Graduation Requirements and Procedures

Registrar’s Office
Centennial Hall, First Floor

THE STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS – GRADUATING IN FOUR YEARS

The Student Bill of Rights (also known as Colorado Revised Statute 23-1-125) notes that a student may formalize a plan to obtain a degree in four years. Colorado State University supports this timeline for graduation by publishing advising guidelines under which a student may expect to graduate in four years and also by publishing curriculum check sheets defining a common four-year course progression for each major. These check sheets and advising guidelines are available in each department office and in the Center for Advising and Student Achievement (CASA), Room 121, The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT). There are some majors which a student may not be able to complete in four years because of additional degree requirements recognized by the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The following apply to all students entering Colorado State University who enroll Summer Session 2000 or thereafter.

Students are required to complete all curricular requirements in place in the current catalog at the time of graduation. (See Changes in Undergraduate Curriculum Requirements in this chapter.)

The list of general requirements below is a sufficient guide for academic planning, but does not represent all rules which might apply to a particular student or program of study.

GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

To meet requirements for the bachelor’s degree, a student must fulfill:

Minimum Credit Requirement

A bachelor’s degree requires a minimum of 120 semester credits; however, individual programs in colleges and departments may exceed the minimum.

Minimum Grade Requirement

Only credits completed with grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and S may count toward the graduation total. (Note: Effective Fall Semester 2008, C-, D+, and D- grades will no longer be assigned.) Some majors require a minimum grade of C or C- or higher in required courses. For further information refer to your Undergraduate Degree Progress Audit (DARS) or contact the department offering the major.

Graduation Average Requirement

The minimum cumulative grade point average acceptable for graduation is 2.000 computed only for courses attempted at Colorado State. The CSU GPA calculation is carried to the third decimal place and is not rounded.

Total credits earned and counted toward graduation may differ from total credits used in computing a scholastic average, since the scholastic average is computed by dividing the total grade points at Colorado State by the total GPA credit including credits for grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and F. Credits graded S may count toward graduation. [Note: Effective Fall Semester 2008, grades of C-, D+, and D- will no longer be assigned.]
Upper-Division Credit Requirement

A minimum of 42 semester credits in upper-division courses (300-400 level) is required of all students completing a bachelor’s degree program. Although 500-level courses cannot be required in undergraduate programs of study, elective credits taken at the 500 level may be used to fulfill the upper-division requirement.

Use of 500-Level Courses within an Undergraduate Program

With written approval of advisor, junior and senior undergraduate students may use 500-level courses to fulfill major requirements, either by selecting from an approved department list of courses, or by exception signed by advisor. However, students are never required to take 500-level courses to complete an undergraduate program of study, whether a major or a minor.

“In residence” Requirement

A minimum of 30 upper-division semester credits must be completed in residence at Colorado State University. “In residence” courses include any authorized Colorado State University course recorded as Colorado State credit on the Colorado State transcript. As an approved exception, “in residence” may also be satisfied by pre-approved upper-division credits earned in authorized study abroad programs and designated domestic exchange programs, if simultaneously enrolled in designated CSU courses. Pre-approval procedures are required.

Senior Year Requirement

Of the last 30 semester credits earned immediately preceding graduation, no more than 15 may be completed at other colleges or universities.

Academic Fresh Start Requirement

If a student receives a Fresh Start, he or she must successfully complete at least 30 upper-division credits of coursework in residence at CSU after the Fresh Start is granted in order to graduate.

EXCLUSION OF COURSES FROM THE BACHELOR’S DEGREE

Undergraduates may enroll for a maximum of nine credits of graduate-level course work that may be applied toward a graduate degree at Colorado State, provided such course work is not used to meet bachelor’s degree requirements. Students who enroll in 500-level courses not applied toward a bachelor’s degree may request that an exclusion statement be placed on their academic records for those courses, making them potentially applicable to a Colorado State graduate degree. Students cannot exclude any courses below the 500-level under this policy. (See the Key to Courses of Instruction section for additional information.) Courses at the 600-level are automatically excluded from use for an undergraduate degree. Undergraduate students may not enroll in courses numbered 700-799.

A written request must be filed in the Degree and Transfer Evaluation unit of the Registrar’s Office no later than the end of the term in which the excluded course is taken.
Exclusion of these courses from the bachelor’s degree does not assure acceptance of this credit toward a graduate degree program. These excluded courses are computed in the undergraduate grade point average.

TIME LIMITATION ON CREDIT

Courses completed within the preceding ten years may apply toward a bachelor’s degree. After ten years, course work is reviewed by the department head and college dean or a designee to determine its appropriateness to the major requirements.

GRADUATION PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION

Checking undergraduate University graduation requirements is the responsibility of the Registrar’s Office. Curriculum requirements are checked by the department head of the first major and the second major and/or minor if applicable.

