

# DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Lake Superior State University offers bachelor (also called baccalaureate) degrees, associate degrees, and certificates. These degrees are offered in a wide variety of academic programs. Each academic department has a set of specific courses and other requirements for each of its degree programs. However, some requirements are of a general nature, applying to all such degrees. These are discussed below.

## Bachelor's Degree

A minimum of 124 credits (at the 100 level or higher) is required for a bachelor's degree. Some programs require more than this number of credits. Requirement categories are general education, bachelor of arts (if applicable), and major. Some programs require concentrations, support courses and/or a minor, and free electives. Please note: a minor selected to accompany a major may not be in the same discipline.

## Bachelor of Arts Degree (6 - 8 Credits)

(Effective Spring 2024)

One year of a modern language other than English. One-half year of two different languages will not meet this requirement.

## Associate Degree

A minimum of 62 credits (at the 100 level or higher) is required for an associate degree. Some programs require more than this number of credits. Requirement categories are general education and major or concentration. Some programs require minors, support courses, and free electives.

## Certificate

A certificate may be comprised of a series of courses/experiences housed in one department, or a cluster of courses/experiences in a defined thematic area which is not confined to a single disciplinary area – referred to as a multidisciplinary certificate. Standard and professional certificates credit minimums are variable, however, certificates that will be eligible for standalone approval under Gainful Employment provisions must be at least 24 credits minimum.

## Concentration

A prescribed set of disciplinary or interdisciplinary courses within a particular bachelor or associate degree.

## Minor

Academic minor programs are offered in a wide variety of disciplines. A minimum of 20 credits is required for a minor, with some minors requiring additional credits. Minors are earned as part of the bachelor or associate degree program.

## GPA

A minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 for all credits carried at Lake Superior State University and a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 for all courses required in a student's major, minor and general education is necessary for graduation. Some degree programs may require a higher GPA.

## Electives

Elective courses are chosen to obtain credit beyond that of specified requirements. Free electives refer to courses students may select completely of their own choice. Designated electives refer to courses selected from a list specified by the department.

## Graduation with Honors

Students graduating with honors must earn at least 30 credits at Lake Superior State University.

- **Cum Laude:** Cumulative GPA of 3.50 to 3.69
- **Magna Cum Laude:** Cumulative GPA of 3.70 to 3.89
- **Summa Cum Laude:** Cumulative GPA of 3.90 to 4.00

Graduation diplomas with honors will be awarded to baccalaureate, associate, and certificate recipients. Honors medallions will be awarded to baccalaureate, associate, and certificate recipients who graduated summa cum laude.

For the commencement ceremony and program, honors status will be determined based on the Fall Semester cumulative GPA. Official graduation with honors status will be granted based on students' final cumulative GPA at LSSU.

## Honors Degree

The University Honors Program offers highly motivated students the opportunity to develop their knowledge, abilities, and skills in distinctive ways, which draw from and which build upon LSSU's best qualities. The central goal of the University Honors Program is to create and foster a community of scholars characterized by strong student-faculty interaction and who are equipped to get the most out of their LSSU experience and to take that experience into society. The Honors Program approach to education incorporates the qualities of active participation, intellectual curiosity, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Selection is based upon a number of factors, including SAT scores or ACT scores, grade point average, and/or an application essay. Students are accepted into the program on a rolling basis, which means that students may apply at any time for admittance into the program. Students invited to participate in the program enroll in courses designated for honors credit. The courses are distributed among the requirements for general education, the student's major, and the University Honors Program and include seminars or directed research projects.

To graduate with an honors degree in a program of study, the honors student must have successfully completed 18 honors credit hours with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or better at graduation.

Upon graduation from the honors program, the student will receive an honors degree in his/her program of study. The honors degree designation is indicated on the student's diploma and academic transcript. The Honors Degree is distinct from graduating with honors (see Graduation with Honors).

## Acceptance of Other Institutions' Honors Credits

This policy applies only to the transfer of honors credits which count towards earning an honors degree at Lake Superior State University. It does not affect non-honors course credits and the transfer of those credits to LSSU.

