Graduation Policies

Applying to Graduate

Students who intend to graduate in the next academic year must complete an Application for Graduation as directed by their respective academic advising office.

Students will select their conferral date based upon their ability to complete their graduation requirements. The university confers degrees three times per year in August, December, and May and conducts one graduation ceremony in May.

Students will be responsible for completing the requirements for a Bachelor degree. If students must deviate from the recommendations of the advisors or if the student intends to use a different course to meet a requirement, the student must obtain approval of the change in writing.

All grades and credits for courses that are required for graduation must be submitted in time to clear students for graduation. Graduating students who are taking courses at cooperative schools or in other divisions of the university must make arrangements with their instructors on the first day of class to have final grades submitted to the host registrar and then to the Homewood Registrar by the deadline for submitting grades for graduating students. If such an arrangement cannot be made, students should not register for the course.

The university commencement ceremony is held once each year in May. Students may participate in the graduation ceremony when all graduation requirements have been satisfied. Students who are seeking an August degree conferral date should speak to their academic advising office regarding their ability to participate in the preceding commencement ceremony.

The university does not guarantee the award of a degree or a certificate of satisfactory completion of a course of study or training program. The award of degrees and certificates of satisfactory completion is conditional upon a) satisfaction of all current degree and instructional requirements at the time of the award, b) compliance with the university and divisional regulations, and c) performance meeting the bona fide expectations of the faculty. No member of the faculty is expected to provide students or graduates with an evaluation or letter of recommendation which does not accurately reflect the faculty member’s true opinion and evaluation of the student’s academic performance and conduct.

Completing Graduation Requirements

Students are eligible to graduate after the fall or spring semester when they have completed all graduation requirements (http://e catalog.jhu.edu/archive/2013-14/undergrad-students/academic-policies/ requirements-for-a-bachelors-degree/#credit_required_grad), including the four-semester minimum residence requirement and the minimum JHU credit requirement of 60 JHU credits. Four years of undergraduate study is but a short time to refine existing talents and explore new interests. The entire university community is dedicated to making these short years productive and exciting for all of our students.

Students who have met all requirements for graduation in the School of Arts and Sciences or the School of Engineering as of December of their senior year may remain in university housing and/or continue to participate in student organizations only if they enroll for a minimum of 6 credits in these schools for the spring semester.

Students who have not completed degree requirements after eight full-time semesters in college may register for less than 12 credits and pay for courses on a per credit basis. With approval of the director of the student’s academic advising office and the major department (in the case of courses required for the major), these students may take courses elsewhere to meet the remaining graduation requirements, but must observe the 12 credit limit on transfer credit. These students also may have part-time status in the semester when they graduate.

A student will not be graduated with unresolved outstanding charges of misconduct or academic ethics violations.

Each student expecting to graduate will receive a final bill from the university. It is university policy that all outstanding accounts must be paid in full before a student’s diploma may be released.

Restrictions on When Students Can Complete Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements can only be completed in the fall or spring semester unless a student has already completed eight full-time semesters. Because of the requirement that students have full-time status in the semester immediately prior to graduation, students must register for at least 12 credits in the final semester even if all course and credit requirements could be met with fewer than 12 credits.

Students who have already completed eight full-time semesters and at least four semesters in residence without completing graduation requirements may stay on for additional semesters to complete graduation requirements on a full-time or part-time basis and may complete requirements in summer session.

Transfer students who have already completed the required number of semesters may stay on for additional semesters to complete graduation requirements on a full-time or part-time basis and may complete requirements in summer session.

Graduating Early (less than 8 semesters)

Students are eligible to graduate early at the end of the fall or spring semester if they have completed all requirements for graduation, including the residence requirement. Students graduating early may not use intersession to complete remaining graduation requirements. Students may not graduate early during the summer.

Incomplete Grades and Graduation Status

Students with incomplete grades or missing grades in required courses at the date of conferral will not graduate.

Students who have completed at least 8 full-time semesters and have also met the residency requirement and who receive one or more incompletes in their last semester in attendance, may complete those incompletes and are not required to register for additional coursework unless required for their degree.

