





# PIECES OF THE PICTURE

By Alexandra Eyle

**Like a stained-glass window, the University is made up of many parts, each with its own shape and color. The great strength of Syracuse is that those parts—the academic disciplines and programs—may be combined in unusual and sometimes unique ways.**

**W**hen Debra Gussin was in high school, she knew she wanted to work in a field that combined marketing and communications. The problem was finding a university that could provide excellent training in both.

In much the same way, Gary Scavone expected that he would never find the combination he wanted. What university, after all, had both an outstanding engineering school and a saxophone program that would help him perfect a style of playing known as the “dark tone”?

Kristi Lantz Sawers, unlike Scavone or Gussin, was less certain about what she wanted to study. She hoped to attend a university where, should she wish to change majors, she could do so without having to transfer elsewhere.

Gussin, Scavone, and Sawers all found solutions to their dilemmas at Syracuse University.

“I was accepted by 10 universities,” says Gussin, a 1984 graduate now working at ABC, “but I chose SU because I could get a dual major with the management school and the communications school.”

For his part, Scavone could study both electrical engineering and the dark tone at SU. He enrolled as an engineering major and took music courses as electives. After one semester, he decided to declare a dual major. Working

closely with the deans of the College of Engineering and the College of Visual and Performing Arts, Scavone drew up a four-and-one-half-year schedule of courses that would fulfill both sets of requirements.

Sawers found, as she had hoped, that SU could accommodate her uncertainty. “SU allowed me to change majors within the University without transferring to another school,” she says. Sawers first majored in physical education, but graduated in 1984 with a double major in marketing and personnel and industrial relations.

These three recent graduates discovered an aspect of Syracuse that has become, especially during the past two decades, a major point of distinction for SU. More than perhaps any other comprehensive university, Syracuse has created mechanisms that bring related or even widely divergent disciplines under single programs of study. These mechanisms—dual majors, double majors, selected studies majors, minors, and combined degree programs—tap the breadth and depth of the University to serve the breadth and depth of an individual student.

## Sum of the Parts

Diversity is a critical element of the University's character. Through its 12 schools and colleges, SU currently offers 226 formal undergraduate programs. Combined with 209 master's and 125 doctoral programs, they make the University's academic offerings the second largest of all colleges and universities in New York state. Except for medicine, all of the traditional, popular majors are represented.

*Alexandra Eyle has previously written under the byline of Alix Mitchell. Lyn Carnrike, Class of 1986, and Susan-Laura Smith, a Newhouse School senior, assisted in the research for this article.*

But what truly sets SU apart is its range of mechanisms for combining the various study programs.

Dual majors allow students to pursue two different disciplines in different colleges or schools that have established special dual-major requirements. The resulting dual degree is a single diploma that is certified by both deans. Dual degrees are especially popular among students wishing to combine two professional disciplines, such as management and journalism.

Double majors are similar to duals, but in this case the two programs of study are offered

by the same school or college; basic requirements are shared, allowing the student to complete both programs in four years. This option is especially popular among students in the College of Arts and Sciences who pursue a variety of double majors ranging from philosophy and sociology to English and art history. The two majors appear on one degree from a single college.

Combined degree programs take five years to complete and provide for the study of two separate subjects in greater depth. They are different from dual or double majors in that both programs are fulfilled in their entirety, though the two are coordinated and duplication of coursework is eliminated. Two degrees from the two different schools or colleges are awarded.

Minors are relatively rare at Syracuse, with so many other interdisciplinary options available. But there are important exceptions to this rule. The College of Arts and Sciences, for example, offers 22 minor programs, including a new minor in management that gives all liberal arts graduates an opportunity to hone their business sense on the side. There is a similar concentration in professional skills.

If none of these options yields the perfect program of study, students may create a "selected studies" program to meet their needs, under the supervision of an academic committee. Selected studies majors are one-of-a-kind, customized to each student's specific, often unusual, needs. These programs typically take four years to complete.

