

Recommendation to revise University Criteria for baccalaureate graduation requirements

There are two types of criteria for baccalaureate graduation; **University criteria** and **Program Criteria**. The University Criteria apply to all UofL undergraduate students. Academic units/programs have the option of requiring students graduating from their program to meet additional, more stringent, criteria called Program Criteria.

Current Baccalaureate Graduation Requirements

- Current University Criteria
 - The full list of current University Criteria for Baccalaureate graduation are included in Appendix A. This discussion is focused on the GPA requirements for graduation.
 - Current **University Criteria** for Baccalaureate Graduation related to GPA
 - Have a cumulative university GPA of at least 2.00, or higher if specified by the program.
 - Have a cumulative program GPA of at least 2.00, or higher if specified by the program.
- Current Program Criteria
 - The Program Criteria for baccalaureate graduation are listed in the UG catalog under 'Graduation and Degree Requirements: Unit-Specific Policies' and the 'Degree Requirements' section of each degree program.
 - **The majority of degree programs do not use Program Criteria.**
 - Examples of Current **Program Criteria** for Baccalaureate Graduation
 - SSoE requires Cumulative University GPA of 2.25 and a Program GPA of 2.25
 - Music requires Cumulative University GPA of 2.50 and a Program GPA of 2.50
 - Nursing requires grades of C or above in all NURS courses
 - Some departments in SSoE limit the number of D grades allowed in 'in-major' courses

Proposed Baccalaureate Graduation Requirements

The Council for Undergraduate Academic Affairs and Advising (CUAAA) **recommends the replacement of the minimum Program GPA criteria from the University Criteria for Baccalaureate graduation with an upper limit on the number of credit hours in courses prefixed in the major in which the student can earn a D-, D, or D+ grade.** For interdisciplinary programs, the degree granting unit must specify in the catalog which course prefixes will be included in the D grade limitation.

- **Justification for recommendation**

- Currently no standard definition for Program GPA exists and, in fact, different academic units have been including different course types (e.g. Cardinal Core, free electives, in-major core courses, out-of-major core courses, supporting courses, etc.) in the calculation of the Program GPA. Therefore, at this time, a student cannot determine if they have met the requirements for graduation since they do not know how to calculate their Program GPA due to the lack of explicit definition of the Program GPA in the catalog or on the student's transcript.
- Additionally, Program GPAs are currently calculated by hand by the advisors. Therefore, Program GPAs are not reported on a student's transcript. So there is no 'official' documentation of Program GPA throughout a student's career.
- It is much easier for students and advisors to count the number of lowest passing grades in a major

- Proposed University Criteria

- Proposed **University Criteria** for Baccalaureate Graduation related to GPA and/or mastery of major.
 - Have a cumulative university GPA of at least 2.00, or higher if specified by the program.
 - Have no more than 10 credit hours of D-, D, or D+ grades in courses with prefixes in the major. The program can specify fewer credit hours of minimum passing grade or a different minimum passing grade (e.g. C, C+).

- Proposed Program Criteria

- Remove Program GPA from Program criteria for Baccalaureate Graduation.

Proposed Timeline

These graduation criteria will go into effect for Summer 2025 graduates (i.e. catalog year 2025-26). Students who are on a degree plan for any year prior to 2025-26 can choose to use the 'old' university graduation criteria of a Program GPA of 2.0 or higher.

APPENDIX A

Current University Criteria for Baccalaureate Graduation

University Policies: Graduation and Degree Requirements

The conferring of degrees by the University of Louisville is conditional upon completion of all requirements in the opinion of the unit faculty and dean, regardless of the students' participation in commencement. Students are strongly urged to run preliminary degree audits on a regular basis so that possible deficiencies in degree requirements can be identified early.

Bachelor's Degree Requirements

The baccalaureate degree (arts, business administration, fine arts, music, science, or social work) is the undergraduate degree offered by the university. It is awarded to students who have completed both university-wide requirements and the requirements of the selected degree program. The following university-wide requirements apply to all baccalaureate degrees. The student must:

- Complete an online degree application by the specified date at the beginning of the semester of graduation.
- Complete an application for and be accepted for admission into a major program.
- Satisfy all Cardinal Core requirements.
- Complete all required courses and program requirements listed in the degree program section of this catalog.
- Have a cumulative university GPA of at least 2.00, or higher if specified by the program.
- Have a cumulative program GPA of at least 2.00, or higher if specified by the program.
- Complete a minimum of 120 hours applicable to the program, or more if required by the program.
- Complete at least 60 hours at an accredited four-year institution.
- Complete at least 25% of the total credit hours required for the degree in residence at the University of Louisville.
- Complete 30 of the last 36 hours in residence at the University of Louisville.
- Have neither missing nor outstanding I or X grades.
- Satisfy any additional requirements specified by the major program and unit.
- Be discharged of all financial obligations to the University.
- Be formally recommended for the baccalaureate degree by the unit faculty and dean and approved by the Board of Trustees.

<https://catalog.louisville.edu/undergraduate/university-wide-unit-specific-policies/graduation-degree-requirements/>

Recommendation to revise University Criteria for academic accolade requirements

There are three categories of academic accolades upon graduation from a Baccalaureate degree program: recognition based on GPA, recognition based on successful completion of the University Honors or Honors Scholars program, and successful completion of a unit or department recognition program such as a thesis or project. This proposed revision only affects the University academic accolades based on GPA.

Current Requirements for University academic accolades based on GPA (i.e. Latin Honors)

Minimum criteria for University academic accolades based on GPA:

- Cum Laude: 3.50 undergraduate and program grade point averages
- Magna Cum Laude: 3.75 undergraduate and program grade point averages
- Summa Cum Laude: 3.90 undergraduate and program grade point averages.
- Note: This recognition will appear on the student's transcript and diploma.

Proposed Requirements for University academic accolades based on GPA (i.e. Latin Honors)

The Council for Undergraduate Academic Affairs and Advising (CUAAA) recommends the removal of the minimum Program GPA criteria from University academic accolades based on GPA. Please note this recommendation applies only to the University academic accolades based on GPA; no changes are recommended for the other two categories of academic accolades.

- **Justification for recommendation**
 - Currently no standard definition for Program GPA exists and, in fact, different academic units have been including different course types (e.g. Cardinal Core, free electives, in-major core courses, out-of-major core courses, supporting courses, etc.) in the calculation of the Program GPA. Therefore, at this time, a student cannot determine if they have met the requirements for University academic accolades since they do not know how to calculate their Program GPA due to the lack of explicit definition of the Program GPA in the catalog or on the student's transcript.
 - Additionally, Program GPAs are currently calculated by hand by the advisors.
 - A review of 20 other universities found that all only use university cumulative GPA to determine university accolades

Minimum criteria for University academic accolades based on GPA:

- Cum Laude: 3.50 **cumulative university** undergraduate **and program** grade point averages
- Magna Cum Laude: 3.75 **cumulative university** undergraduate **and program** grade point averages
- Summa Cum Laude: 3.90 **cumulative university** undergraduate **and program** grade point averages
- Note: This recognition will appear on the student's transcript and diploma