

GRADUATION/ COMMENCEMENT

Southwestern College recognizes the educational achievement of its students by granting the Associate in Arts Degree, Associate in Science Degree, Associate Degree for Transfer, Certificate of Achievement, and Certificate of Proficiency. Associate degree programs allow the student the benefits of a general college education, transfer education, and the option of choosing occupational training, liberal arts, or a concentration in a department offered by the College.

Petition for Graduation

Students are encouraged to plan their educational objectives in such a manner as to qualify for graduation with an associate degree. Degrees or certificates are not awarded automatically upon completion of the requirements. It is recommended that you meet with an academic counselor one year before you complete your requirements to confirm your eligibility. A candidate must submit a petition for graduation online at www.swccd.edu/evaluations. Petitions for graduation may be filed at any time; however, students wishing to graduate in a specified semester (fall, spring, or summer) must submit a petition according to the following schedule:

Semester	Date Range
Fall	July 1 – October 31
Spring	November 1 – February 28
Summer	March 1 – June 30

AA-T or AS-T (also known as ADT) CSU eVerification Applicants: Please visit the website at www.swccd.edu/index.aspx?page=2805 (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/transfer-center/associate-degree-for-transfer.aspx>) for further information and follow the specific deadlines:

- For Spring CSU Applicants with a declared AA-T or AS-T degree, you must apply for Fall graduation at Southwestern College by October 1st.*
- For Fall CSU Applicants with a declared AA-T or AS-T degree, you must apply for Spring graduation at Southwestern College by February 1st.*

Official college transcripts from all colleges attended and external exam reports (AP, IB, CLEP, or DANTES) must be on file before submitting a petition for any Associate Degree, Certificate of Achievement or GE Certification. Hand carried copies of transcripts will not be accepted. All previous coursework must be evaluated whether or not it is needed to obtain the associate degree at Southwestern College.

NOTE: Former military must have a petition for Military Credit on file at Veteran Services prior to submitting a Graduation Petition if you plan to utilize the units towards graduation.

Catalog Rights for General Education

Provided that continuous enrollment is maintained, students may elect the general education and graduation requirements in effect at the time of entrance to Southwestern College, or any catalog year thereafter.

Continuous Enrollment

Continuous enrollment is defined as completion of a course during at least one semester or two quarters in a calendar year, including summer

session, in either the CSU, UC, or California Community College System after time of entrance to Southwestern College (effective enrollment fall 2023). Completing a course is defined as receiving a grade of A, B, C, D, F, I, Pass (P), or No Pass (NP). Receiving a grade of "W", "EW" or "MW" will not satisfy the requirements for completing a course. The grade of "EW" or "MW" does not disqualify a student from continuous enrollment.

Multiple Degrees

Students who qualify may receive additional associate degrees provided the designated degree to be earned will represent a significant change in program from the degree or degrees previously earned. A student who has already earned a bachelor's or higher degree from an institutionally accredited institution may qualify for an associate degree providing that the designated program and complete coursework are different from the bachelor's or higher degree.

For each additional degree, the student must earn a minimum of six units in the new program. In addition, the student must meet all graduation requirements enforced at the time of declaration of a new program. Students who have previously been awarded an Associate Degree and wish to receive an ADT will be exempt from the additional unit requirement of six new units in the program.

Students who wish to pursue a second ADT in a new program will also be exempt from the additional unit requirement. Students must complete all required courses for the ADT and submit a graduation petition for the new degree. Upon approval, the additional ADT will be posted to the student's academic record. A student who has earned an ADT and petitions to earn an additional AA/AS (non-ADT degree) must have earned a six unit difference in the program.

Residency Requirement

The student must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 12 degree-applicable units to satisfy degree requirements at Southwestern College. Credits obtained through Credit for Prior Learning are not accepted for satisfying graduation residency requirements. Students who have experienced injustice or undue hardship that impacts this requirement may petition to waive the residency requirement in the responsible office.

Unit and Scholarship Requirement

Students must satisfactorily complete 60 or more units of coursework which will satisfy all graduation requirements. This means either credit earned on a Pass/No Pass basis or cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better for credit earned on a grading scale basis for all college coursework attempted regardless of applicability and for all Southwestern College coursework attempted.

Waiver or Substitution of a Major Course

A student may request permission to waive or substitute a course that is required for the major to complete graduation requirements. Petitions must be submitted to and approved by the appropriate school dean. Petitions are available online at www.swccd.edu, click on Admissions and Registration, and then click on Printable Forms. These petitions must be on file before you submit a petition for graduation.

Degree Requirements

Please see General Education, SWC Graduation and Proficiency requirements. (<http://catalog.swccd.edu/certificates-certifications-degrees-csuuc-requirements/>)

Cal-GETC Certification

Please see the "Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates" (<http://catalog.swccd.edu/certificates-certifications-degrees-csuuc-requirements/>) section for General Education, SWC Graduation and Proficiency requirements.

Awarding Degrees and Diplomas

Degrees and diplomas will be awarded after final grades are posted for the semester in which the requirements are completed and the graduation petition has been submitted. Graduation petitions are processed by term.

Diplomas are issued after verifying completion of all graduation requirements for all student applicants. Diplomas will be issued in the name of record at the time the diploma is awarded. For information on obtaining your diploma or certificate of achievement, or a duplicate copy, please contact the Evaluations Office or visit the website at www.swccd.edu/evaluations.

Graduation with Honors

Students who achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher in degree-applicable units (in all college work completed, including coursework taken elsewhere) will be graduated with honors. This status as an honor graduate will be noted on both the degree and the permanent record (transcripts) for all such students.

Commencement

Commencement is held once a year, at the end of the spring semester. Candidates for summer, fall and spring terms each year may participate in the ceremony. For more information, please visit the website at www.swccd.edu (<http://www.swccd.edu/?page=1434>)/commencement (<http://www.swccd.edu/?page=1434>).