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Policy Name

15.4460 Graduation Policy

Purpose and Scope

This policy defines the graduation process and requirements for Alvernia University (“AU”). The policy is intended to ensure all AU students are graduated in a timely manner once degree requirements are met. This policy:

- Defines roles and responsibilities with respect to graduation.
- Identifies the standards and best practices used by the Registrar’s Office related to graduation.
- Lists the related AU policies which provide more detailed guidance on graduation.
- Specifies which departments maintain their own graduation procedures.

This policy applies to all AU students and its scope includes students enrolled in AU programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Responsibilities

Title or Role	Definition and What They are Responsible For
Registrar	Maintains and enforces this policy.
Provost Office	Serves as approval for policy and assists with reviewing exceptions to the policy. Commencement ceremony Script.
Advisor	Guide students along program completion.
Student Affairs	Manages the commencement ceremony process.
Senior Leadership Team	Serves as final approval for policy and assists with reviewing exceptions to the policy.

Policy

This policy provides the requirements for degrees earned at Alvernia University. At the time of the awarding of a degree (associate, baccalaureate, master’s, doctoral), the student record for that degree will be finalized, such that additional concentrations or minors may not be added to the degree record through the taking of additional coursework in subsequent semesters.

All students are responsible for knowing the major, degree, and university requirements of their respective programs. Students are advised to meet with their academic advisor regularly throughout their academic careers.

Definitions

Conferral - If your degree has been conferred, it means that you have been admitted into your award as a legal graduate of Alvernia University. To be conferred you must have completed all academic and practical requirements and have. From the moment your degree has been conferred, you are an official legal graduate of the University and can use any titles associated with that award.

Completion - Being marked as 'Completed' in your degree means that you have completed the academic requirements for your award. Completion will be useful if you are applying for further study or need evidence while you are awaiting your conferral that you have met the academic requirements of your degree.

Commencement ceremony – The Commencement ceremony is the annual ceremony that celebrates your degree conferral and the achievements of other students and alumni.

Course Substitution - The use of an alternative equivalent, or nearly equivalent, course in place of a course required in a degree, minor, or certificate.

Policy Procedure

Students must apply for graduation via MyAlvernia by the posted deadline. Failure to apply by the deadline may result in a late fee to be added to the student's account. All financial obligations to Alvernia University must align with the Student Financial Balances and Holds Policy (linked below) before a diploma or transcript is released.

All credentials for graduation, including transcripts of credits from other institutions, must be submitted the semester prior to graduation. For example, students graduating at the end of Spring term must submit all credentials for graduation, including transcripts of credits from other institutions, by the end of the previous Fall term.

In cases where students must complete credits outside of Alvernia during their final term, all credits must be submitted by the graduation dates listed below. Prior to enrolling in outside credits, students must have a completed, approved Transfer Credit Approval Form on file with the Registrar's Office.

Any student applying for graduation must complete all requirements, including community service, "Incomplete" and "In Progress" grades, within 14 calendar days after the graduation date. If all requirements are not completed within this 14-calendar day period, the student must submit a new graduation application once the degree requirements have been met.

Each term's official graduation date is the Saturday after the term ends. See the University Academic Calendar posted on the Alvernia website for official graduation dates.

Example:

Term	Term End Date	Graduation Date
Summer	August 18, 2023	August 19, 2023
Fall	December 8, 2023	December 9, 2023
Spring	May 10, 2024	May 11, 2024

Applying for Graduation

The Graduation Application is available online to students on the MyAlvernia portal. Seniors must submit the Graduation Application by the following deadlines:

Graduation Application Deadline	Graduation Month
November 1	May
December 1	August
April 1	December

The student's advisor or department chair must sign the form and attach a copy of the completed major sheet. A graduation fee will be charged when the application is processed. See Fee Schedule for the current graduation fee.

Students who do not submit a graduation application in a timely manner may experience delays in conferral processing and receipt of student records. Late graduation applications may not be accepted after April 1 for end of Spring semester graduation. Students who fail to apply by April 1 may be moved to the next conferral date and may not be able to participate in the Commencement Ceremony.

Non-Academic Graduation Requirements

Community service credits - Alvernia University requires community service to be completed by all undergraduate students before graduation. All community service hours must align with the Holleran Center Service Policy and be submitted 14 calendar days of the posted graduation date for the term in which the student applies for graduation.

