

# ACADEMICS

---

## Classification

Classification (year in school) is determined by the number of credits completed and reported to the registrar, and is based on credit hours earned, not merely credit hours attempted. The grades F and NP and the marks I and X do not contribute toward credit hours earned and thus are not considered in determining year in school. See Grades for information about the grading system at Iowa State University.

Classification in all colleges except Veterinary Medicine is as follows:

**Sophomore:** 30 credit hours earned

**Junior:** 60 credit hours earned

**Senior:** 90 credit hours earned

Students who have a bachelor's degree and are working toward another undergraduate degree, licensure, or admission to a specific graduate or professional program, are typically classified as a senior.

Transfer students without a degree are classified on the basis of credits accepted by Iowa State University.

Veterinary medicine students are promoted from the first- to the second-, third-, and fourth-year classes based upon satisfactory completion of the required courses for each year. To be promoted to the second-year class, students must have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 1.67 for all courses in the first year of the veterinary medicine curriculum. To be promoted to the third- and fourth-year classes, students must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 for all courses in the professional curriculum.

A student, who is attending Iowa State and decides not to work toward an undergraduate degree, will be classified as a special (nondegree) student. Admission requirements and academic standards regulations are the same as regular students. Credits taken as a special (nondegree) student are applicable for undergraduate degree purposes if the student is admitted later as a regular undergraduate. Credits obtained as an undergraduate special student may not, however, be applied toward a graduate degree.

Students enrolled in the Intensive English and Orientation Program (IEOP) are classified as special (nondegree) students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and usually are not permitted to enroll in academic courses until they have satisfied requirements for admission as regular students. Permission to enroll in one academic course may be granted under special circumstances.

## Degree Planning

### ISU Degree Audit

In addition to being properly registered, students are responsible for knowing the requirements for their degree and planning their schedule to meet those requirements. One way to monitor progress toward a degree is with the ISU degree audit.

Students may access their ISU degree audit through AccessPlus (<https://accessplus.iastate.edu/frontdoor/login.jsp>). The degree audit shows courses that have been completed, courses in which the student is currently enrolled, and graduation requirements that need to be completed for the student's curriculum.

Students should use the degree audit information to help them review progress towards their degrees(s), plan their course of study to complete degree requirements, and select courses for the next term. Graduation evaluators in the Office of the Registrar use the degree audit during the term a student will graduate to determine if the student will meet all degree requirements upon successful completion of the courses on the student's schedule that term.

In addition, through AccessPlus (<https://accessplus.iastate.edu/frontdoor/login.jsp>), students may request a degree audit for any major available at Iowa State. The audit results will show how their completed and in-progress course work applies toward other majors or options offered at the University.

For further information about how completed courses fulfill degree requirements or how other courses will apply toward their degree requirements, students should see their adviser.

### Two Bachelor's Degrees

Students may receive two bachelor's degrees if the requirements for each major (curriculum) are met and the total number of semester credits earned is at least 30 more than the requirements of the curriculum requiring the greater number of credits. This rule applies whether or not the degrees are awarded at the same time. Students should have an academic adviser in each major (curriculum), with one adviser being designated as the registration adviser. Students should request approval to pursue two degrees by completing the form, Request for Double Major/ Curriculum or Two Degrees. This form is available from advisers and classification offices. Each adviser will have access to the student's information after this form has been processed. The appropriate department and college must approve each degree program.

Students who have earned advanced degrees and wish to earn a second Bachelor's Degree may be eligible for a college waiver of certain basic and general education requirements. Students should contact the department offering the major for advice and appropriate planning.

## Double Major/Curriculum

A double major is a program for a single degree in which all requirements for two or more majors (curricula) have been met. The majors (curricula) may be in different colleges or within the same college or department. The diploma and permanent record will designate all majors (curricula) that are completed at the same time.

To declare a double major (curriculum), students should complete the form, "Request for a Double Major/Curriculum or Two Degrees." This form, available from advisers and classification offices, should be completed at least one term prior to graduation. One major (curriculum) should be designated as primary and the other secondary for purposes of record keeping, but the student's rights and responsibilities are the same in both majors. The adviser of the primary major will serve as the student's registration adviser, but both advisers will have access to the student's information. Degree programs must be approved for each major (curriculum) by the appropriate department and college. One of the majors may subsequently be canceled using the same form.

Students in the College of Engineering are able to earn a degree with a second major/curriculum as long as the second major/curriculum is within another college, meets all requirements of the additional programs and contains a minimum of 15 additional credits beyond the requirements for a B.S. degree in engineering for each additional area of study. A student with multiple curricula within the College of Engineering is permitted to earn only multiple degrees. All requirements for each curricula must be met plus an additional 30 credits for each curricula being pursued beyond the curriculum which requires the most credits.

