

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND ACADEMIC HONORS

University Graduation Requirements Requirements for All Students

In order to receive a Cornell degree, a student must satisfy academic and non-academic requirements.

Academic Requirements

A student's college determines degree requirements such as residency, number of credits, distribution of credits, and grade averages. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific major, degree, distribution, college, and graduation requirements for completing their chosen program of study. See the individual requirements listed by each college or school or contact the college registrar's office (<https://registrar.cornell.edu/service-resources/college-registrar-directory/>) for more information.

Non-academic Requirements

Conduct Matters. Students must satisfy any outstanding sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed or agreed to under the Student Code of Conduct (Code) or Policy 6.4. Where a formal complaint under the Code or Policy 6.4 is pending, the University will withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the adjudication process set forth in those procedures is complete, including the satisfaction of any sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed.

Financial Obligations. Outstanding financial obligations will not impact the awarding of a degree otherwise earned or a student's ability to access their official transcript. However, the University may withhold issuing a diploma until any outstanding financial obligations owing to the University are satisfied.

Additional Requirements for Undergraduate Students

The University has two requirements for graduation that must be fulfilled by all undergraduate students: the swim requirement, and completion of two physical education courses. For additional information about fulfilling University Graduation Requirements, see the Physical Education website (<https://scl.cornell.edu/pe/>).

Physical Education

All incoming undergraduate students are required to take two credits (two courses) of Physical Education prior to graduation. It is recommended they complete the two courses during their first year at Cornell. Credit in Physical Education may be earned by participating in courses offered by the Department of Athletics and Physical Education (https://courses.cornell.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=60&poid=30232) and Cornell Outdoor Education, by being a registered participant on a varsity athletic team, or performing in the marching band.

Students with medical concerns should contact the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://sds.cornell.edu/>).

Swim Requirement

The Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education has established a basic swimming and water safety competency requirement

for all undergraduate students. Normally, the requirement is taken during the Fall Orientation process at Helen Newman Hall or Teagle Hall pools. The requirement consists of the following: jump or step feet-first into the deep end of the pool, float or tread for one minute, turn around in a full circle, swim 25 yards using any stroke(s) of choice without touching the bottom or holding on to the sides (there is no time limit) and exit from the water. Students who do not complete the swim requirement during their first year, during a PE swim class or during orientation subsequent years, will have to pay a \$100 fee. Any student who cannot meet this requirement must register for PE 1100 Beginning Swimming as their physical education course before electives can be chosen.

If a student does not pass the swim requirement in their first Beginning Swimming PE class, then the student must take a second Beginning Swimming PE class (PE 1100 or PE 1101). Successful completion of two Beginning Swimming classes (based on attendance requirements) with the instructor's recommendation will fulfill the University's swim requirement.

Students unable to meet the swim requirement because of medical reasons should contact the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://sds.cornell.edu/>). When a waiver is granted by the Faculty Committee on Physical Education, an alternate requirement is imposed. The alternate requirement substitute is set by the Director of Physical Education.

Academic Honors

Dean's List

Cornell University is phasing out individual school and college Dean's Lists. The Dean's List designation will not be applicable to undergraduate students matriculating in Summer 2023 and beyond. The Dean's List will be discontinued for all students at the end of the Spring 2026 semester.¹

¹ The only exception is for the five-year B.Arch. program; the Dean's List will cease at the end of Spring 2027 for this program.

Graduating with Latin Honors

Beginning with the December 2026 conferral date, Cornell University will institute a standardized Latin Honors system based solely on final cumulative undergraduate GPA. The Latin Honors categories include: Summa Cum Laude (top 5%), Magna Cum Laude (next 10%), and Cum Laude (next 15%).

The student's cumulative undergraduate GPA percentile at the time of degree conferral will be computed with respect to the student's particular college/school degree program (e.g., B.S. in CALS, B.A. in A&S, B.S. in ILR, B.F.A. in AAP). Existing college/school-specific Latin Honors systems not based upon the new standardized criteria will be discontinued at the end of Summer 2026.

Graduating with Honors for Academic Activities

Beginning with the December 2026 conferral date, each undergraduate college or school will use the standardized nomenclature of Honors in X for degree or major honors (e.g. Honors in Research; Honors in Engagement; Honors in Chemical Engineering). The award is based on academic criteria as determined by the college, school, or academic program; it may not be based solely upon GPA, as Latin Honors are reserved for that purpose. The student's eligibility will be determined at the time of degree conferral. Existing nomenclatures other than Honors in X and existing non-Latin college and school degree or major honors

based solely upon grades will be discontinued at the end of Summer 2026.