

Senior Information



Welcome to your senior year at Salem State University! We want your final year at Salem State to be a rewarding and enriching learning experience. You've come this far and your achievements and academic successes are reason for celebration. To help you navigate through this year, we have provided the answers to questions frequently asked by seniors.

How do I apply for my degree?

- **Fall 2011 Completers:** Applications are available online via Navigator beginning September 1, 2011 and are due October 15, 2011. Degrees for students completing in the Fall 2011 semester are conferred on January 20, 2012 and diplomas will be mailed in mid-March.
- **Spring 2012 Completers:** Applications will be available online via Navigator beginning December 1, 2011 and are due **January 31, 2012**. Degrees will be officially conferred on May 19, 2012. Students attending Commencement will receive their diplomas at the ceremony. All others will be mailed in mid-July to your permanent address on file in Navigator.
- **Summer 2012 Completers:** Applications will be available online via Navigator beginning December 1, 2011. The **early application deadline is March 15, 2012** for those summer completers who meet the criteria to participate in Commencement. The **late application deadline is July 1, 2012** for those who will not attend the May 2012 Commencement ceremony. Degrees will be officially conferred on August 31, 2012 and diplomas will be mailed in mid-October 2012.

Can I participate in Commencement even though I won't be finished with my degree requirements?

If you have 12 or fewer credits to complete over the Summer 2012 term and have a cumulative GPA of 2.000 as of the end of the Fall 2011 semester and will complete those remaining requirements in the Summer 2012 term, you are eligible to participate in the May 2012 Commencement ceremony. You will need to apply for graduation for the Summer 2012 term by the early application deadline of **March 15, 2012** and indicate that you want to participate in the May 2012 ceremony.

What will my diploma say and how will my name appear?

When you fill out your Application for Degree, you are given the opportunity to choose exactly how your name will appear on your diploma. Make sure to complete the information carefully so your name appears exactly as you would like it to.

The diploma you will receive is dependent upon your major. Most majors will receive a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science. The exceptions are: the Bachelor of Fine Arts, the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (for the Interdisciplinary Studies or one of the Liberal Studies concentrations), the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, the Bachelor of Social Work and the Bachelor of Science in Nursing. All other majors will receive a diploma that reads Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts.

When is Graduation?

Undergraduate Commencement ceremonies will be held on May 19, 2012. Information on the details of the May 2012 Commencement ceremonies will be available online in the Spring 2012 semester at salemstate.edu/commencement.

How do I find out exactly which classes and requirements I have left before I can graduate?

All students who are following a flowsheet dated Fall 2007 or later will now be able to track their course, credit and GPA requirements in real time! Use the new Degree Tracker to verify that all degree requirements will be met in time for graduation. Log into your Navigator account online and click *Student Home*, *Academic Home* and finally *View My Advisement Report*.

Degree Tracker will give you an interactive academic advisement report from your academic home that will:

- Show your courses and grades and how they fit into your degree program, including core, major and minor requirements
- Help you choose your courses for upcoming semesters
- Show you missing requirements
- Let you create a model of your requirements if you are thinking of making any changes to your program, such as changing your concentration or adding a minor

If you are following a flowsheet with an effective date prior to Fall 2007, or your major is the Bachelor of Liberal Studies – Interdisciplinary Studies concentration in any year, the advisement report will not be available to you in Navigator. During your senior year, Academic Advising and the Registrar’s Office will send you a manually generated *Senior Degree Progress Report*, also known as a *Senior Audit*. All students in senior status (90 credits at the beginning of the Fall semester) are audited, and audits are sent out in the mail throughout the Summer and Fall semester. Generally speaking, a student who begins the academic year in senior status can expect to receive an audit before Add/Drop in the Spring semester.

What is a Senior Degree Progress Report/Senior Audit?

