course options and these courses are offered every semester. That is not true of major courses. For example, some courses, like ART 3700 Public Art, are offered very rarely. Others are offered every other semester, etc. So, make sure to have a few GE courses still to do in your final senior year in case the major courses you need aren't offered in either Fall or Spring of your senior year.

6. Design Courses have a code! Our "DES" (design) courses have a code embedded into the course numbering. Please note that any DES course ending in a '0' is typically offered in the Fall semester, and any DES course ending in a '5' is typically offered in Spring. Try to plan accordingly.

7. Transfer Students - If you transferred in from a junior college, you will have taken some courses that should be applicable for lower-division requirements in your CSUSB PAWS report for your major. You need to check the UNUSED ELECTIVES area of your PAWS, in case these have automatically been placed there instead of in the correct place to fulfill requirements in your major. Feel free to contact an advisor (see below) to check that all your transfer courses have articulated properly. This will help you avoid taking lower-division courses (1000- and 2000-level) you may not need.

8. Course Substitutions / EFAs / Unused Electives -
a) Before choosing the courses for your next semester please check the UNUSED ELECTIVES area of your PAWS in case some courses you have taken ended up there instead of being placed correctly to fulfill requirements in your major. If they have, then pleased reach out to an advisor (see below) who can help do EFAs/Course Substitutions.

b) EFAs are 'Exceptions from the Audit' (i.e. course substitutions) and these do what is described above, but also EFAs can help you if you want to take a course that isn't listed on your PAWS. If you see a course on the schedule that really interests you, and broadly fits within the remit of your program, then you can ask an advisor to make it count in your PAWS. So, don't let the PAWS totally dictate what courses you want to take in your major or minor, but you will need to seek advice and ask permission to request EFAs/Course Substitutions. (NB. This only applies to courses in your art, design, art history, or visual studies major or minor - NOT for GE; GE is fixed). In other words don't just enroll in random courses unless you have sought advice and got permission for them to apply to fulfill requirements in your major or minor!

9. Build a MyCAP (or two, or three ...) - Here's how to use the MyCAP planner in your PAWS report (it's a really useful planning tool):
https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/soar%20book%2001-2019-2.pdf

10. Check out this page on the Department of Art & Design Website - It has everything you need - links to *permissions requests, forms, process guides, "How To ..." guides*, etc.: https://www.csusb.edu/art/student-resources

And finally, IF IN DOUBT, REACH OUT!!!

We're here to help. You can find contact details for full-time faculty advisors here:
https://www.csusb.edu/art/our-team

and, the CSUSB Advising Center here:
https://www.csusb.edu/advising