Students with a primary major in another college who wish to take a second major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are not required to meet the Liberal Arts and Sciences General Education requirements. They must, however, meet all requirements for the major, including complementary courses. Students in the B.L.S. curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences do not have majors.

## Second Major (Curriculum) Completed after the Bachelor's Degree

After receiving a bachelor's degree, a person may wish to complete all requirements for another major (curriculum). Approval of the department of the second major (curriculum) is needed before study for the program is begun. At the completion of the program a notation will be made on the permanent record (transcript), but no change will be made on the diploma received at the time of graduation. A degree program must be approved for the second major/curriculum by the department and by the dean's office.

## Changing Curriculum or Major

A student's freedom to change their major, and the procedure that should be followed, depend on the student's academic standing and on policies of individual colleges as approved by the provost.

1. If students have never been dismissed and reinstated, they may change their major by consulting first with their adviser. Procedures for changing curriculum or major are as follows:
  - a. If the change involves majors within the same college, they should check with the college office to obtain instructions as to how to make the change.
  - b. If the change involves majors in different colleges, they should obtain a Change of Curriculum/Major form and their file from their adviser, present these materials to the student services office of their present college, then to the student services office of the college to which they are transferring, and finally to the office of their new major.
2. Students on academic probation (P) may be restricted by rules outlined in the section on Additional Academic Standards Regulations.
3. Students who have been reinstated may not transfer to another college within the university during the first term following reinstatement, and they may not at any time transfer back to the college that originally dismissed them without the permission of the academic standards committee of that college.

## Declaring a Minor

Many departments and programs in the university specify requirements for an undergraduate minor. A record of requirements completed appears on students' transcripts. All minors require at least 15 credits, including at least 6 credits in courses numbered 300 or above taken at Iowa State University. The minor must include at least 9 credits that are not used to meet any other department, college, or university requirement. Courses taken for a minor may not be taken on a pass-not pass basis. See [/collegescurricula/#minors](#) for additional information regarding policies which govern minors. To declare a minor, students must submit a completed Request for a Minor form to their college office at least one term before graduation. The minor may be from the catalog under which the student is graduating or a later catalog.

## Undergraduate Certificates

An undergraduate certificate provides a way to give formal recognition of focused study in a specialized area that is less comprehensive than required for an undergraduate major.

An undergraduate certificate has the following requirements and understandings:

1. A minimum of 20 credits, with at least 12 credits taken at ISU which are applicable towards the undergraduate certificate requirements
2. At least 9 of the credits taken at Iowa State University must be in courses numbered 300 or above
3. At least 9 credits used for a certificate may not be used to meet any other department, college, or university requirement for the baccalaureate degree except to satisfy the total credit requirement for graduation and to meet credit requirements in courses numbered 300 or above
4. A student may not receive both an undergraduate major and a certificate of the same name
5. For students earning an ISU baccalaureate degree, a certificate is awarded concurrent with or after the ISU baccalaureate degree
6. A certificate is not awarded if the baccalaureate requirements are not finished
7. After receiving a baccalaureate degree from any accredited institution, a student may enroll at ISU to earn a certificate
8. Courses taken for a certificate may not be taken on a pass-not pass basis
9. A cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 is required in all courses taken at ISU towards the certificate
10. A notation of a completed certificate will be made on a student's transcript and a printed certificate will be awarded.

## Appeal of Academic Grievances

Students who believe a faculty member (in his or her academic capacity) has behaved unfairly or unprofessionally may have their grievance reviewed through the procedure described below. A student may not initiate an appeal more than one year following completion of the course, and may not initiate the appeal of a course grade beyond midterm of the semester following completion of the course.

Prior to initiating a formal appeal, a student may wish to discuss the situation informally with the Dean of Students or designee, who can offer advice as to the most effective way to deal with it.

Grievances arising out of classroom or other academic situations should be resolved, if at all possible, with the student and the instructor involved. If resolution cannot be reached, or if the grievance involves sexual or racial harassment and the student prefers not to deal directly with the instructor, the student should discuss the grievance with the instructor's

department chair and submit it in writing to him or her. The department chair will investigate the grievance, including discussing it with the instructor involved and/or referring it to a departmental grievance committee. The department chair should respond in writing within five class days of receipt of the written notice of the grievance.