Students planning on transferring coursework from another post-secondary institution in order to meet the requirements for degree completion should contact the Degree & Transfer Evaluation unit for assistance. It is very important that all grades/transcripts are received by the end of the 4th week after the semester has ended. If grades/transcripts are not received within this timeframe students will experience a delay regarding the formal posting of their official graduation for that semester as well as delays printing their diploma.

Requests for waivers of or substitutions for program requirements must be approved by the advisor and department head (see Changes to Undergraduate Curriculum Requirements in this chapter). Requests for waivers or substitutions of the All-University Core Curriculum must be submitted on an appeal form found at registrar.colostate.edu/registrar-forms, signed by the advisor and department head and turned in to Degree and Transfer Evaluation unit of the Registrar’s Office.

Admission to Degree Program

Students are required to be admitted into a degree-seeking program in the term for which they plan to graduate. Contact the Office of Admissions for application procedures.

Intent to Graduate

Students will file their Intent to Graduate during registration via the Registration Ready Tool in RAMweb upon completion of 85 credits. The student will be prompted to verify their curriculum, their correct graduation term, and to give their desired name (within reason) for the commencement program as well as their diploma.

Contract for Completion of a Major or Minor

Students seeking to graduate must complete a graduation contract for each major and minor in which they are enrolled. Graduation contracts must be completed and signed by the Friday of the second week of classes of the student’s graduation term. Graduation contracts consist of the most updated version of the Degree Progress Audit (DARS), which will be used for final graduation certification, and will be signed in consultation with the student’s advisor(s) at each department where the student is enrolled in a major or minor program of study. Students who do not complete the degree requirements in their graduation term must sign another contract or contracts at the beginning of the term in which all requirements will be completed.

Good Standing Status

A student must be in good standing to receive a Colorado State degree. Accordingly, any student who is subject to suspension or probation for scholastic or disciplinary reasons will not graduate until the conditions of suspension or probation have been satisfied.

Graduation List

The official graduation list is prepared each term by the Registrar’s Office. Students may not graduate unless their names appear on the list as approved by the Faculty Council during the graduation term.

Off-Campus Completion of Degree Requirements

Seniors who are registered for final course work at another institution, either in residency or by correspondence or extension, must have their contracts for Completion of Major/Minor on file in the Registrar’s Office by the end of the add/drop period of the graduation term.
Graduation Requirements and Procedures

Official transcripts showing completion of work from another institution must be on file in this office no later than the fourth week after the graduation term. (See Senior Year Requirement earlier in this chapter.)

Degree Conferral

Degree conferral only occurs three times each year, after the conclusion of the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. The conferral date is the date which will be posted on the official transcript and the diploma. This is the date when the degree is considered officially awarded. A degree is a credential. There are three documents that provide evidence of that credential: an official transcript, a diploma, and a formal letter of completion from the Registrar’s Office.

CSU degrees will not be posted on the student’s record until the official degree conferral date has been reached for the semester in which the degree is being awarded. Completion of all requirements prior to the official degree conferral date will not result in an early conferral of the degree. A student in this situation may request an official “Completion Letter” from the Registrar’s Office showing pending conferral of the degree. The degree will be conferred for the term in which the requirements are completed.

Degrees Awarded Posthumously

In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Governors of Colorado State University may award degrees posthumously. Recommendations for such an award will only be considered when the student had completed nearly all of the requirements for his or her degree before dying, and when the student’s academic record clearly indicates that the degree would have been successfully completed had death not intervened. Nominations for posthumous awards of degree will be initiated by the student’s department and approved internally by the relevant college dean and the Provost. The posthumous nature of the recommended degree award shall be made explicit when the recommendation is forwarded to the Board of Governors. The Provost/Senior Vice President’s Office shall be responsible for presenting the degree to appropriate survivors.

COMMENCEMENT (GRADUATION CEREMONIES)

Commencement is held each year at the end of each fall and spring semester. Students completing degree requirements during any term receive their diplomas by mail within 6-8 weeks after the degree conferral date, if there is no outstanding financial obligation to the university. Candidates must appear in appropriate academic attire at commencement exercises.

GRADUATION WITH DISTINCTION

Colorado State recognizes outstanding scholarship by granting the baccalaureate degree “Cum Laude,” “Magna Cum Laude,” and “Summa Cum Laude” to those students in each college who have achieved unusually high academic excellence in their undergraduate programs. To be eligible for graduation with distinction, students must meet the following requirements:

Minimum grade point average required for graduation with distinction.

To qualify for graduation with distinction, a minimum of 60 credits completed at Colorado State University is required. Students who have been granted Fresh Start must have completed 60 credits after the Fresh Start designation to qualify for graduation with distinction.

