

Registrar News

Welcome to the eleventh edition of a newsletter from the Office of the Registrar. Its purpose is to keep you informed about dates and deadlines, and policies and procedures pertaining to registration and student records.

Major, Major! What's Your Major?

A major is an academic subject area a student chooses as his or her specialty field. If you did not select a major during the admission or orientation process, you must officially declare a major by the third week of your third semester of enrollment (a.k.a. sophomore year.) Acceptance into a major is based on your academic record and whether you have met other standards required by the academic unit.

Declaring a Major. To declare a major, you need to fill out a "Change or Declaration of Major" form. This form can be picked up at the academic unit or at either of the Registrar's Office locations in Warren Hall. Fill out your identification information and then, at the bottom, under "NEW information to be added," fill in the Major(s) and Minor(s) information that you want to declare. Take the form to the academic unit for evaluation of your application. The Academic Unit Head must sign as the authorizer. If you are a freshman, you will also need to obtain the signature of your current adviser. If you are unsure who your current adviser is you can look that up on your e-campus student center. Once approved, a new adviser will be assigned to you by the academic unit. Once the form is completed, either the academic unit or you will need to submit the form to the Registrar's Office for processing.

Changing a Major. You can change majors by filling out a "Change or Declaration of Major" form and obtaining the appropriate signature(s). The form can be picked up at the academic unit or at either Registrar's Office locations in Warren Hall. Fill out your identification information, your current Major(s) and Minor(s) as appropriate, the Major(s) and Minor(s) you want to declare, and then obtain the signature from the Academic Unit Head of the new major/minor. The Academic Unit Head will evaluate your application and, if approved, will assign a new adviser to you. Once the form is completed, either you or the academic unit will need to submit the form to the Registrar's Office for processing.

Deciding on a Major. Selecting a major may be the hardest decision you make as a college student. Before deciding on a major, you should research to make sure the major you choose is the right fit for you. You also should check to see if you have met the entrance requirements. Your university catalog is a good source of information as it details goals, requirements, and course listings. Another valuable source is the Career and Academic Planning (CAP) office. The [Career Guide to JMU Majors](http://www.jmu.edu/cap) link on the CAP web-site, www.jmu.edu/cap, is a beneficial resource. Just click on a major that interests you and a description of the major, related fields of study, possible careers and a wealth of other helpful information is provided. You may visit also the CAP Resource Center in Wilson 303 for resource materials or to speak to a staff member. To schedule an appointment with a Career and Academic Planning adviser, call (540) 568-6555. For even more insight, you also may want to talk to a faculty member or adviser within that area of study.

Office of the Registrar MSC 3528
James Madison University
800 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807
www.jmu.edu/registrar
registrar@jmu.edu
Warren Hall 300 or 504A

What is the Degree Progress Report?

The Degree Progress Report is a tool for students and advisors to use to determine a student's progress toward meeting requirements. This report shows how earned credits apply to the academic record. You can access your Degree Progress Report from your Student Center on e-campus. Your transcript prints at the top of the report; the degree progress prints at the bottom.

On your Degree Progress Report, you can view AP, Transfer, and Dual Enrollment credits and see what requirements they satisfy. The report also shows how you are progressing with General Education requirements, major and minor requirements, and degree requirements. If you transfer credits from another college or if you change your major/minor, you should check your Degree Progress Report to see how changes have been displayed on your academic record. Each time you meet with your academic adviser you should take this report with you, particularly when you are applying to graduate.

If you have questions regarding your Degree Progress Report, you should contact your adviser. If the adviser determines that you have fulfilled a requirement that is not correctly reflected on the report, you will need to bring a copy of the report, a detailed description of the problem, and your contact information to the Registrar's Office. The issue will be reviewed and you will be contacted once it has been resolved.

If you need help understanding your degree progress report, a tutorial is available on the Registrar's web-site. The [Reading Your Degree Progress Report](#) link is on the For Students page under [e-campus](#).