If you are one of those mentioned above, you will find that your Senior Degree Progress Report lists all courses you need to complete and other academic requirements that need to be fulfilled before you can graduate. It is very important that you read and make sure you understand the material in this report— your eligibility for graduation and the certification of your completion depends upon your successful completion of the requirements outlined on the audit.

What if I don’t agree with my Degree Tracker advisement report or my Senior Degree Progress Report/Senior Audit?

If you believe an error has been made on your audit, you should contact Academic Advising at (978) 542-7049 or a member of the graduation team at (978) 542-6300 in the Registrar’s Office to make an appointment as soon as possible. Many issues can be resolved, but it is your responsibility to follow up and address any concerns you may have about your requirements.

What is a substitution note and when do I need one?

In some circumstances, a department Chairperson may approve an alternative course in lieu of a support course or a major course. Any substitutions or changes from the standard curriculum as outlined on your flowsheet must be approved in writing. This permission must be on file in the Registrar’s Office before the substitution is officially applied to your record. All previously received substitutions will be entered into Degree Tracker and will be applied accordingly to your degree program for you to see in your academic advisement report.

What are the Q, V, W Requirements and How Do Know if I Need to Do Them?

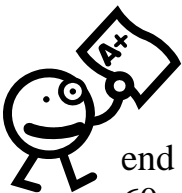
All students who entered the University in Fall 2006 or later will need to fulfill the *Quantitative (Q), Diversity (V) and Writing (W)* requirements. Information on how to fulfill these requirements can be found in the University catalog at catalog.salemstate.edu/.

What are the GPA (Grade Point Average) requirements for Graduation?



You must have a cumulative GPA of 2.000 and a 2.000 average in your major in order to graduate from Salem State University. Your major GPA includes all courses taken in your major department, but does NOT include any required support courses outside your major. It does, however, include major courses from other departments that are not separately labeled as support courses. Degree Tracker will help you by displaying your major GPA when it has been satisfied; however, if not satisfied it will not display in the academic advisement report. For those following flowsheets prior to Fall 2007, a worksheet has been provided at the end of this document to assist you in calculating your major GPA. Your major may have additional GPA requirements—if you have questions, please review your academic advisement report or consult your senior audit and speak with your faculty advisor.

How are Degree Honors assigned?



Honors categories for the Commencement ceremony are assigned based on your Salem State cumulative GPA at the end of the Fall semester. Final degree honors are based on your cumulative GPA at the end of your final semester. To qualify for honors, you must have completed 60 credits in residence at Salem State University and have attained a GPA within the range indicated below. You will receive your honors seal to affix to your diploma after your degree is recorded on your transcript during the summer term following Commencement.

The criteria for degree honors are as follows:

Summa cum laude – 3.750 – 4.000

Magna cum laude – 3.500 – 3.749

Cum laude – 3.000 – 3.499

What should I do if I am a day student but I want to take my last few classes in the evening through the School of Continuing and Professional Studies?

If you have 12 or fewer credits left before graduation, you are eligible to maintain your day status while taking evening courses. You must write to the Registrar's Office and inform the University of your intention to complete your requirements outside the day school. It is important to complete this step, because if you are not registered in day classes, you may be administratively withdrawn from the University. If you have more than 12 credits to complete, you must fill out an Internal Transfer to the Evening Division form in order to continue your studies in the evening. These forms may be obtained in the Registrar's Office.


What do I need to do if I plan to take one or more of my remaining courses at another college?

