Degree Planner Introduction

THE DEGREE PLANNER ADVISING TOOL

Degree Planner is an interactive online tool that is built into MySSU (PeopleSoft) and is designed to help students map out their personal degree plan. Degree Planner provides students with the opportunity to be proactive in their long term course planning. This results in a more engaging experience for students by providing a visual presentation of their long-term academic goals; tools for comprehensive planning; intuitive drag and drop course planning options; and integration with other E-Advising tools.

- Clearly Presents Academic Goals
Degree Planner displays progress towards completion of the student’s academic goals in a variety of ways. Requirements for majors, minors, and general education are drawn from a student’s ARR in real time and are displayed in a recommended sequence. Students can customize their recommendation by increasing or decreasing the number of units they plan to take in a semester or during intersession. When the number of units planned is altered or intersession terms added, the recommendations will be updated to provide the student with a new customized plan.

- Actively Responds to Course Selection
Degree Planner allows for the selection of courses to meet individual requirements where a range of courses are available, such as electives or general education.

Interactive filters allow students and advisors to select courses that best fit their degree requirements. As courses are selected or planned, the filters for courses already planned are removed to help avoid duplicating requirements.

- Drag & Drop Course Planning
Degree Planner provides drag and drop use for further customizing the student’s path to degree completion. The drag and drop feature follows prerequisites and “term offered” of courses to ensure a student’s recommended roadmap is achievable.

- Interacts with Existing E-Advising Tools
Degree Planner works with the Academic Requirements Report (ARR) to create a comprehensive academic planning experience. The ARR tells the student what courses they still need to take (red boxes) and Degree Planner displays these remaining requirements and puts them in a suggested order for each semester of the major.

Degree Planner also works with the Seawolf Scheduler so students can move upcoming term’s suggested courses directly to their Schedule. Students import their planned coursework into Seawolf Scheduler and then use the program to find their optimal class schedule.

LIMITATIONS

Degree Planner should not be viewed as a replacement for the Academic Requirements Report (ARR). Some degree requirements cannot be built into a sequence, such as GPA and Residency requirements. Students should continue to view their ARR for a comprehensive view of their progress towards graduation at Sonoma State University. Degree Planner contains a link to the ARR with “planned courses” to help students determine if they are planning appropriately for those requirements that cannot be placed into a Degree Planner sequence.
Meeting with your Advisor early and often will ensure academic success and in reaching your educational goal.

DEGREE PLANNER HISTORY

“Smart Planner” was developed at the University of Arizona (UA) between May 2011 and June 2013. UA provided a Smart Planner demonstration at a Higher Education User Group meeting in 2013. When UA realized the interest the system was generating, they decided to license the technology to other schools, including Boise State University and the California State University system.

Sonoma State University is one of several campuses in the process of adopting the Smart Planner advising tool following the three pilot campuses: California State University, Long Beach and California State University, San Marcos and California State University, Chico who implemented Smart Planner in 2014. Relabeling of program to “Degree Planner” was done by the majority of CSU campuses using this product.