1. The LSSU Honors Program will accept up to 12 honors credits with a grade no lower than B taken at an accredited college or university. These accepted honors credits will count towards the 18 honors credits required to graduate from LSSU's Honors Program.
2. To graduate from the Honors Program at LSSU, students affected by this policy must meet the following requirements at LSSU:
  - a. The completion of the capstone senior thesis project at LSSU.
3. Students who transfer into LSSU's Honors Program will receive the same honors benefits given to other students who enter LSSU's program earlier. These include but are not limited to:
  - a. Priority Registration
  - b. Optional Honors Housing
  - c. Opportunities to participate at Honors Program conferences
4. Students who transfer into LSSU's Honors Program will receive the same Honors designation on their Lake Superior State University diploma as other LSSU students who meet its Honors requirements by their graduation date.
5. This Policy shall commence on January 24, 2012, or as soon thereafter as administratively possible, and shall be in effect until suspended or terminated.
6. Students already admitted into the Lake Superior State University Honors Program at the time of suspension or termination will be allowed to complete the Program at LSSU under the terms of this policy enumerated (above) in numbers 1 through 4. Suspension or termination will only affect those admitted after suspension or termination of this policy.

## Residency Requirements: On-campus and Regional Centers

### Bachelor's Degree Candidates

Students must successfully complete at least 30 of the 124 credits earned for the degree using courses offered by Lake Superior State University. Additionally, at least 50 percent of the departmentally required (major) 300/400 level credits must be earned using courses offered by Lake Superior State University.

### Associate Degree Candidates

Students must successfully complete at least 15 of the 62 credits earned for the degree using courses offered by Lake Superior State University. Additionally, candidates must earn at least 50 percent of their departmentally required (major) credits using courses offered by Lake Superior State University.

### Certificate Candidates

Students must successfully complete at least half (50%) of their departmentally required credits using courses offered by Lake Superior State University.

### Minor Candidates

Students must earn at least 10 of the departmentally required credits using courses offered by Lake Superior State University.

Departmental residency requirements may exceed the residency of the University for certain degree programs.

## Multiple Majors

Students may earn more than one major by completing all requirements of each desired major program. Before graduation, students must file a Degree Audit approved by the school chair for each major. The double

major must be granted as one combined degree such as: bachelor of science degree in accounting and business administration.

## Multiple Degrees

If a student desires to earn more than one degree, the student must complete all program requirements of the additional degree(s) as certified by the school chair, comprising a minimum of 30 additional LSSU credits for each additional bachelor degree, or a minimum of 15 additional LSSU credits for each additional associate degree from Lake Superior State University.

There are no overlapping or additive residency requirements between the associate and bachelor degree tracks. The degrees stand alone. Earning an additional associate degree and a bachelor degree at the same time would require the completion of an additional minimum of 30 credits.

## Additional Degrees for Graduates of Other Universities

Students who hold a bachelor degree at another U.S. accredited institution, and who desire a bachelor degree from LSSU, must complete all requirements of an approved degree schedule including at least 30 additional credits in courses offered by LSSU. The degree schedule must be approved by the major school chair and sent to the Registrar's Office. Transfer credits from other universities will be evaluated for those classes used for the new degree. Students should initiate the approval process with the school chair at the time of or before commencing study toward the additional degree. The schedule elected shall consist mainly of major, minor and cognate courses.

Courses considered essential to the degree but not previously elected may, at the option of the school chair, be required even though the total may exceed 30 credits. Lake Superior State University general education requirements are considered complete if students have earned a bachelors degree from any United States accredited university or an honors bachelors degree from an accredited Canadian university.

If students have earned a bachelors degree or associates degree at another accredited institution and desire an associates degree from Lake Superior State University, they must complete all requirements of an approved degree schedule including at least 15 additional credits in courses offered by LSSU. The degree schedule process is identical to that described above for an additional bachelors degree. The schedule elected shall consist mainly of major and cognate courses. Courses considered essential to the degree but not previously elected may, at the option of the school and college, be required even though the total may exceed 15 credits.

## Incomplete (I) Grades

Students are **not** eligible to receive a degree or certificate with an Incomplete (I) grade on their academic record.

## Failed Classes

If a student fails a class required for their degree program, the student must repeat the class and receive a passing grade. If the failed class is no longer offered because of program changes and/or course deletions, the dean may approve a substitution or waiver recommended by the academic chair. The chair must provide reasons for the recommendation on the substitution/waiver form which is sent to the dean's office.

## Exceptions to Graduation Requirements

Exceptions to specific general education requirements may be granted only by the Scholastic Standards Committee. Such exceptions are infrequently made. A petition for exceptions to general education requirements is initiated with the Chair of the Scholastic Standards Committee.

Course substitutions and waivers of departmental degree program requirements may be granted only by the dean of the college offering the program (major or minor).

