MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

DEGREE WORKS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This is a list of questions and responses gathered from the perspective of students for the benefit of students, advisors, faculty, and staff who use Degree Works. It serves as a companion guide to other student and advisor "how to" and video tutorials.

1. What is "*Degree Works*"?
   "Degree Works" is an online degree evaluation guide available to all students who have been admitted to MSSU since 2010. Former students and graduates who left MSSU prior to 2010 will be able to access a Degree Works audit if they return to MSSU.
   Degree Works is often referred to simply as degree audit or degree evaluation. It is programmed from corresponding published catalog requirements of majors, certificates, and minors. It provides a listing of completed, in-progress, future coursework, and other major, minor, certificate degree requirements. The audit includes completed coursework that may not fulfill any requirements for the declared major or minor. The audit is organized into sections, referred to as cards, with each card outlining specific requirements for fulfilling degree requirements and other supplementary information.

   In the Fall of 2024, MSSU added the Student Educational Planner feature identified as PLAN on tool.

   The audit should be used concurrently with the official catalog and consultation with your departmental advisor to ensure all degree requirements are met.

2. Who is the Advisor listed on the audit?
   The name(s) of the individual(s) listed as the advisor(s) on the audit is usually your academic advisor and/or minor advisor.
   If there is no advisor listed, please contact the department of your major to be assigned an advisor.

3. Can I see my Degree Works audit on my phone?
   Degree Works is mobile friendly and can be readily seen on smart phones and tablets.

4. Where can I access Degree Works?
   Degree Works is accessible from Lionet. For students, it is accessible, under "*Student"* tab in the *"Profile"* section and for faculty, it is under "*Faculty"* tab under the *"Student Information"* section.

5. How current is the information on the degree audit?
   The information in Degree Works updates as changes are made to the student information system, Banner or Degree Works. As changes are made to your student record (e.g., applied petitions, enrollments, withdrawn classes, etc.), most changes should reflect immediately.

6. What information does the "*Degree Progress"* area provide?
   The "*Degree Progress – Credits*" wheel calculates and displays all credits earned as a percentage of the minimum credits required to graduate. It does not factor in whether the credits completed are credits applicable to the major and/or minor declared or not. The figure SHOULD NOT be used as a measure of how close you are to completing a declared major.

The "*Degree Progress – Overall GPA*" displays the overall GPA also posted in the header card with the student information.

7. When should I look at my degree audit?

You can view your degree audit anytime, but it is recommended that you view your audit several times during a semester, especially before enrollment and after enrollment. Other helpful times to view your degree audit are:

i. At the end of each semester after grades have been posted.
ii. Prior to applying for graduation to check how close you are to showing all requirements met.
iii. In your last semester to confirm all degree requirements are completed.
iv. After any changes to declared major, minor, certificate, or catalog year.
v. After an academic petition has been approved and applied.
vi. Anytime you wish to check/verify your progress toward graduation.

8. What should I do if the degree audit and the catalog requirements don't match?

Degree audits are programmed according to specific catalog requirements. Programs may change degree requirements from year to year, and with each change, there is a new audit. This means there may be different audits with different degree requirements based on the catalog year selected.
Your degree audit is programmed under the catalog year posted on it. The website publishes several catalogs, but the online catalog search defaults to the current year or the most recent catalog year. To compare your audit to the corresponding catalog year, make sure to use the catalog drop down option to choose the corresponding catalog year listed on your degree audit.

Click on https://catalog.mssu.edu/ to access the published catalogs.

If you find that the catalog year listed on your degree audit is incorrect or you would like to change to a different catalog requirement, consult with your advisor.

If you want to change your catalog year, major, and/or minor, submit the request by completing the online Undergraduate Change of Major, Minor, Certificate, or Catalog Year form.

9. How is my transcript different from my degree audit?

The transcript is an official document which displays courses by completed terms, overall and semester GPA, academic standing, transfer work, and degree(s) earned if applicable. It does not outline degree requirements. The degree audit outlines degree requirements for your major, minor, or certificate by listing courses and requirements completed, in-progress, and yet to be completed, serving as a graduation checklist tool.

10. What does the "*Audit date*" on the audit mean?

The "*Audit date*" refers to the last time that an audit was updated for you based on changes in your student record. An update could include changes in enrollments, preregistrations, applied academic petitions, applied transfer credits, applied final grades, etc.

11. How does Degree Works decide where to place courses that I've completed?

Degree Works is programmed with configurations that guide it to place courses in specific areas and cards according to the degree requirements published in the catalog. As and when new coursework is entered, the placement may change if necessary. For example, some general education courses applied to an area may be moved around when other more fitting courses are completed. Contact your advisor if you have questions regarding the placement of specific courses.