Students who have completed less than 8 full-time semesters and who receive one or more incompletes in their intended last fall or spring semester in attendance, are required to register for another full-time fall or spring semester (at least 12 credits) in order to complete all degree requirements (including the residency requirement).
Last Semester Option

In their last semester before graduation, students may request that they be excused from taking the final examination in one or more courses. This option is solely at the discretion of the course instructor. This option is not available to students who are graduating early.

S/U Option in the Last Semester

Students in their final semester, who will have completed at least eight full-time semesters in college when they graduate and who are taking more credits than are needed to complete graduation requirements, may take one or more of the extra courses for S/U credit. Engineering students must have the faculty advisor’s permission, indicated by his/her signature on an add/drop form, to request this option. The faculty advisor’s signature indicates that the student will have completed all degree requirements without this course. In addition, a signature from the Engineering advising office is needed to confirm that the senior has applied for graduation in the spring semester. Arts & Sciences students must seek approval from the Academic Advising Office.

The extra courses may also include up to 6 credits of independent academic work, either graded or S/U. In addition, the usual limit of no more than 6 credits per year of independent academic work will be waived if the additional credits are for extra credit work done in the final semester.

General and Departmental Honors at Graduation

Students may receive general honors, departmental honors, or both at graduation. General honors are awarded to students with cumulative grade point averages of 3.50 or better. The final determination is made after all grades have been reported. Departments set their own standards for the award of departmental honors. Students should consult with Director of Undergraduate Studies for their major about the requirements for honors. If a student believes that s/he has met the requirements for departmental honors, the student must complete a departmental honors form with the department’s advising coordinator and submit the form to the Office of Academic Advising (AS) or the Office of Engineering Advising (EN) with the coordinator’s approval signature.

General and departmental honors are noted on a student’s academic record following the student’s last undergraduate semester before graduation. In addition, honors are noted in the Commencement program. However, because the program is printed several weeks before the date of Commencement, not all honors are announced in time for inclusion in the program.

Completing an Honors Thesis

Students who are completing an honors thesis for departmental honors must complete the thesis before graduating. Students may not stay on after graduation to complete an honors thesis. Similarly, students graduating at midyear may not register part-time in the spring semester to finish an honors thesis.

Graduation Closes the Undergraduate Record

Upon graduation, the undergraduate record is closed. The only permitted changes are the resolution of incomplete grades, missing grades, and grade errors. These changes must be resolved by the first Monday after 30 days have lapsed since the degree conferral date. A student who has been cleared for graduation by completing all credit and course requirements for the bachelor’s degree in more than four and less than eight semesters may choose to enroll for an additional semester as a special student following completion of all degree requirements, subject to approval by the student’s advising office. A new transcript is started for students staying on after graduating.

Participation in Commencement

Commencement is a celebration for students who have completed all requirements for graduation. The student’s academic advising office determines whether students have completed all requirements and clears the student for graduation and participation in Commencement. Students expecting to complete their degree requirements for an August degree conferral should speak to their respective academic advising office with regard to their eligibility to participate in Commencement. The diploma will not be awarded until the final course is completed successfully and recorded.

Earning a Second Major or a Minor after Graduating

Students who have completed eight or more semesters in college may take additional courses after graduation to complete a second major or minor, or to further their studies on either a full-time or part-time basis. The courses, grades, and credits will appear on a new academic record. If the additional courses satisfy the requirements for a second major or a minor, a notation indicating the additional major or minor will be added to the new academic record. Students must notify their academic advising office when additional courses taken after graduation satisfy another major or minor.

Students who graduate in fewer than eight semesters may also take courses after graduation as a full-time or part-time student if not completing an additional major or minor. Students who graduate early lose the opportunity to complete additional majors or minors after graduation.

Students should seek assistance of their respective advising office in order to register for a course after graduation.

Second Degrees

Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and Whiting School of Engineering undergraduate-degree alumni who wish to earn a second bachelor’s degree at Hopkins must contact their advising office. Students who receive approval must have already completed the requirements for the first bachelor’s degree and complete an additional 60 credits at Hopkins and an additional four full-time semesters at Hopkins beyond what they have done for the first degree.