Applying for Graduation

Graduation and officially receiving a degree are not automatic. Students must officially notify the Office of Registration and Records of their intentions to graduate. Do not assume that graduation is an automatic outcome of your having completed the minimum requirements for a degree. The College won’t take steps to graduate you until you officially apply for graduation and there are several very good reasons for this. It would be a massive task for the College to be continually scanning the records of more than 9,000 students to ascertain when each will be ready to receive a degree. Once a student has graduated with a baccalaureate degree, the undergraduate record is closed. Therefore, a student cannot decide at some later date to add a minor or any other program to it, or to improve the GPA by repeating a course, or to add a teacher certification program to it. Also, once the degree is posted, a student is ineligible for most any kind of financial aid that is offered for undergraduates. If a student decides that s/he wants to take additional courses once the baccalaureate degree has been posted, s/he will be required to reapply through the appropriate admissions office prior to taking those courses. Students must be very sure about when their degree is to be awarded to prevent any future problems.

Application for Graduation

Undergraduates with 84 completed credits and graduate students with 21 completed credits are eligible to apply for graduation. Completing the online Application for Graduation starts the graduation review process. The Application for Graduation can be found on the Office of Registration and Records web site at www.brockport.edu/registrar.

Undergraduate applications for graduation must be submitted at the beginning of the student’s senior year and for graduate applications, no later than mid-term of the semester in which all requirements will have been met.

The online application asks the student to enter the way they wish their name to appear on the diploma, their degree type, the major(s), minor(s), track/concentration area(s), in which term the degree will be completed, if they plan to attend the commencement ceremony, the address for diploma mailing and a telephone number where they can be reached.

Completing the online application for graduation is the first step in the graduation process and sets in motion other related processes involving the Commencement Office. The application alerts the Office of Registration and Records of your plans to graduate and initiates a review of your academic
record. It also alerts the Office of College Events if you wish to attend the Commencement ceremony. Following the completion of the degree review, the Office of Registration and Records notifies all students of their degree status at their Brockport email address. In the event that the review of your records is unfavorable, the email will provide a detailed list of the problems. If you and your advisor have met regularly each semester to discuss your degree progress, your chances of receiving one of these fairly unpopular notifications will be minimized.

**Graduation.** Degrees are officially awarded effective May, August, December and January. It is important not to confuse “graduation” with “commencement.” The College awards the degree when the Office of Registration and Records has determined that all requirements have been successfully completed at the end of the final semester and notes that fact on the official college transcript. Only then has the student graduated.

**Commencement.** All potential degree candidates for May, August, December and January are eligible to participate in the Commencement ceremony. While degrees are awarded for each of these review periods, the College holds only one Commencement ceremony each year in May. However, participation in the Commencement ceremony does not necessarily constitute graduation. Commencement is the public celebration of that accomplishment, but it is a ceremony, and not the actual graduation itself.

Most students complete their degree requirements for May. If not, some are able to finish them over the summer session and graduate in August. Similarly, students who are unable to finish their requirements over the summer may be able to complete them during the following fall semester and graduate in December or finish over the winter session and graduate in January. A nominal commencement fee is charged to all students within one year of scheduled graduation. This fee is mandatory and is not contingent on student participation in Commencement ceremonies.

**Diplomas.** The diploma isn’t the only source of legal proof that the student has completed a degree. As soon as final grades have been posted and a final review of the student’s records has been completed to ensure that all requirements have been met, the Office of Registration and Records will place that notation on the official transcript as the real proof of the completion of the degree. It is important to understand that an employer or graduate school will require an official transcript as the real proof of degree completion, not the diploma. The official transcript will be ready as soon as the Office of Registration and Records can complete the final review and post the degree.

The diploma will not arrive at the address requested on the Application for Graduation until several weeks after the degree has been posted on the transcript. It is important to remember that a request for an address change on the College records will not affect the diploma address. **If the diploma address needs to be changed, the student must request it specifically.** To be awarded their diploma, students must be in good financial standing with the College. If a hold exists on their account, the diploma will be held until the hold has been cleared by the appropriate office. Once cleared, the student must notify the Office of Registration and Records to release the diploma. The same is true for releasing transcripts. Official transcripts will not be released by the Office of Registration and Records until the student has cleared all holds on their account.
Confirming the Award of the Degree. Students should check to make certain that their final transcript shows the notation of their degree award and that their diploma arrives. Occasionally, students walk through the commencement ceremony and then, “forget” about requirements that are still not met. They discover years later that they have not actually been awarded the degree because they did not complete those remaining requirements.

Questions?
For questions regarding specifics on the commencement ceremony, contact the Commencement Office at (585) 395-5648.

For questions regarding specifics on transcripts, applications for graduation and diplomas contact the Office of Registration and Records at (585) 395-2531.

For questions regarding progress towards degree completion, students should contact their advisor.