Transfer credits are not considered when determining a) candidacy for graduation with distinction or b) graduation with distinction.

The Current Breakdown of Acceptable GPA’s for a Distinction Designation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Summa Cum Laude</th>
<th>Magna Cum Laude</th>
<th>Cum Laude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Sciences</td>
<td>3.980</td>
<td>3.850</td>
<td>3.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3.980</td>
<td>3.900</td>
<td>3.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>3.980</td>
<td>3.930</td>
<td>3.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Human Sciences</td>
<td>3.990</td>
<td>3.900</td>
<td>3.760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>3.990</td>
<td>3.910</td>
<td>3.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>3.990</td>
<td>3.910</td>
<td>3.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>3.990</td>
<td>3.940</td>
<td>3.830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>3.990</td>
<td>3.910</td>
<td>3.800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These minimum cumulative grade point averages will be reviewed every four years and may be changed if needed to maintain appropriate academic standards. Such changes will become effective the semester following approval by Faculty Council and publication in the General Catalog. Each of the minimum grade point averages needed to graduate with distinction will be adjusted at the end of each four year period only if the percentage of students graduating with distinction in a distinction category and
college have shown a statistically verifiable deviation from the target percentages of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summa Cum Laude</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magna Cum Laude</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cum Laude</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Candidates for graduation with distinction are recognized at the time of commencement. A student’s candidacy is determined by their cumulative grade point average through the semester preceding graduation. “Candidacy” for graduation with distinction does not guarantee graduation with distinction. Graduation with distinction is based on the student’s cumulative grade point average at the time of graduation. The CSU GPA calculation is carried to the third decimal place and is not rounded.

Students seeking a second bachelor’s degree are eligible for distinction designation. To qualify for graduation with distinction, a minimum of 60 credits completed at Colorado State is required after the first degree. In determining the grade point average of the student, only grades earned after the first degree are considered.

**GRADUATION AS A UNIVERSITY HONORS SCHOLAR**

Students who complete the University Honors Program academic requirements and achieve at least a cumulative 3.5 grade point average earn the designation of University Honors Scholar. Scholars are recognized at graduation by the Honors Program and during the colleges’ commencement ceremonies. The University Honors Scholar designation appears on diplomas and transcripts.

For information about admission to the University Honors Program, visit or contact the Honors Program Office, Academic Village, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1025; (970) 491-5679 or visit on-line at [honors.colostate.edu](http://honors.colostate.edu). Also see the chapter, Broadening Your Horizons (1.2).

**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY HONORARY SOCIETIES**

Outstanding academic achievement is recognized by inviting students who have achieved superior scholastic records to join one or more of the all-University, college, or departmental honorary societies on campus. Some societies focus primarily on scholastic achievement; others consider grades along with other factors such as community service and leadership. Some select members by invitation only; for others, students must submit applications.

Below are listed the names of those societies who are present at Colorado State University.

For further information, contact the societies’ respective academic department or visit [provost.colostate.edu/students](http://provost.colostate.edu/students).

**All University**
- Alpha Lambda Delta – Freshmen
- Gamma Beta Phi
- Golden Key
- Mortar Board
- National Society of Collegiate Scholars
- Order of Omega
- Phi Beta Kappa
- Phi Kappa Phi
- Pinnacle International – Non-Traditional Students
- Sigma Alpha Lambda – National Leadership and Honors Organization
- Sigma Xi – Scientific Research

**Agricultural Sciences**
- Alpha Zeta
- Gamma Sigma Delta – Agricultural and Related Sciences
- Pi Alpha Xi – Horticulture

**Business**
- Alpha Sigma Gamma – Real Estate
- Beta Alpha Psi – Accounting
- Beta Gamma Sigma

**Engineering**
- Alpha Epsilon – Agricultural Engineering
- Chi Epsilon – Civil Engineering
- Eta Kappa Nu – Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Omega Chi Epsilon – Mechanical Engineering
- Pi Tau Sigma – Chemical Engineering
- Tau Beta Pi – Engineering

**Health and Human Sciences**
- Phi Alpha – Social Work
- Pi Theta Epsilon – Occupational Therapy
- Sigma Lambda Chi – Construction Management

**Liberal Arts**
- Alpha Kappa Delta – Sociology
- Kappa Tau Alpha – Technical Journalism
- Lambda Pi Eta – Communication Studies
- Omicron Delta Epsilon – Economics
- Phi Alpha Theta – History
- Pi Sigma Alpha – Political Science

**Natural Resources**
- Xi Sigma Pi

**Natural Sciences**
- Psi Chi – Psychology
- Sigma Pi Sigma – Physics
- Epsilon Pi Delta – Computer Science

**Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences**
- Phi Zeta – Veterinary Medicine