If the student is not satisfied with the resolution of the grievance proposed by the department chair, the student may appeal in writing to the dean of the instructor's college. (In the case of a grievance involving a Graduate College policy or procedure, an appeal of the chair's decision should be directed to the Dean of the Graduate College rather than to the dean of the instructor's college.)

The dean will hear the explanations of the department chair and instructor, and should respond to the student in writing within ten class days of receipt of the written notice of the appeal. If the grievance cannot be resolved with the dean, the student may forward a written appeal to the provost, who will convene a Committee to Review Student Grievances (see below) to consider the appeal within ten class days of receipt of the written notice of the appeal.

Within five class days following the convening of the committee, the provost will make a decision with regard to the grievance and will transmit this decision in writing to the grievant, the dean, the department chair, and the instructor. An appeal of the provost's decision may be made to the president of the university. The time limit specified at each level may be extended by mutual agreement of all parties concerned.

The Committee to Review Student Grievances is composed of faculty members named by the president of the Faculty Senate and students named by the president of the Government of the Student Body. The provost may serve as a chairperson for the committee, or may designate another chairperson for a specific grievance hearing. A minimum of two faculty members, two students, and the chairperson shall constitute a quorum for the convening committee.

## Graduation

Seniors must file a graduation application with the Graduation Office, 210 Enrollment Services Center. Students will be notified of their graduation status approximately mid semester of their graduation term. For graduation application instructions and deadlines, go to the Graduation and Commencement web site (<http://www.graduation.iastate.edu>).

Iowa State University commencement ceremonies are held at the end of fall and spring semesters. Undergraduate students expected to graduate at the end of summer semester are invited to participate in the spring ceremony preceding their graduation term or the fall ceremony following their graduation term. In addition to the formal University commencement ceremony, the undergraduate colleges host graduation activities take place at the end of fall and spring semesters. For

more information see [www.registrar.iastate.edu/graduation/](http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/graduation/) (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/graduation/>)

Verification of satisfactory final grades will be completed approximately two weeks after the end of the semester and diplomas will be mailed to all successful degree candidates. Students must ensure the following before they can graduate:

1. Registration for the term has been completed and the date of graduation is correct on the degree audit printout.
2. Sufficient credits, acceptable toward graduation, have been earned to meet the minimum requirements for their curriculum. (Some examples of credit not acceptable toward graduation are: elective credits beyond those allowed in a curriculum, credits earned in passing the same course more than once, more than four credits of Athletics 101, and credit in two courses for which the catalog states that only one may count toward graduation.)
3. They have achieved a set of communication competencies established by the department as appropriate for the major.
4. A cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 was earned in all work taken at Iowa State; and student has met all special grade point average requirements established by their college, department, or program in specified courses.
  - a. Students admitted from another college or university with a quality-point deficiency, must have earned sufficient quality points above a 2.00 at Iowa State to offset their transfer grade point deficiency.
  - b. Students who have taken work at another college or university prior to or after having been a student at Iowa State, must have submitted a transcript of all such college study attempted to the Office of Admissions. This work must average 2.00 or the deficiency of quality points will be assessed against the student. Failure to submit such a transcript is grounds for dismissal.
5. Incompletes in courses required for graduation have been removed by midterm of the term of graduation.
6. At least 32 credits have been earned in residence at Iowa State University, and the final 32 credits were taken at Iowa State. (Six of the last 32 credits may be transferred to Iowa State, with prior permission of their major department.) Iowa State University must receive an official transcript of all transfer work by midterm of the term of graduation.
7. Outstanding financial obligations owed the university have been paid in full. Students who owe an outstanding obligation to the university will have a hold placed on their records and they will not receive their transcripts. If students have questions about this policy, they should contact the graduation area of the Office of the Registrar.

## **Class Attendance**

In order to attend a given class, a student must be registered for that class for credit or audit. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the instructor of the course. See Index, Validation of Enrollment for regulations concerning attendance to validate students' enrollment in a class.

Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled. Each instructor sets his or her policy with respect to class attendance, and excuses for absence from class are handled between the student and instructor. The instructor is expected to announce his or her policy at the beginning of the course.

Additional information regarding discretionary accommodation for disability and religion are available at <http://www.hrs.iastate.edu/AAO/eod/reasonaccom.shtml>

## **Veteran Attendance**

Students who receive benefits from the Veterans Administration required by the V.A. to attend class regularly to maintain their V.A. eligibility. If the instructor knows that a student receiving V.A. benefits is not attending class, the instructor is obligated to notify the Office of the Registrar and a notification will be forwarded to the Veterans Administration. More information about veteran benefits is available at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/veterans/>.

