

SAMPLE CLUSTERS

Editor's note: We thank Nancy Ahlander, Curtis Hawkins, Lee Warnick, and Kirk Gifford for outlining the following rationale and the College of Business and Communication for the cluster samples.

While clusters will be determined by students and their advisors, several departments and colleges do offer some guidelines for developing clusters. They have also developed samples to model how and why certain clusters would be effective. The following provide a few sample clusters and a brief rationale for these groupings.

CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES

With the increase in married students at BYU-Idaho, it is important to offer accessible, practical courses that can be included in minors, clusters, and/or electives that work with many programs of study. This rationale is based on Elder Packer's charge that we teach courses in "such subjects as motherhood and fatherhood in such a way as to prepare our students just to be 'good moms and dads.'"

Because Child and Family Studies prepares students for careers related to children and families, students in programs such as Elementary Education and Psychology may use a cluster in this field to supplement their major. However, many students will be interested in this type of cluster to prepare marriage and children. Therefore, the department recommends that cluster selections be guided by the department's three minors. Students can create clusters that reflect their interests by focusing on the minors' descriptive titles: Marriage and Family Studies, Child Studies, and Child & Family Studies. Courses within each minor interrelate; therefore students and advisors should feel comfortable with selecting 12-15 credits within a minor, based on the student's interests. Students may also choose from four one-credit "short courses," which focus on practical application of child and family scholarship. These applied, gospel-based courses are for students who are married or engaged, with or without young children, as well as for those who are studying about families and children in an academic major, minor or cluster.

ACCOUNTING

The following clusters all focus on a particular technical area of expertise added to a base of financial and managerial accounting.

Accounting—Tax

Acct 201	Financial Accounting	3
Acct 202	Managerial Accounting	3
Acct 321	Introduction to Income Taxation	3
Acct 322	Advanced Topics in Taxation	3
	Total	12

Students taking the Tax cluster not only learn current law and practices concerning individual and business entity income taxation but also learn to utilize tax software, to keep abreast of changes in tax law, and to do tax research. Such students are prepared to work with a tax practitioner during the tax season as well as file their own tax returns and those of friends and family.

Accounting—Financial

Acct 201	Financial Accounting	3
Acct 202	Managerial Accounting	3
Acct 301	Intermediate Financial Accounting I	3
Acct 302	Intermediate Financial Accounting II	3
	Total	12

Students taking the Financial Accounting cluster gain expertise in financial reporting and proper disclosure. They experience research software to help them access the reporting standards and keep abreast of changes in reporting requirements. Such students are prepared to be accounting managers for companies.

Accounting—Systems

Acct 201	Financial Accounting	3
Acct 202	Managerial Accounting	3
Acct 333	Accounting Software	3
Acct 356	Accounting Information Systems	3
	Total	12

Students taking the Systems cluster learn how to apply design principles to accounting information systems. The students gain additional expertise in Excel, in the use of functions, and in writing macros utilizing Visual Basic applications. They gain experience working with general ledger packages applicable to smaller businesses such as QuickBooks. They learn about the design of and reporting from event-oriented databases for larger companies.

COMMUNICATION

Communication—Interpersonal

Comm 120 Interpersonal Theory & Practice	3
Comm 101 Public Speaking	2
Comm 102 Oral Presentations	1
Comm 350 Small Group Communication	3

Choose one of the following courses:

Comm 352 Persuasion	3
Comm 356 Diversity Issues in Communication	3
Comm 450 Conflict Management	3

Total	12
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Surveys of work-sector supervisors consistently show that communication is among the most sought and rewarded skills among employees (that's right—good communication encompasses *skill*, not just traits or attributes). An Interpersonal cluster will add a nice human relations dimension to the academic programs of many students. In organizing the cluster, our intention was to provide a grouping of courses to build a broad range of communication skills in a variety of settings and situations.

ECONOMICS

Economics—Managerial

Econ III Economics Principles & Problems - Macro	3
Econ III Economics Principles & Problems - Micro	3
Econ 300 Managerial Economics	3
Math 221 Principles of Statistics	3
B 361 Operations Management	3

Total	15
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This Managerial cluster provides an excellent economics background for someone whose major is outside the field. Specifically, someone in a field such as agricultural business, construction management, or even dentistry or medicine could gain a strong enough background in economics to understand the operation of a business. Since many students who are science majors will actually work in executive positions, this cluster would prepare them for advancement. ☞