12. Can a single course appear in multiple places?

Depending on the major or minor, this may happen. For example, several general education classes may also be included as degree requirements for specific majors in which case, those courses will be listed in the General Education card and the degree specific requirement card as well. When a course is required for both a major and minor, it will be posted in both areas.

13. Why are my transfer credits not showing on the degree audit?

When transfer work is received and applied to your student record, it is programmed to your audit according to the configuration of degree requirements. It will show on your audit once the record has been processed completely.
If transfer work is not showing, it may be that the Admissions office has not received your transfer credits, or the Office of the Registrar has not yet posted it to your record. Please check with either the Office of the Registrar or the Admissions office to determine the status of the transfer credits.

Contact your academic advisor to explore an academic petition, if you want to appeal where a transfer course was applied to on your degree works audit.

14. Are there degree requirements that may not be posted on the audit?

While the degree audit has been programmed to include all published degree requirements in the catalog, occasionally, some requirements may not be programmable, may be omitted unintentionally, or may need to be communicated at the departmental level. For example, some programs may have certification tests or some non-course specific requirements needed before students can graduate. These may not be programmable but will be communicated to the student by the department. Therefore, it is important to use Degree Works in conjunction with the course catalog and communication with your departmental advisor to ensure you are meeting all degree requirements. If you have questions about any additional requirements for your curriculum, you should contact your academic advisor.
When a programming error is determined, every effort will be made to correct it right away which may change the audit.

MSSU reserves the right to make corrections to the catalog and audit as and when corrections need to be made to ensure the accuracy of all degree requirements.

15. Can I file a petition to waive/substitute a course or degree requirement?

You can consult with your academic advisor who will file the petition on your behalf. Note that though your advisor may file the petition on your behalf, it does not mean it will be approved. Petitions require multiple approvers. If approved, the Office of the Registrar will apply it to your student record and to the degree audit requirement for which it was approved. The process of filing a petition, receiving the required approvals, and application to your student record and degree audit, may take about 30 working days, unless the approved course to be applied has not been completed.

16. How would I know when my petition has been approved and applied to my degree audit?

An approved petition will be programmed to apply to whichever course or requirement it was approved to satisfy on the audit. In most cases, it will be accompanied by the date programmed and the name of the Academic Records Specialist in the Office of the Registrar who applied the approved petition. Approved petitions are also listed on the Academic Petitions section of the audit.
Sometimes petitions are approved prior to the student completing the requirement stated in the petition. Such approved petitions may not be applied on the audit until the student has completed the requirement.

For example, if a petition is approved to replace ENG 240 with ENG 250, but the student has not completed ENG 250, the approved petition will not be applied on the audit until ENG 250 is completed.

If a petition is not displayed, it may mean:

i. It has not made it to the Office of the Registrar.
ii. It was not approved.
iii. The course, which was approved has not been completed, or if it is transfer credit, the transfer credit has not been applied to your student record.
iv. The requirement for which it was approved to apply has already been met.

You can contact the Office of the Registrar to check the status of a filed petition.

17. An applied petition that was once posted on the audit is no longer showing. What happened and who should I contact?

Approved petitions are usually applied to specific degree requirements. Petitions can fall off or become unhooked due to one or more reasons:

i. Because the programming behind the scenes drops an applied petition when there is a change in major, minor, or catalog year on the premise that the petition no longer applies.
ii. Petitions may unintentionally become unhooked due to periodic Degree Works updates, and it may be unknown to the audit programmers.

Though petitions may get unhooked from their applied position, they will remain listed in the Academic Petitions card of the audit.

If you notice that a once approved petition has disappeared from where it used to be, contact the Office of the Registrar to discuss reapplying it, if it is still applicable to the major.

18. My department gave me permission to take a different course to meet a degree requirement, but it is not showing. What do I need to do?

Your advisor needs to submit the necessary academic petition to go through the approval process before your degree audit can be updated.

19. What is the "*What-If*" feature on the audit?

The What-If tab serves two functions:

i. For students with multiple majors, it is used to view the full degree requirements for each of the majors independent of the others.
ii. It is used to explore degree requirements of another major, minor or catalog year without officially making changes to your declared major.

20. What is the "*Future Classes*" feature included in the "*What-If"* tab?

The "*Future Classes*" feature accessible under the "*What If"* tab allows you to generate and view an audit with courses you plan to take in the future. Using the "Future Classes" feature does NOT enroll you for the future courses, change your major or minor or updated your current audit.

21. I'm considering changing to a different major, and/or add a minor, or switch to a different catalog. Is there a way to see what the requirements will be?