For the community service requirements, see the Graduation Requirements in the Programs and Courses of Study section of the Catalog.

Degree Evaluation

Completion of a graduation application notifies the Registrar's Office to begin the degree evaluation process.

Degree Audit - A degree audit is an electronic review of each student's course transcript matched against the College's requirements for a degree. Students may review their degree audits through the University's graduation audit program (for example, Degree Audit uAchieve) and become informed about their progress toward the degree at any given time. Advisers also have access to the degree audits of their advisees. While the electronic degree audit is usually accurate, at times the complicated nature of a major or other requirement may lead to inaccuracies. Students are responsible for reporting audit discrepancies to the Registrar. In addition, a discrepancy in the degree audit does not change the actual requirements for graduation; in particular, unfulfilled requirements are not waived because of degree audit discrepancies. The responsibility for understanding and meeting degree requirements rests entirely with the student.

Degree Conferral

Following the completion of all program requirements as stated in the university catalog, the university will confer on the student the appropriate degree or certificate. A degree can be conferred as early as, but not prior to, the end date listed on the final course(s) if all grades are entered by that date.

Conferral typically occurs within six to eight weeks of the final grade entry deadline (assuming no outstanding grades or incomplete program requirements). No student is eligible to receive a diploma or transcripts until all bills with the university are paid in full.

To qualify for degree conferral, a student must:

- Be in Academic Good Standing,
- Have final grades posted in all courses as defined by the degree program, and
- Complete all degree program components including training requirements, competency exam(s), residencies, and the capstone project, thesis, or dissertation as defined by the degree program.

Information on students who qualify for degree conferral each term will be gathered by the Registrar's Office and sent to the Board for a vote. Once the Board votes to approve all qualifying student degrees, the Registrar's Office may begin posting degrees to each student's record.

Expedited Degree Conferral

Alvernia recognizes that the standard timeframe for processing degree conferral is problematic for the needs of some students. Therefore, we do allow students to request that the conferral of their degree be expedited. The process requires students to contact professors to request grade entry prior to normal deadline (72 hours after the last day of the finals period). Students must then notify the registrar's office once all final grades have been posted.

Conferral will be processed within one business day after notification of final grade posting, as modified for weekends, holidays, and campus closure (rather than the standard six to eight weeks). An additional fee is required to expedite the degree conferral process. See the Catalog for the expedited degree conferral fee.

Certificate Evaluation & Conferral

Departments review requirements for certificates and notify the Registrar's Office once complete. The Registrar's Office will post the certificate to the student transcript. Programs are responsible for printing their own certificates, if offered.

Degree Posted to Academic Transcript

The academic transcript is the official record of the requirements students have completed for their degree. Students ordering official transcripts before the conferral date must request that the transcript be held for degree conferral if they wish to have the degree posted on the transcript. Official transcripts are ordered through the National Student Clearinghouse.

Awarding of Diploma

Diplomas are produced by a third party, delivered to the Registrar's Office, and shipped from the Alvernia Registrar's Office in Reading, PA. Alvernia diplomas include degree and Major/Area of Study, and honors, as applicable. Diplomas do not include concentrations or specializations.

Diplomas are generally available 10-12 weeks after the official graduation date of the term.

Diplomas are mailed to the home address on each graduating students' myAlvernia account. Diplomas will not be mailed to a local address listed on a students' account. There is a \$150 fee to mail diplomas internationally.

Students are responsible for the diploma or certificate replacement cost if it carries an incorrect name (not a misprint) or if mailed to the incorrect address.

Bachelor's Degrees - If a student has completed the requirements for two or more majors leading to the same baccalaureate degree (e.g., two BS degrees), those majors are acknowledged on a single diploma. The major which the student requests as their primary major will appear first on the diploma. If a student has completed the requirements for two or more majors leading to different baccalaureate degrees (e.g., a BS and a BA), those degrees and the completed major or majors leading to each degree are acknowledged on two separate diplomas. If a student has completed concurrently the requirements for two or more degrees, at least one of which is a graduate degree, Alvernia issues a separate diploma for each degree earned.

Diploma Replacement

To request a replacement diploma, please complete a Diploma Replacement Form. There is a charge for a replacement diploma.

Note: A replacement diploma is not the same as an original. Your replacement diploma will be printed with your original graduation date, but with the current President's and Provost's signatures.

