Responsible Division: Academic Affairs
Responsible Office: Graduate Studies
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Policy Title: Degree Completion

Policy: *The Graduate School policy on Degree Completion* contains the policies and regulations of the Alcorn State University Office of Graduate Studies. This policy has been established by the   Graduate School Graduate Council to ensure consistent standards across Graduate programs.

GRADUATION

Degrees and diplomas at Alcorn State University are awarded two times a year, December, and May. There is no formal ceremony for students completing degree requirements during the summer but they may elect to participate in the formal commencement ceremony in December. Diplomas are issued to students participating in the ceremony on the day of Commencement. All diplomas are mailed to graduates at least one week following commencement if they do not participate in the ceremony. Students must apply for graduation by published deadlines; it is not automatic. If a student does not graduate for the term in which application is made, the student must reapply for the intended graduation cycle. The Office of Graduate Studies processes all applications for graduation and conducts a degree audit to inform students of their eligibility to graduate. Students must satisfy all progression to graduation requirements before allowed to participate in the May Commencement.

Application for Degree

Students anticipating graduation in the spring should file an application for degree by the last Friday in January. Those anticipating completing degree requirements during the summer should file their application by the second Friday in July and those anticipating completing degree requirements during the fall should file their application by the second Friday in September. Students who fail to submit the application for degree and required documents on time will be deferred until the next graduation cycle.

Degree Plans

All graduate students must have an assigned Degree Plan in go.alcorn.edu for the appropriate degree program. The Office of Graduate Studies monitors degree plans based on the approved program of study. Students cannot graduate in a program they have not been admitted. The Degree Plan must be assigned during the first semester of enrollment. An academic hold is placed on the student's account if a Degree Plan is not assigned during the required timeframe. The Hold is removed by the Office of Graduate Studies once the Degree Plan is assigned. Students must satisfy all curriculum requirements for the degree. Any transfer courses approved by the student's advisor and Graduate Studies Administrator will be included on the student's official transcript and reflected on the Degree Plan. A Degree Candidacy Checklist is attached

to each Degree Plan to inform student of requirements for degree completion. All requirements must be met to clear for graduation.

Degree Audits
Students must clear for graduation in order to confer a degree. This process is conducted in go.alcorn.edu using the Degree Plan and Checklist. The first level of degree audit is conducted by the academic unit. The advisor, chair, and dean of the school certify all curriculum requirements have been met as well as well as degree requirements required by the department. The appropriate information is noted in go.alcorn.edu by the advisor. Following verification by the department, the Graduate School completes the degree audit and certifies the student has met all requirements (Admission, Progression, and Graduation). Three determinations are used to indicate the candidacy status of students based on the degree audit: Approved, Rejected, and Pending.

Participation in Commencement Ceremony
In order for graduate students to participate in the commencement ceremony, students must meet the following requirements:

1. Students must be cleared for graduation by the Office of Graduate Studies to be eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony. Submission of the Application for Degree initiates the clearance process. The students' Progress to Graduation file is reviewed to verify students have met all requirements.
2. To graduate, a student must fulfill requirements specified on the Degree Plan and Graduation Checklist.
3. Students who do not wish to participate must notify the Office of Graduate Studies in writing.

Cap and Gown Order Form
All students anticipating graduation and participating in the commencement ceremony must complete a Cap and Gown Order Form. This form is located online on the Academic Affairs website at www.alcorn.edu/academics .