

Six Steps to Majoring in STS

- 1. BACKGROUND RESEARCH:** If you are considering majoring in STS, carefully read the STS section of the current *Stanford Bulletin*. Also, read “STS Frequently Asked Questions and Answers,” available on the STS website at <http://sts.stanford.edu/stsfaq.html> or at the STS Office (370-109).
- 2. DISCUSSION:** Make an appointment with the STS Student Services Specialist, Julie Widman, or the STS Program Director, Professor Robert McGinn, to discuss the STS major; in particular, its rationale, requirements, tracks, pre-approved and self-designed concentrations, the STS honors program, careers pursued by recent STS graduates and open to you with a major in STS, and any questions you might have about STS. You are also encouraged to seek out one or more STS majors to obtain their unique perspectives on the program. The STS Office can help you set up appointments, identify STS majors who are willing to answer questions and offer advice, and direct you to other sources of information.
- 3. PLAN:** Get a copy of the appropriate STS Curriculum Form (“B.A. in STS” or “B.S. in STS”) from the STS website (<http://sts.stanford.edu/major.html>) or at the STS Office to start planning how you might fulfill the requirements for the various components of your major: the STS Core, Technical Literacy, and Thematic Concentration for the B.A., and the STS Core and Technical Depth for the B.S. Examples of Thematic Concentrations, Technical Literacy, and Technical Depth components approved for previous majors are available at the STS Office. If you intend to design your own Thematic Concentration, talk with Professor McGinn about your concentration idea and get his advice and approval *before* taking courses you hope to make part of your Thematic Concentration course package. In order to approve your declaration of STS as a major on Axess, the STS Office requires you to submit a draft of the curriculum form. **NOTE WELL:** Any petition to use a non-approved course to satisfy any requirement of the STS major must be submitted in writing to the STS Office at least two quarters before the quarter in which you intend to graduate and before you take the class. The petition will be kept in your STS major file.
- 4. DECLARATION:** If you decide to declare STS, either the B.A. or the B.S., as your major, you **must** do so on Axess. The STS Office will automatically be notified of and then approve your declaration -- provided you have submitted a draft curriculum form as described in step 3. The Office will also start a major file for you and add you to the STS majors email list.
- 5. ADVISORS:** Identify a faculty member who would be an appropriate source of advice on each of your major components and make an appointment to solicit her/his advice, suggestions, and signature of approval for your plan. Professor McGinn serves as advisor for the STS Core component of most STS majors’ curricula and can suggest faculty members in various departments of the Schools of Humanities and Sciences and Engineering who have offered advice and signed off on past STS majors’ Technical Literacy, Thematic Concentration, and Technical Depth components. **NOTE WELL:** *Do not wait until you are a senior to get your major components approved by knowledgeable faculty members. If you wait too long before doing so, you risk finding yourself in a situation where the individual whom you wish to sign off on your form is on sabbatical or believes your plan lacks an important course that it is now too late to take. Instead, STS encourages you to get all required signatures by the end of winter quarter of your junior year.* While the curriculum plan outlined on the signed form is not set in concrete, subsequent changes must be approved in writing by the appropriate faculty advisor.
- 6. FINAL CURRICULUM FORM:** *By the end of the quarter immediately prior to the quarter you hope to graduate, your final, completely signed STS Major Curriculum Form must be put into your major file at STS. All three (B.A.)/two (B.S.) faculty signatures must have been obtained, and all courses satisfying major requirements must have been successfully completed, except, of course, for those you intend to complete during your final quarter of study. All signatures of approval for your curricular components must be obtained and all courses meeting major requirements must be completed if you are to graduate. (NOTE WELL: STS honors designation must be conferred simultaneously with bestowal of the STS bachelor’s degree.)*