Use the "What If" feature on the degree audit to process a new degree audit with the different major or minor or whatever changes you are considering. Make sure to select the catalog year requirements you want checked, otherwise when you run the "What If" process, the audit will apply the current catalog requirements.

If you decide to change your major, and/or add another major or minor, or catalog year, complete the online form at Undergraduate Change of Major, Minor, Certificate, or Catalog Year.

22. I have multiple majors but only one appears on the degree audit. How can I check the requirements for my other major(s)?

i. If you have multiple majors from the same degree type, all the majors will be displayed on one card, but you can separate out the majors to find the requirements of each by using the "What-If" feature.

   For example, Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Psychology and Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Spanish, both will be displayed as Bachelor of Arts. To find the degree requirements for each one, run a "What-If" with Psychology, and another "What-If" in Spanish.

ii. If you have multiple majors from different degree types, the different degree types will be displayed in the drop-down box of the Header card. Toggle between the degree types to view each set of degree requirements. For example, if you have an Associates of Science in Radiologic Technology, and a Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology, because these are two different degree types, there will be two different degree header cards for you to toggle through. If there is no drop-down option arrow displaying other majors, check your Lionet account to see if you have declared the other major.

iii. If multiple majors are listed but you still cannot see the drop-down arrow, contact the Office of the Registrar.

iv. If you want to declare additional majors, use the online Undergraduate Change of Major, Minor, Certificate, or Catalog Year to declare the other majors.

23. How many majors can be displayed as degree audits?

    A maximum of seven majors can be displayed as accessible audits for each student. Students who have multiple majors declared will have a drop-down option in the Degree field from which they can toggle through to access the other degree audits.

24. Where can I find the minor I declared on the audit?

    Minors are listed separately as individual cards.
    If you believe you declared a minor and cannot see a card for it on the audit, add it using the Undergraduate Change of Major, Minor, Certificate, or Catalog Year form.

25. When a card has "*COMPLETE*" or "*INCOMPLETE"* notation, what does it mean?

    A "*COMPLETE*" notation posted in a card means all the requirements in that section have been met or satisfied.
    An *"INCOMPLETE*" notation means there are still some courses or requirements in that section of the audit that have not been met or satisfied.

26. How will I know if a course has a prerequisite?

    Any course that has this clipboard icon beside it means it is a course with a prerequisite. When you click on the course, the course description will be displayed along with the prerequisite information.

27. What happens on the audit when I repeat a course?

    The highest grade will be used in computing your GPA towards your degree requirements. The course with the lower grade will show in the "Insufficient" card. The course with the lower grade will not count in the other cards in your degree audit. Note that repeated courses will not replace prior courses until the end of the semester.
    All repeated courses will be denoted by the symbol "(R)" on the Repeated column of the audit.

28. Is there a way to see the course description, section offerings, and available seats for a course I plan to take?

    Most courses are displayed as hyperlinks to the catalog and the online schedule book for future terms if it has been published. If the hyperlink is active, hover your mouse over the course to open the course

description and future course offerings if published. The future course offerings seat availability posted are usually behind by a day since degree audits refresh overnight.

29. What is the "*MOTR number*" included on the Gen Ed. Core 42 card?
    A "*MOTR number"* is the approved Missouri Transfer course number that all Missouri public institutions use as part of the Core 42 transferable courses. Courses with a MOTR number are guaranteed to transfer among all Missouri public institutions of higher education.

30. What are the "*Transfer equivalences*" lists published with some of the Course Descriptions?
    "*Transfer equivalences*" are tentatively equivalent transfer courses that may be transferred to MSSU upon the submission of an official transcript.

31. Are previous degree audits saved?
    You can only access the current audit published. Previous audits are not saved. To access previous audits, you are advised to save the audits for reference.

32. Are previous "*What-If*" degree audits saved?
    The last three "What-If" degree audits are accessible under the "View historic What-If" audit" drop down arrow.

33. What is the "*Credits Applied*" header in some of the cards?
    This refers to the total number of credits that are being included in that part of the card and/or into the overall audit.

34. What does the "*Classes applied*" in the cards mean?
    This refers to the total number of individual classes that are applied to that card.

35. What does the "*Additional Courses*" card display?
    The "Additional Courses" card displays courses which are not required or used in any of the other required degree requirement cards. Courses in this card count in the student's GPA and toward the total hours required for graduation.

36. What does the "*Insufficient* Courses" card display?
    The "*Insufficient*" card will show courses that have "NO" grades (grades not reported), "F" grades, "W" grades, and (R) for Repeated courses that are not being included in the degree requirements. Courses in this card do not count in the student's GPA or toward the total hours required for graduation.

