

# Graduation and Commencement

## Applying to Graduate

Candidates for graduation should apply to graduate at least one year prior to the anticipated graduation date. The preferred deadline for applying is May 1 (Spring/Summer graduates) or December 1 (Fall/Interterm graduates). This student-initiated step begins the graduation tracking process.

The student and advisor should utilize My TU Degree to review all outstanding requirements for graduation. For students who apply for graduation by the preferred deadline above, the Office of the Registrar will review each student's progress toward graduation during summer (for Spring/Summer graduates) or December or January (for Fall/Interterm graduates). Any outstanding requirement should be addressed by March 1 for Commencement participants and all requirements must be met for degree conferral. Students anticipating a Summer completion must register for or notify the Assistant Registrar of the status of all planned Summer courses by April 15.

If deficiencies exist in My TU Degree, the student will not be eligible for participation in Commencement; it is the student's responsibility to notify his or her family. If the deficiencies are addressed and My TU Degree shows no outstanding requirements (with the exception of the senior comprehensive requirement, major/minor participation requirement, and planned Summer courses not to exceed 8 credit hours) by April 15, the student will be eligible to participate in Commencement. Students addressing deficiencies after April 15, but up to one week prior to Commencement, may request permission to participate in Commencement; however, the student might not be included in the Commencement program even if approved to participate.

Students with two additional semesters remaining for graduation should visit <https://www.taylor.edu/offices/registrar/graduation> for details regarding applying to graduate. Students are solely responsible for ensuring that their academic programs comply with the policies of the University and meet all graduation requirements.

## Commencement and Diplomas

A student may complete graduation requirements and officially graduate at the end of any Taylor University instructional term concluding in December, January, May, June, July, or August. Only one Commencement ceremony is held—in May at the end of the Spring semester. Attendance at Commencement is expected; however, if a graduate is unable to participate, written notification of *in absentia* must be submitted to the Assistant Registrar by April 15. Students are eligible to participate in a maximum of one Commencement per level of degree. Graduates subsequently completing a higher degree at Taylor would be eligible to participate in Commencement again. Participation in Commencement does not guarantee official graduation from Taylor University.

A Summer graduation candidate should participate in Commencement if no more than 8 credit hours remain, and the student provides the Assistant Registrar by April 15 details of all planned Summer courses to be completed by the respective official Summer graduation date. Fall and Interterm graduates are eligible to participate in the ceremony following their official graduation. Any exceptions must be approved by the Dean after the student has been approved to graduate.

Any outstanding course, including incompletes, will prevent the conferral of the degree. A student intending to take additional courses beyond graduation must apply as a guest student or extend the graduation date. Diplomas should be mailed to graduates within three weeks of the conferral date following submission of final grades and completion of the final degree audit by the Office of the Registrar. Graduates must fulfill all financial obligations to the University before receiving a diploma.

## Honors

In recognition of superior scholarship, the University awards three levels of honors at graduation: *summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude*. *Summa cum laude* is awarded to those with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.90; or *magna cum laude* is awarded to those students with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.70; or *cum laude* is awarded to those students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.50.

Graduation honors placed on diplomas and transcripts are designated for those students who have fully completed all course work and requirements for their baccalaureate degrees. Graduation honors are computed on Taylor University credit hours only; fifty percent of the minimum degree hours must be completed through Taylor University. Associate and Master degrees are not eligible to receive honors.

**For Commencement ceremony purposes only**, honors will be announced and appropriate honors regalia worn using the cumulative GPA calculated after January interterm. No grades from Spring (immediately preceding Commencement) will be used in calculating honors for Commencement. Only honors regalia provided by the University, based upon cumulative GPA, may be worn during Commencement; no regalia from honor societies or other organizations may be worn during the ceremony.

## Major/Minor GPA Calculation

Only courses with a grade of C- or better will count in satisfying major/minor credit hour requirements. However, the institutional methodology for computing the major or minor GPA will be to include all courses that could be counted toward the major/minor, including courses in which a grade below C- is earned. This includes excessive major electives and courses taken in concentrations, specialties, tracks, education, and systems. For courses that have been repeated through Taylor due to an unsatisfactory grade, the previous attempt is excluded from GPA calculations and credit totals but remains on the transcript.

All major and minor programs have a 2.30 major and minor GPA requirement with the exceptions of social work which requires a 2.50 major GPA and the Honors Guild which requires a 3.40 cumulative GPA. Individual programs may have circumstances unique to the discipline that would suggest that major or minor GPA requirements might be more appropriately computed in a specific manner; these exceptions are listed within the curriculum requirements for those majors and minors.

## My TU Degree Audit

My TU Degree is the official degree audit system provided to students, faculty, and staff to track progress toward graduation. Students are responsible to regularly review the degree audit to ensure all degree requirements are being met and that the academic plan (e.g., four-year plan) keeps the student on track for degree completion. Students should review the degree audit with the advisor to determine courses in which to register for upcoming terms and to create or update a four-year plan.

Any student meeting a requirement by a course not listed in the audit must submit a course substitution form (approved by the chair of the department requiring the course); after submission to the Office of the Registrar, the student's My TU Degree audit will be updated to show the course meeting the specific requirement. Students must contact the Office of the Registrar for clarification of any discrepancies experienced with the catalog, curriculum guides, degree audit, staff, and faculty.

## Senior Comprehensive Examination/Paper/Project

A candidate for a baccalaureate degree must successfully complete a comprehensive examination, project, or paper in the major field of study. This requirement is expected to be completed during the senior year. A student is allowed a maximum of three attempts to pass the comprehensive requirement in any single major. If a student intends to graduate with more than one major, a comprehensive examination, project, or paper is required for each major. The examinations, projects, or papers are to be marked superior, pass, or fail. Advisors can discuss available options for a specific major.