- **Outside Course Form.** Before you take any course at another college or university, you must have the permission of the department chairperson. Make sure to drop by Academic Advising or the Registrar's Office to obtain an Outside Course Request form. Complete the form and ask an advisor if a transfer decision is on file for the course. If so, permission to take the outside course will be entered for you. If no decision is on file then you may need to have your request form signed by the chairperson of the department to which the course belongs (for example, if you plan to take Introduction to Sociology at North Shore Community College, you may need to have the Chairperson of the Sociology department sign the Outside Course Form). The forms are available in Academic Advising and should be returned to the Registrar's Office after signing. (Forms also at saalemstate.edu/registrar/.)
- **Outside Courses during the Spring semester.** If you are taking one of your remaining courses at an outside college or university during the Spring semester, you must bring official verification of your enrollment in the course to the Registrar's Office in order to be eligible to participate in Commencement. You will not receive your diploma until the official transcript of the course is on file in your student record.
- **Official Transcript.** Before you can graduate, you must have an official copy of your transcript from the outside college on file with the Registrar's Office at Salem State University. Drop off or request that your transcript be sent to the attention of Rebecca Lea in the Registrar's Office at Salem State University. Remember that you must receive a C- or better in order to transfer a course into Salem State University.



- **Notify the Registrar’s Office.** If you are a day student not taking any courses at Salem State University during the semester in which you are taking outside courses, you must inform the Registrar’s Office in writing of your intention to complete your degree requirements outside of the school. Otherwise you may be administratively withdrawn for a lack of registration.

Things to Remember During Your Senior Year

- **Student Academic Responsibilities.** It is your responsibility to read and understand all academic and other requirements of the University. If you have any questions or concerns about those requirements, you should schedule an appointment with an Academic Advisor or the Senior Auditor. We are here to help you navigate through your final year. 
- **Outstanding Incompletes and Grade Changes.** Remember that all incompletes must be completed by the end of the sixth week of the following semester. If you fail to complete the course within this time frame, your grade of “I” will automatically become a grade of “F.” Outstanding incompletes or missing grades in required courses will affect your eligibility to participate in Commencement. A course cannot be applied to your degree requirements until you have successfully completed the work and a grade has been submitted by the instructor.
- **Internships and Directed Studies.** Remember that you must register for your internship or directed study and a grade must be submitted by your faculty supervisor in order for the course to fulfill your academic requirements. Internships and directed studies taken during the summer must be paid and registered for through the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. If a course is not on your transcript, it cannot be applied towards your degree requirements.
- **Don’t Wait Until May 1st.** If you have questions or concerns about any aspect of your academic record, please address them as soon as possible. The spring semester is a very busy time for faculty, students and staff—the longer you wait to resolve an issue, the more likely it is that you may have difficulties with graduation.
- **Current Address Information.** The University sends out many communications to students during their senior year. Also, your diploma will be mailed to the permanent address on file if you do not attend Commencement. Make sure that you don’t miss anything. Keep your permanent address and telephone information current in Navigator.



Other Resources

- **Stressed Out?** You're not alone! Many seniors find their final year difficult and there are people here to help. Personal concerns and challenges are a normal part of the college experience. Students frequently seek counseling for help with family or relationship difficulties, depression, anxiety, or dealing with stressful events. Counseling & Health Services offers confidential short-term individual and group counseling, workshops, and consultation. The staff consists of licensed clinicians and advanced graduate interns. Appropriate community referrals are provided when necessary. To make an appointment, call (978) 542-6410. More information can be found at salemstate.edu/counseling/.
- **What's Next?** Wondering what to do after graduation? It's never too late to visit Career Services in the Ellison Campus Center. Their staff is committed to helping you with your career decisions and planning for the job search. From help with career choices to resume writing, practice interviews, graduate school planning and recruitment opportunities, our Career Services Center has extensive resources to aid you in reaching your goals. For more information, go online to salemstate.edu/careersvcs/ or email career@salemstate.edu.
- **Thinking About Graduate School?** For more information on Salem State University's many graduate programs, or to receive information about an upcoming Open House, contact the Graduate School at (978) 542-6323. If you are interested in further study at the graduate level at another institution, the staff in Career Services and the faculty in your major department can provide information and guidance.
- **Senior Events.** The University sends out information to all seniors about Senior Week activities in late March. Questions should be directed to the Campus Center Office at (978) 542-6440.