In most cases, students invest the same amount of time and effort in a multiple degree as would be required by a single course of study. No more credits are needed to earn a dual major in French literature and magazine journalism, for instance, than to earn a single major from Newhouse, because so many of the liberal arts prerequisites are shared. A human development and management dual major, however, can be more rigorous; specializing in retailing and marketing, for instance, requires 132 credits, rather than the 124 required of a single retail major. Combined degrees are another exception. As noted, these majors—offered by the College of Arts and Sciences with the engineering, law, and management schools—ordinarily require five years to complete.

Together, these mechanisms provide a flexibility that is clearly in demand. An estimated 15 percent of SU's undergraduates are enrolled in such programs; half of these are pursuing dual majors. And even SU students who do not take advantage of the combined degree options

## One-of-a-kind Major

Ever since she was a child, Sydney Cowherd wanted to be a lawyer. But once at SU, Cowherd realized law wasn't for her. "I took courses in political science, talked to some lawyers, and realized that that really wasn't what I wanted to do."

Cowherd decided to study math and computer programming instead. But she wanted to study more math courses than were available to singly enrolled CIS majors. Cowherd discussed her dilemma with Barry L. Wells, assistant dean of student services for the College of Arts and Sciences, who suggested she draw up a selected studies program. Cowherd put together a schedule of the math, computer programming, and liberal arts courses she would take.

"It was a lot of work," says Cowherd, now a computer programmer. "I even had to set up my own internship, but it was worth it. Employers are impressed with my mathematics background, especially since you don't see a lot of women or minorities specializing in upper-level math."

## Going for It

Linda Allen Pasto, a 1976 graduate, broke new academic ground at SU when she decided to earn a dual degree in nursing and child and family studies.

"Neither school had ever before had a student with this combination," she says. "It took a semester for me to set it up."

With the help of Barbara MacDermott, now assistant dean of the College of Nursing, Pasto created a 160-credit program that took her four and one-half years to complete. Pasto says it was well worth the effort.

"I'm in obstetrical nursing and also

teach childbirth, parenting, and sibling classes, where we teach brothers and sisters how to get used to a new baby," she says. "I have really used my family studies background, such as courses in working with parent groups and creative play for children, in teaching these classes. It's been very helpful."

Since graduating, Pasto has also completed a master's in childbearing and child-rearing nursing, which combines her two undergraduate specialties.

## Switching Midstream

In retrospect, it was only natural that Henry Iwanicki should switch majors midstream. By his own admission, Iwanicki, a 1979 graduate, entered college as a premed student "by default."

"Everybody in high school wants to be a doctor, I guess," he says. "But I didn't really enjoy it all that much. I was doing some drawing on the side and decided to switch to that major."

Iwanicki transferred from Utica College to SU's College of Visual and Performing Arts in his junior year. He decided to complete a dual major in illustration and biology.

"The art major was my priority, but I also wanted a biology major because I didn't want to waste the two years years I'd spent studying biology as a premed student."

After graduating, Iwanicki worked as a textbook illustrator and later became advertising manager for Wards Natural Sciences, which supplies equipment for high school science laboratories.

"It's my experience that it's very difficult to be a freshman and plan out something like a career, step-by-step. I was lucky that my combination worked out so well."

say that the University's academic flexibility attracted them to Syracuse.

This is because—as Gussin, Scavone, and Sawers discovered—the University's interdisciplinary degree offerings meet the needs of an extraordinarily wide range of people: those who expect Syracuse to prepare them for a professional specialty, those with two (or more) divergent passions, those who arrive on campus unsure of what they want to study, and others.

## Professionally Inclined

For the first group—students with specific, well-directed career goals in mind—the advantages of dual, double, and selected studies majors are particularly immediate. In some cases, a multiple degree broadens a student's area of knowledge; other times, it provides an area of specialization; occasionally it does both.

Of all the schools and colleges, the School of Education has perhaps the longest history of dual degrees. A student studying to teach music, for instance, must take a dual degree with the College of Visual and Performing Arts.

Dual programs among the professional schools became strongest during the 1960s and '70s as the demand for undergraduate professional degrees grew. Today, the most popular dual major for professional purposes is in management and public communications. The usefulness of this combination is obvious.