37. What does the "*In-Progress Courses*" card display?
    The "In-Progress" card of the audit shows courses for which you have registered but not completed. This section also includes courses that you have pre-registered for a future term that has not yet started.

38. What is the difference between "*In-Progress*" and "*Preregistered"?*
    "*In-Progress*" courses are courses occurring in a current term.
    "*Preregistered*" courses are courses registered for a future term.

39. Is it possible to run a degree audit without in-progress or preregistered courses?
    Your audit defaults to include any in-progress courses and preregistered courses if enrolled for a future term.
    To view a degree audit which excludes in-progress and/or preregistered courses, run a "*What-If"* process and check the "*Use current curriculum"* box, and uncheck the "In-progress" and "*Preregistered"* boxes.

40. What does the *"Not Counted Courses*" card display?

    The "*Not Counted"* card lists courses that are below the 100 level which are generally excluded from degree requirements. For example, ENG 80.

41. What does the "*Academic Petitions"* card display?

    The card displays all approved academic petitions applied to your audit.

42. What does the "*Notes"* card display?

    The notes card displays informational notes that advisors have posted to a student's record. Only advisors or staff can post notes on a student's audit.

43. I am an advisor; how can I post notes to a student's audit?

    Access to post "Notes" text box is one of the options under the Ellipse icon in the top right of the audit. Notes posted cannot be modified, or deleted once saved, and are accessible to anyone who sees the student's audit; therefore, it is important to be mindful of what is posted. It is recommended that notes be objective and informational only. For example, "Advised student to enroll in PSY 432 Spring 2023, or "Advised student to send in transfer credits from Community college".

    Notes appear at the bottom of the degree audit in the Notes card after the nightly refresh process has run.

44. What does the "*Registration Checklist"* display?

    The "*Registration Checklist*" is one of the two Format views under the Academic tab. (The audit defaults to the "Student View"). The Registration Checklist displays the list of outstanding requirements based on the major selected. If a student has multiple majors, first select the major of interest before switching to the Registration Checklist view to see the outstanding requirements. This is helpful for planning future enrollments.

45. What does the "*Term History"* link display?

    The "*Term History"*, one of the options under the Ellipse icon to the top right of the audit displays the student's completed coursework in a semester-by-semester view starting from the earliest to the last semester taken or current in progress courses.

46. Can I email my academic advisor, or an advisee/student from the audit?

    The "*Envelope" i*con on the top right-hand corner of the audit is an Outlook email link to either "*Contact Advisor*" or "*Contact Student*".

    If a student clicks on that envelop icon, it opens to "Contact advisor", which is the name of the person listed as the Advisor(s) in the Student Information section of the audit. If multiple people are listed, the names and email address of all those will be displayed, and the student can select the email of the person they want to email. The names listed will include minor advisors if the student has a minor advisor assigned.

    If an advisor clicks on the "Envelope" icon, it opens to "Contact student".

47. What is the GPA Calculator?

    One of the options under the "*Ellipse*" icon is the link to three GPA Calculators.

    i. The "*Graduation Calculator"* accepts current GPA, credits remaining, credits required, and target GPA and calculates the average GPA required to graduate with the target GPA.
    ii. The "*Term Calculator"* accepts current GPA, credits completed, and GPA goals for the term's remaining credits, and projects an end-of-term GPA.
    iii. The "*Advice Calculator*" accepts current GPA, credits earned, and target GPA and returns an average GPA needed to meet target GPA depending on remaining credits required.

48. I'm an academic advisor; why are the audits of students who have already graduated and students who have not attended for several years still loaded up in my advisees?
    Degree Works automatically populates the first 500 advisees of an advisor regardless of if the advisee is current, former, or has graduated. If you would like to remove graduated or former students from your auto populated list, you will have to end the advising relationship in Banner. Please discuss this with the Administrative Assistant of your department or contact the Office of the Registrar for instructions.

49. How do I print a degree audit?
    Click the "*Print*" icon on the top right corner and follow the print dialog options.

50. How do I save a degree audit?
    Click the "*Print*" icon on the top right corner, change the default "Printer" destination options to "*Save as PDF*" option and follow the prompts.

Degree Works Legend – Interpreting Degree Works icons



Disclaimer: A Degree Works audit is a guide that shows degree and graduation requirements programmed from the corresponding catalog requirements of a major. It should be used concurrently with the official catalog and consultation with your departmental advisor to ensure all degree and graduation requirements are met. Contact your academic advisor for assistance in interpreting the report and determining completion status. Official graduation requirements will be determined and verified by the Office of the Registrar for degree conferral. The University reserves the right to make corrections to the audit as necessary.

For general questions regarding the audit, contact the Office of the Registrar at *degreeworks@mssu.edu*

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