Degree Level	Replacement Fee
Associates	\$45
Bachelors	\$45
Masters	\$60
Doctorate	\$60

Participation in Commencement ceremony

The Registrar's Office Team manages the Degree Conferral process, which is separate from the Commencement ceremony. Please see the University Commencement ceremony webpage for details. After reviewing the Commencement ceremony information students should follow up with their program office or the Commencement Ceremony Team for further information.

Students may participate in the Commencement Ceremony provided they have met all graduation requirements. However, students may be permitted to participate if their graduation audit confirms either

- (i) the student needs six or less credits to graduate, or
- (ii) all community service hours have been met, and the student is registered for summer coursework, lab work, and/or clinicals that fulfill all graduation requirements for their program of study. In this case, all such summer coursework must be scheduled to be completed prior to the start of the upcoming academic year.

Graduation Requirements

University Graduation Requirement Substitution

A student must petition the Academic Standards Committee to obtain a substitution for a University graduation requirement. Such petition should include written support from his/her academic advisor. The Academic Standards Committee's decision is final.

Course Substitution

All substitutions for program requirements are approved by the academic dean, or designee, and processed by the Registrar's Office. Programs include undergraduate and graduate degrees, certificates, and minors. Course substitutions should be appropriate and demonstrate discipline-similar content to the course requirement being substituted. Course substitutions should be consistent in level; for instance, a substitution for an advanced course should be made with another advanced course, and not an introductory-level course. Course substitutions should be evaluated within the same semester for which the student has requested consideration, preferably before the subsequent term's pre-registration period begins.

Honors at Graduation (Undergraduate)

Bachelor's degree: Students may receive their bachelor's degree with Honors. With Honors is defined as a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 or above with a minimum of 40 Alvernia credits. As noted above, courses receiving a grade of "pass" are not included. The award of honors shall be as follows:

cum laude	In recognition of a GPA of 3.50 to 3.69
magna cum laude	In recognition of a GPA of 3.70 to 3.89
summa cum laude	In recognition of a GPA of at least 3.90

Associate degree: Students may receive their associate degree with Honors. With Honors is defined as a cumulative grade point average of or above with a minimum of 40 credits. As noted above, courses receiving a grade of "pass" are not included. The award of honors shall be as follows:

with distinction	In recognition of a GPA of 3.50 to 3.69
with high distinction	In recognition of a GPA of 3.70 to 3.89
with highest distinction	In recognition of a GPA of at least 3.90

Note: For the Commencement Ceremony, the above GPAs will be calculated at the end of Mod 3 since Mod 4 and semester grades will not be available until after commencement. The final GPA will determine the Honors posted on the graduate's diploma and transcript.

Second Bachelor's Degree Requirements

A student returning to Alvernia to complete a second bachelor's degree will earn two separate diplomas. Students are required to complete all the major requirements for the second degree, and general education courses previously completed may apply to the second bachelor's degree.

Dual degree versus double major

A student pursuing a double major satisfies the requirements for two separate major programs within the College but earns a single bachelor's degree. A student pursuing a dual degree will receive two bachelor's degrees simultaneously, from two separate colleges of the University.

A dual degree is two-degree programs with significant non-duplicated course work (12 or more credits for an associate's degree or certificate; 12 or more for a bachelor's degree). Two diplomas are awarded.

Exceptions to Policy

Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing by filling out the Policy and Procedure Exception form and submitting to the individual named in the Responsibilities section who assists with reviewing exceptions to this policy.

Policy Review

The Registrar Office policies should be reviewed on a 5-year cycle and updated when institutional needs or goals change.

Approved versions of this policy will be posted on the Alvernia University Portal.

References and Related Policies

[Posthumous Degree Policy](#)

[Student Financial Balances and Holds Policy](#)

[Holleran Center Policy on Community Service](#)

Exhibits

- [Policy and Procedure Exception Form](#)
- [Transfer Credit Approval Form](#)

Document Review Log

Date Reviewed	Description of Changes
7/13/2023	Initial Draft
8/2/2023	Initial Draft ready for Registrar Office team review
8/4/2023	Registrar Office team reviewed and suggested changes
11/22/2023	Provost Office Review
4/11/2024	SLT Approved
10/23/2025	SLT Approved revision to expand participation in graduation ceremony