## **Field Trips/Curricular-Related Activities**

Trips away from campus as part of a course are often appropriate educational experiences. They may not, however, take place during the first or last week of the semester, nor may they extend over more than two consecutive class days (Monday -Friday); these regulations may be waived only by special permission of the dean of the college in which the course is offered. Students should consult with instructors whose classes will be missed. If a mutually satisfactory agreement between three instructors and the student cannot be reached, the student cannot be required to attend the curricular-related activity or be penalized by the instructor for missing the curricular-related activity.

Special fees are often charged to cover the costs of field trips. Field trip fees are noted in the Schedule of Classes (<http://classes.iastate.edu>).

## **Excusable Absences for Non-Curricular Reasons**

Students who miss class for non-curricular reasons are responsible for completing all assigned course requirements in a timely manner. Instructors should provide timely opportunities for students to make-up or replace missed scheduled examinations and/or assignments resulting from an excusable absence. While instructors are free to change the format of make-up examinations or assignments, students will be evaluated by the same standards as other members of the class.

In all cases, the person responsible for the event or activity should provide participants with a letter explaining the proposed absence and its duration including travel times for off-campus events and activities. Students must provide this documentation to instructors at least 10 days in advance of the activity or event, except when such notice is not possible.

Course instructors retain final authority regarding student absences and how they impact course grades and the acceptability of a student's work toward passing their course. If a student must miss, for any reason, a portion of a course that, in the considered opinion of the course instructor, is critical to the student's ability to meet the course objectives, the instructor must recommend alternative actions to the student, which may include dropping the class.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities as a Representative of the University**

Students may seek to or be asked to participate as an Iowa State University representative in non-credit events (competitions, conferences, presentations, programs, and performances) scheduled by academic or athletic units of the university at times that conflict with scheduled classes.

Instructors shall excuse students who miss class while representing Iowa State University in official department-or university-sponsored activities, including:

- academic or professional conferences and workshops
- intercollegiate athletic, academic, and judging competitions
- musical, theatrical, dance and other artistic performances
- presentations or programs given to external audiences

### **Other Extra-Curricular Activities**

Instructors will determine whether other absences not officially sponsored by a unit of the University (e.g., conference attendance, job interviews), will be treated as excused.

### **Military Service**

Instructors shall excuse absences due to performing required National Guard or other United States military service obligations (other than annual training). When a student is called to active duty for more than two weeks, instructors should meet with the student and the student's adviser to discuss the situation and academic options. University procedures are in place for such situations and should be followed.

### **Court Appearances**

Instructors shall excuse absences due to officially mandated court appearances including jury duty.

## **Examinations and Evaluation Evaluation Procedures**

It is university policy that the instructor shall inform the students at the beginning of each course of the evaluation procedures planned for use in the course.

### **Retention of Records**

Records of all graded work must be retained by the instructors until midterm of the semester following completion of a course or until all pending appeals and incompletes are resolved, whichever is later. Instructors leaving the university must file records of all graded work with their department office before departure.

### **Examinations**

Examinations are one of the most common ways instructors assess student performance. In order that examinations can be a useful part of the educational process, the following policies have been instituted:

1. One purpose of examinations is to help students' learning. Therefore, examinations should be evaluated as soon as possible after they are given and the results should be made available to the students in a timely way to enhance learning.
2. All tests and examinations administered between the beginning of the term and final examination week shall be held during a regularly scheduled lecture or laboratory class period for that course. A department may obtain approval to administer a separately scheduled examination if all of the following criteria are met:
  - a. The course is multi-sectioned.
  - b. A common departmentally developed examination will be administered to all students in all sections at the same time.
  - c. The test scores will be used as a basis for a uniform grading procedure for all sections of the course. Requests to hold separately scheduled examinations must be made to the registrar and approved by the provost in time to be announced in the Schedule of Classes to allow students to plan in advance. Only under unusual circumstances will a course be approved for separately scheduled examinations if the deadline is past to include notification in the Schedule of Classes. Whenever a separately scheduled examination is administered, a regular class meeting during that week shall be omitted. Students who are unable to take a separately scheduled examination at the scheduled time indicated in the Schedule of Classes, because of a course conflict or other legitimate reason must notify the instructor in advance and must be given the opportunity to be examined at another time mutually convenient for the student and the instructor. The instructor shall determine

whether to administer the same examination or an alternate examination, or use an alternate assessment procedure.