"A dual degree with management makes perfect sense for a Newhouse student," says John Hottenstein, assistant dean of the Newhouse School. "While students receive an understanding of the communications industry necessary to becoming reporters, directors, producers, or public relations practitioners, their management dual gives them a basic understanding of the skills needed for personnel, budget analysis, and accounting. To be a unit manager for a television show, for instance, you need to understand budgeting and accounting procedures.

"And our advertising students who are dual majors with the marketing program in the School of Management," he adds, "find that those majors go together beautifully."

Class of 1985 graduate Laura Edwards, for example, attended Syracuse because of its dual major in marketing and advertising. She knew that the two together would be worth much more than either alone, and she hasn't been disappointed.

"I wanted to get in on all aspects of running an advertising agency," she says. "Thanks to my major, I have both advertising and business

skills. On the other hand, some of my friends who just majored in advertising are not able to discuss distribution at length." Today, Edwards is assistant to the president of Altamont Advertising in New York City; when recruiting new employees, she looks for dual majors.

The professional schools at Syracuse understand the marketability of multiple majors and encourage their students to pursue interdisciplinary degree options. At Newhouse this spring, for example, 522 out of 1,816 students were dually enrolled. The school offers dual majors with both the School of Management and the College of Arts and Sciences. During

## Two Are Better Than One

Raymond Waterhouse, a 1984 graduate, is very pleased with himself. He is a credit analyst for Drexel Burnham Lambert, an investment bank in New York City.

"This is exactly where I wanted to be. I took a double major in marketing and finance from the management school. It really opened up my mind and let me see where I wanted to go."

Waterhouse started out as a marketing major, but at the suggestion of his advisors, he decided to also major in finance.

"Marketing taught me about the makeup of markets: the people who make them up and their buying behavior. Finance taught me about the economics of running a business. Together, my majors taught me how to run a business."

## Just for Fun

When John Marko III was an architecture student, he took painting courses on the side in order to relax. Eventually, painting turned into a dual major. A 1976 graduate, Marko was pleasantly surprised to find how profitable these relaxing painting courses could be.

"Employers commented on the combination, and early on they had me doing renderings and drawings for covers," he says. "It really helped a lot in the beginning."

Now that he is running his own firm, Architx, in Honolulu, Marko finds the experience of earning a dual degree helps in other ways.

"It prepared me for the hectic nature of the profession I chose. You are always involved in simultaneous tasks, and there's never an easy time limit."

## Twice as Good

In 1976, Barbara Finkle was accepted into Pratt Institute, American University, the University of Maryland, and SU.

"I chose SU because it had a formal dual program between the College of Visual and Performing Arts and Newhouse. I wanted to be an art director or a photographer, but I didn't know which one I wanted. This let me study both.

"The great thing about the program was that I came out with two portfolios—one for photography and one for advertising design. It was very impressive," says Finkle, who now manages a photography studio in New York City. "It shows you can not only design an ad, but you can also do the ad yourself."

## Second Dimension

By the time Peter Phipps was a junior, he'd almost completed his requirements for an international relations major. So he decided to add another major: political science.

Now this 1985 College of Arts and Sciences graduate is putting his double major to good use. As staff assistant to Senator Alfonse D'Amato, he deals with constituents' questions and lobbyists' pressures. Much of his work requires that he decide which issues are most important.

"My international relations background helps me understand the importance of certain issues. For instance, a lobby group might send a letter about a treaty that could be important. Because of my background, I would recognize that."



**Job recruiters feel that students with dual or double majors are especially focused, driven, and well-educated. They may pay special interest to them.**

this same enrollment period, the College for Human Development had 71 students pursuing dual majors in the School of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Management, and the Newhouse School.

## Intellectually Inclined

Other Syracuse students opt for dual majors not for professional reasons, but purely for their intellectual development. Michael Richardson, a 1982 biology and psychology major, took the latter simply because he cared about the topic.

"At the time, it was purely an intellectual interest," Richardson says. "Studying psychology along with biology created a balance—biology dealt with the scientific study of life, while psychology dealt with the human side of life. Together they made a whole."

Richardson, who now works as a quality assurance manager for the Kendall Company, had no professional goal in mind when he chose his major—"I guess at the time I really didn't think I would use it"—but he now finds that his psychology background helps him deal with people and his scientific background helps him communicate with scientists and engineers at work.