Normally, students will graduate under the program degree requirements in effect and published in the Catalog at the time they are admitted into the given degree program, provided enrollment at the University is continuous. If enrollment is interrupted, or if students select a new major, they must satisfy program requirements in effect at the time they re-enter or officially change to the new major. If program requirements are revised during students' enrollment, students will be allowed to graduate under the new requirements providing they can meet such requirements in their entirety.

The University reserves the right to change the requirements for graduation at any time as a means of keeping pace with educational developments affecting the various curricula. As such changes are made, they may, at the discretion of the University, be applied to students already enrolled. In such cases, reasonable and prudent effort will be made to provide the benefit of the new educational program without imposing undue hardship.

## Missing Requirements

Students not graduating because of missing requirements will be notified of the missing requirements and will be directed to the department of their major.

## Posthumous Degree Policy

A posthumous degree may be awarded in the name of a deceased student upon request of the student's family, if the deceased student had met the requirements as set forth below.

The deceased student will need to be in good academic standing with the University and have completed a majority of the requirements for the degree. The Chair of the school responsible for the student's degree program will make the recommendation to the Dean. The Dean will complete a degree audit and submit it to the Registrar who will complete a verification of the requirements, and submit the request to the Provost. If the Provost approves, the request will be submitted for Presidential approval, and final Board of Trustees approval.

The academic transcript will be marked: "Degree Granted Posthumously". A copy of the academic record will be released, if requested, to an attorney representing the estate of the deceased student.

Deceased students not meeting the above criteria may receive a "Certificate of Achievement" if requested by the family.

## Graduation Procedures

Two semesters prior to intended graduation, students must submit a completed graduation application to the Registrar's Office. A separate graduation application is needed for each degree or certificate the student plans to receive.

## Official Degree Audit

The official Degree Audit for a student's major and/or minor specifies all required courses that must be completed. Course substitutions and waivers of departmental degree program requirements may be granted only by the chair and approved by the dean of the college offering the major or minor program. Course substitutions and waivers for education majors or minors must also have approval from the School of Education.

Exceptions to specific general education requirements may be granted only by the Scholastic Standards Committee. Such exceptions are infrequently made. A petition for exceptions to general education requirements is initiated with the Chair of Scholastic Standards.

Students are responsible for reviewing their degree audit in My Degree Plan and requesting clarification of anything that is not consistent with their records or understanding.

A final degree audit verification will be completed after grades are received at the end of the semester, for students planning to graduate as of that semester. The degree will be awarded if all requirements have been satisfied. Names of graduates are then sent to the president for approval by the Board of Trustees. Subsequently, a diploma is provided to each student.

**Please Note:** Students are not eligible to receive a degree or certificate with an "I" (incomplete) grade on their academic record.

## Diploma Charge

There is no charge for the first diploma from the University. A fee is charged for replacement diplomas.

Students completing graduation requirements before their diploma is available, may request a letter from the Registrar's Office certifying that they have completed degree requirements.

## Commencement

From the graduation application forms submitted by students, a potential graduate list is created each semester. The names of students who are listed in the annual commencement program are also compiled from the graduation application forms. Students may not be listed in the commencement program unless their graduation application form is filed with the Registrar's Office by mid February. Students are expected to attend the commencement ceremony unless excused by the Registrar's Office.

Students completing degree requirements during the summer semester may participate in the May commencement ceremony. To be listed in the commencement program, graduation application forms must be received by mid February.

Participation in the commencement ceremony is **not** equivalent to graduation. Because the ceremony occurs before final grades are submitted, it is not possible to determine if all degree requirements have been satisfied at that time.

## Graduation Audit Policy

Graduation Audits (graduation application, degree audit, supporting paperwork) are maintained in the Registrar's Office permanently for students that apply to graduate but ultimately do not graduate due to missing requirements.

If the student re-applies to graduate within two years from original graduation application term, the student will follow the same degree audit previously submitted.

If the student re-applies to graduate after two years from the previous graduation application, the student will be directed to contact their academic department. The Registrar's Office will provide copies of the student's graduation audit paperwork to the academic department as requested. The student will also be required to submit a new graduation application to the Registrar's Office.

Because degree programs are continually assessed, requirements may change during the student's absence. Students will need to work with their academic departments in order to fulfill the department requirements in place at the time the student returns to LSSU.

For degree programs that are no longer available (eliminated/suspended), students having completed the graduation application process will be directed to their academic department for advisement.