3. At the end of the semester, a week is set aside for final examinations or other term evaluations, with a two-hour period normally scheduled for each course. The following policies govern the responsibilities of students and faculty members during this week:

- a. Final exams may not be given at a time other than that for which the exam is scheduled by the registrar. An instructor may not give a final exam prior to final exam week nor change the time of offering of the final examination as it appears in the final exam schedule. Permission to change the time for which an exam is scheduled may be given only by the dean of the college. If the instructor elects not to give a final exam in a course of two or more credits, the class is required to meet at the scheduled final exam period for other educational activity such as a review of the course or feedback on previous exams.
- b. Final exam periods are determined according to the regularly scheduled meeting time of the class. However, certain courses are assigned special group exam times so that several sections of the same course may be tested together. The criteria for establishing special group exams are similar to those listed for separately scheduled exams listed in number 2 above. If this results in conflicting group examination periods, students should inform the instructor in charge of the first of the two conflicting courses as listed on the final exam schedule within the special groups in question; that instructor is responsible for arranging a special examination or making some other adjustment.
- c. Evening courses with lectures scheduled at 6:00 p.m. or later should give their examinations during finals week from 7:00-9:00 p.m. on the day the class normally meets. If this exam conflicts with an evening group exam, the instructor responsible for the latter must arrange a special examination for any students who have a conflict.
- d. If unusual circumstances involve the need for students to change the time of their final examination, they must obtain the approval of the instructor of the course.
- e. If a student has three examinations scheduled on the same calendar day and wishes to change one to another day, the instructor of the course having the smallest number of students is responsible for arranging an alternate examination time for the student unless make-up exam times are available in one of the other courses.
- f. All faculty members and teaching assistants with instructional or grading responsibilities are considered to be on duty throughout

the entire final examination week and are expected to be available to students during that week for discussion of any matters pertaining to the final examination and final grade or to other aspects of the course.

## Dead Week

For each Fall and Spring semester, the last full week of classes before final examinations is designated as Dead Week. The intent of this policy is to establish a one-week period of substantial and predictable study time for undergraduate students. During the Dead Week period, regular lectures are expected to continue, including the introduction of new content, as deemed appropriate by the instructor. The restrictions established by this Dead Week policy are:

- Due dates for mandatory graded submissions of any kind that fall within Dead Week must be listed on the syllabus provided at the start of the course.
- Mandatory final examinations may not be given during the Dead Week period except for laboratory courses or courses that meet weekly and for which there is no contact during the normal final examination week.
- Registered ISU Student Organizations may not hold any meetings, functions, or sponsored events during the Dead Week period. Any exception to these restrictions must be authorized in advance by Office of the Dean of Students.

## Scholastic Recognition

The university recognizes those students who are doing exceptionally well in several ways, including the following.

1. **Dean's List.** Each semester the university issues a dean's list made up of those students who have carried at least 12 credit hours of graded or S-F courses with a 3.50 grade-point average or above for the semester. Courses taken on a P-NP basis do not count as part of the 12-credit hour requirement. No dean's list is issued for summer school. The list can be viewed from the Office of the Registrar web site (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu>).
2. **Top 2 Percent.** Each spring semester, undergraduate students in the top 2% of their class (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) within their college, based on cumulative grade point average, are recognized. In addition to a congratulatory letter from the university president, a notation of the accomplishment is recorded on the student's permanent record.
3. **Graduation with Distinction.** Undergraduates who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 or higher at the beginning of their final term

are eligible to graduate "with distinction" provided they have completed 60 semester credits of coursework at Iowa State University at the time they graduate, including a minimum of 50 graded credits.

**4. Cumulative grade point recognition.** Students who graduate with a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 or higher are recognized as follows:

- Summa Cum Laude: cumulative grade point average of 3.90 or higher.
- Magna Cum Laude: cumulative grade point average of 3.70 to 3.89.
- Cum Laude: cumulative grade point average of 3.50 to 3.69.

This recognition appears on the student's official transcript and diploma and in the commencement program.

**5. Candidates for the bachelor of liberal studies degree** may be graduated with distinction providing that they (a) have completed 45 semester credits of coursework at the three Iowa Regent universities at the time of graduation, (b) have earned at least a 3.50 cumulative grade point average at ISU, and (c) their combined grade point average for coursework taken at the three Iowa Regent universities meets the honors cutoff specified above.

**6. Honors Program.** Students who are full members of the University Honors Program prior to Fall Semester 2011 must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.35 or higher at the beginning of their final term. Students becoming full members during Fall Semester 2011 or later need a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 at the beginning of their final term. In addition to meeting the appropriate grade point requirement, students will have completed an approved honors program of study and an honors project prior to graduation. This recognition appears on the student's permanent record and diploma, and in the commencement program.