

MAE Capped Majors FAQ

I am a freshman who wasn't admitted to Mechanical, Aerospace or Environmental Engineering (MAE). How do I switch?

We have application periods in June of every year. You have two chances over two years to apply to the capped major. To be eligible to apply, you need to have taken certain "criterion" courses. After your 3rd quarter at UCSD, you need to have completed MATH 20A-C; PHYS 2A and 2B; and CHEM 6A. After your 6th quarter you need to have completed MATH 18; MATH 20A-E; PHYS 2A, 2B, 2C and 2CL; CHEM 6A; and MAE 8.

I am a transfer student who wasn't admitted to an MAE major. How do I switch?

Transfers have one chance to apply to the capped MAE majors. You can apply in June of your first year at UCSD. To be eligible to apply, you need to have taken certain "criterion" courses. After your 3rd quarter, you need to have completed MATH 18; MATH 20A-E; PHYS 2A, 2B, 2C and 2CL; CHEM 6A; and MAE 8.

How do I apply to the capped major?

The link to the online application will be emailed to all students and posted on the MAE website. The application is straight-forward and should take less than 5 minutes to complete. The grades of your "criterion" courses will be shown on your application, as well as your UCSD cumulative GPA. Applicants are ranked based on grades only. If you are transferring in some of the criterion courses, from AP credit or from a community college, the grade will be a "pass" and will not count for or against your ranking.

I am a transfer student. Can I graduate in two years at UCSD if I switch to an MAE major after my first year?

No, probably not. Even transfers who are directly admitted to MAE take at least three years to graduate. In any of the MAE majors, graduating in two years as a transfer student is not feasible.

Do honors courses count for the criterion courses?

Yes, the honors versions of the criterion courses will count but they will not have a higher weight in the application. Taking the honors courses will probably not be in your favor because you are competing against students taking easier classes. We look at grades only and do not consider if the course is honors.

I am undeclared. Should I declare a non-capped major even though I want to switch to MAE?

Yes, you need to declare a second choice major and follow that major's curriculum.

Should I follow the MAE curriculum even though I'm not in the major yet?

No! This will not help you get into the major and will delay your graduation if you are not admitted. Declare your second choice major and follow that major's curriculum. If you are admitted, the MAE advisors will work with you to develop your personalized academic plan.

I only want to be an MAE major. I won't be happy graduating without a degree in MAE (Mechanical, Aerospace, or Environmental). What should I do?

If you prioritize being in MAE over staying at UCSD, then consider looking into transferring to another university. If you prioritize staying at UCSD, there are some MAE courses that you can be eligible to take if you are not in the major. You can get hands-on experience working in the lab of an MAE faculty even if you are not an MAE major. You can minor in Engineering Mechanics if you are not majoring in engineering. Finally, it is possible to pursue an MAE graduate degree following your undergraduate degree, even if you did not major in MAE.