Connie Fraser, a 1960 graduate, earned a degree in philosophy and sociology that grew out of coursework in at least four different departments. After transferring to SU in her junior year, she found it was too late to take the freshman and sophomore classes she needed in order to qualify as a math major, so she ended up taking a plethora of other courses that interested her—in religion, social work, sociology, and philosophy. When she was about to graduate, Fraser discovered that she could major in any two of these areas. She chose the philosophy and sociology double major. The combination helped earn her acceptance to Yale Divinity School.

Many students, such as Kristi Sawers, arrive at Syracuse with one interest in mind but soon become fascinated with others; multiple major options make this switch much easier. Evan Wachs, a 1984 graduate, indulged a penchant for the art of argument by switching from a computer engineering major to a double major in philosophy and mathematics.

"I got turned on by math while taking computer engineering courses," Wachs explains, "and then, through the logical end of math I became interested in different branches of logic, which in turn led to an interest in the logical foundation of philosophy. I decided to look into other aspects of philosophy, and I liked that as well. I've always liked arguments

of one form or another, and math and philosophy have that in common."

Richardson, Fraser, and Wachs used the dual- and double-major options to earn diplomas that certify more than one intellectual interest. Wachs had the added advantage of being able to switch into his dual major midstream.

## The Broadest Perspective

Whether students choose "to dual" (an established SU colloquialism) based on intellectual hunger or practical goals, one result pertains to them uniformly. As they step out into the world (probably looking for a job), they are recognized as brighter, more versatile people.

"While a dual or double major is not automatically considered to be superior to a single major," says Russell J. Hamilton, assistant dean of the School of Management, "job recruiters feel that students with such majors are especially focused, driven, and well-educated. They may pay special interest to them."

According to Mary Jones, director of the SU Placement Center, a multiple major will benefit almost any student's job search, even if he or she pursued it for other reasons.

"Employers today are looking not only for those students with a professional degree," Jones says, "but also for the ability to present themselves orally and in the written word—skills developed in the liberal arts or in the Newhouse School. The service areas such as banking, marketing, hotel/motel administration, or accounting demand that students be able to communicate tactfully and diplomatically and establish a solid rapport with the client."

Many students dually enrolled in Newhouse do not plan to work in mass communications, but recognize that interpersonal communications will be a part of their everyday lives.

"Those management students dually enrolled in Newhouse are going to have the extra advantage of really fine-tuning their communications skills," Hamilton says. "We find that the ability to communicate—to present thoughts in a thorough way—is the most sought-after skill of all among our corporate recruiters. No matter what the student's major—accounting, marketing—recruiters look for people who can communicate."

Dual degrees can provide more than finely tuned communications skills. Interdisciplinary studies often result in broader cognitive and interpretive powers. James E. Foudriat, who graduated in 1982, studied newspaper journalism in Newhouse, but also picked up a sec-



ond major in American studies.

"I have to do a great deal of analysis in my writing and must be able to recognize trends," says Foudriat, now a media information assistant for the Newport News, Virginia, public school system. "The historical background my American studies provides is a good complement to my writing skills."

And even Wachs, who studied math and philosophy purely for intellectual enjoyment, later found that his dual major directly benefits his work, in ways he could not have anticipated. Both math and logic are basic to his work as a mortgage-backed systems analyst for

Solomon Brothers in New York City.

In the end, the diversity afforded by dual majors, double majors, combined degree programs, and the like may be one of the University's strongest selling points.

"This variety of academic offerings is what we talk about most in our student recruitment efforts," says David Smith, dean of admissions. "Our research shows that our program flexibility is the primary reason that people choose to come to Syracuse University."

"Syracuse has always been committed to academic program flexibility and versatility," Smith says. "It's our hallmark."



*The stained-glass windows shown here and on page 34 are among those installed in Crouse College when it was built in 1888-89; they are located in Crouse's southern stairway. Despite their beauty, they are of relatively common origin, according to Stanley Worden, who as a member of Henry Keck Studio refurbished the windows in the late 1960s. They are constructed of rolled sheet glass (rather than blown) and would have cost approximately \$1 per square foot in their day. No one knows which stained-glass studio built them.*