Mark Your Calendars

Friday, October 10

First Block Courses end

Monday, October 13

Second Block courses begin

Wednesday, October 15

May 2009 undergraduate degree applications for due to first major adviser

Thursday, October 16

New freshmen mid-semester grades due to Registrar

Monday, October 20

Last day to add or drop a second block course on e-campus

Thursday, October 23

Last day to withdraw with a "W" grade and to change course credit options for semester course

Monday, October 27

Registration begins for Spring 2009 semester

Tuesday, October 28

First block grades due to Registrar

Saturday, November 1

Homecoming

Monday, November 3

Last day to add a second block course with signatures

Tues-Thursday, November 4-6

Graduation Fair at Bookstore

Thursday, November 13

Last day to withdraw with a "W" grade and to change course credit options for a second block course

Monday, November 17

Signed May 2009 degree applications due to the Registrar's Office

Mon-Friday, November 24-28

Thanksgiving Break

Monday, December 1

Last day to submit to instructor "incomplete" 2008 Spring/Summer course work

Tuesday-Friday, December 2-5

Name Card Pick-Up for December graduates

Friday, December 5

Last day of Fall 2008 classes

Last day for faculty to submit to Registrar *Removal of "I" Grade* forms for 2008 Spring/Summer course work

Mon-Friday, December 8-12

Final Exams

Thursday, December 11

6:00 p.m. - Commencement Rehearsal for all graduates

Friday, December 12

Hooping Practice for Graduate level students only

Saturday, December 13

December Commencement:

9:30 a.m. - Processional line up

10:00 a.m. - Commencement start

Monday, December 15

3:00 p.m. - Final Grades due to Registrar

Components of Earning a Bachelor Degree

Any student who is degree seeking must accomplish the following requirements.

Credits. Students must complete 120 credit hours. For four year students, this equates to 15 credits each semester (or 30 credits per year). Transfer students must earn at least 60 total credit hours from a four-year accredited institution and at least 30 credit hours from JMU, to meet the 120 credit minimum.

There are four different categories of credits each student must meet:

- ❖ **General Education** – five clusters of courses for multidisciplinary learning
- ❖ **Major and Minor requirements** – specifics depend on which major/minor(s) you choose
- ❖ **Degree requirements** – specifics depend on which degree you choose, but note that some majors pre-determine which degree you must earn
- ❖ **Electives** – courses of your own choosing that help you meet the 120 credit hour minimum

GPA. Students must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher both at JMU in general and in the major/required minor.

Enrollment. Students must be enrolled during the semester in which requirements are to be met.

Graduate and Doctoral students should contact The Graduate School for specific requirements for earning their degree.

Double Major versus Double Degree

A double major is study in two fields (*i.e., English and Philosophy*) that both fall under the umbrella of one degree (*i.e., B.A.*) Double major graduates receive only one diploma.



A double degree is study in two fields, each one under the umbrella of a different degree. Requirements must be met for both degrees. Double degree graduates receive two diplomas (one for each degree).

A listing of different degrees and the majors that may fall under a degree can be found in the Undergraduate catalog in the Academic Policies and Procedures section.

Applying to Graduate

On the baccalaureate level, prospective graduates should apply for graduation one semester prior to their final semester. To apply for graduation, undergraduate students must pick up an Application for a Bachelor's Degree from the Office of the Registrar. In general, due dates for December graduation are June 1 to the academic unit and June 15 to the Registrar; for May graduation, October 15 to the academic unit and November 15 to the Registrar; and for August graduation, February 15 to the academic unit and March 1 to the Registrar. Students must fill out the form and confer with their adviser. The form should have signatures from the adviser and academic unit head of *all* majors and minors before being returned to the Registrar's Office for processing.

On the graduate level, prospective graduates must fill out an Application for a Graduate/Doctoral Degree. Contact The Graduate School for specific due dates and instructions.