

# HOW TO GRADUATE A SENIOR

The requirements for the bachelor's degree are thirty-six course credits, the fulfillment of the distributional requirements, and the completion of a major program. Course credits and the distributional requirements are supervised by the Registrar's Office, the residential college deans, and the Yale College Dean's Office. The job of the DUS is to certify to the registrar that seniors have completed the requirements of the major program. In addition, as DUS you forward to the Committee on Honors and Academic Standing the nominations of your department or program for Distinction in the Major. As DUS you also oversee the administration of any prizes awarded by your department or program to graduating seniors.

## CLEARING SENIORS FOR GRADUATION

No senior can be graduated until the DUS has certified that he or she has fulfilled the requirements of the major program. Such certification takes place twice a year, and it occurs in two steps: (1) the DUS gives the Registrar's Office provisional certification before grades are actually due; and (2) the Registrar's Office, in the absence of a subsequent negative correction from the DUS, confirms the certification when passing final course grades are received. The DUS gives the provisional advance certification on the Major Completion Form. At the beginning of the spring term you will receive a Major Completion Form for each senior in the major who finished the degree requirements in the fall term; toward the middle of the spring term you will receive a Major Completion Form for each senior in the major who is scheduled to finish the degree requirements in the spring.

On the Major Completion Form you are asked to:

1. indicate that the student has already completed all requirements for the major, and does not need to pass any current courses or complete any other projects; *or* that the student has yet to fulfill requirements for the major, including current course work and/or independent projects or examinations.
2. indicate the degree the student should receive (B.A. or B.S.) and confirm that Intensive Majors are correctly noted.

If the student has yet to fulfill requirements for the major, you will be asked to circle the titles of the specific courses that the student needs to complete in order to fulfill the requirements of the major, and to note any additional noncredit requirements in a comments section. If the student must still fulfill noncredit requirements such as senior projects, essays, or exams, it is your responsibility to provide confirmation to the Registrar's Office when such requirements have been met. That way the Registrar's Office can clear a student for graduation as soon as grades in the specific required courses have been recorded.

The Major Completion Form is generally due one month after you receive it. The registrar supplies the DUS with copies of the academic records of each junior and senior in the major upon request only. Departments are expected to have applied to the Registrar's Office for clearance to generate the academic records of their majors as needed.

## CLEARING STUDENTS FROM PREVIOUS CLASSES

These students are of two sorts: (1) seniors who did not complete the requirements of the major by Commencement in May but who completed them during the following summer; and (2) students who, having been out of Yale for some time, have completed the requirements for graduation. There is no Major Completion Form for such students, and communications with the Registrar's Office about them must be on an individual basis.

What is almost always at issue with these students is a deficiency in the senior essay or senior project. Whenever a student from a previous class has passed the senior essay or senior project, and by so doing has completed the requirements of the major, the DUS should immediately notify the Registrar's Office and the student's residential college dean in writing. If the senior essay or senior project carries course credit, the grade should be reported to the registrar at the same time.

If the deficiency is a particular course in the major (as differentiated from the senior essay or senior project) that the student has made up by work in Yale Summer Session or by work at another university, the Registrar's Office will clear the student for the major based on the Major Completion Form that was filled out when the student was still enrolled at Yale. If there is any question whether the outstanding requirements have been completed (for example, if a student offers work from another university as a substitute), the Registrar's Office or the student's residential college dean will be in touch with you. A student with such a deficiency rarely has the transcript of outside work sent directly to the DUS. If this should happen, however, you should forward the transcript to the Registrar's Office along with a letter indicating whether or not the student has cleared the major.

The Corporation votes late bachelor's degrees at its regular meetings, which take place at intervals throughout the academic year. For a student's name to appear on the list of candidates presented to the Corporation in a particular month, the student must have been cleared by the Registrar's Office for the degree by a week before the meeting. Note that students in a current senior class who qualify for graduation at the end of a fall term are not awarded degrees until Commencement the following May; see Completion of Degree Requirements at the End of a Fall Term in the Academic Regulations in the YCPS.

## **DISTINCTION IN THE MAJOR**

The DUS makes the nominations for Distinction in the Major; details are given under Honors and Distinction. Nominations for Distinction in the Major, both for students who complete their degree requirements in December and for those who complete them in May, are made at the end of the spring term.

In the spring term, instructors submit grades to the registrar on line. The grades are then available to you and to your departmental registrar through the academic record request system. If you have not already arranged for access to this system, please complete the online access request form.

Do not use the grades on the faculty grade submission (FGS) Web site to calculate eligibility for Distinction in the Major. FGS does not indicate whether a course was taken Credit/D/Fail. Only the academic record is an accurate listing of a student's final grade.

Whenever you clear a student from a previous class for the late award of a degree, you should be alert to the possibility that the student may be eligible for Distinction in the Major. You should forward a nomination for Distinction for such a student to the Committee on Honors and Academic Standing at the same time that you inform the registrar that the student has completed the requirements of the major.

## **PRIZES**

Prizes are treated generally under The DUS and the Department. Since many departmental prizes are for graduating seniors and since the recipients are often determined just before Commencement, it is important for the DUS or the chair of the departmental prize committee to notify the Office of the Secretary of the University immediately of the names of winners of senior prizes. The Secretary's Office prepares a certificate of award and has a check drawn if the prize is of money; both are given to the student's college master after Baccalaureate for presentation to the student at Commencement on the following day. The number to call in the Secretary's Office is 432-2314.