

Dear Seniors,

Welcome to your senior year! I do not say this lightly, for I know that this is a pivotal time for many of you. I know you are grappling with difficult questions, excitement and anxiety about graduating, uncertainty about the future, and some fresh energy (I hope), as you embark on your senior coursework.

I cannot emphasize more the importance of attending career fairs, visiting Career Services for career counseling, polishing your resume, or trying out a career through the Douglass externship program. You will find very helpful information on the Career Services website, including a listing of career days and employer recruiting events. Such events can give you a glimpse into the “language” of job hunting and workplace expectations. Those of you who plan to apply to graduate school should arrange to take GRE’s and research graduate programs in your field. You should be talking to faculty and advisors about graduate programs, and getting advice from as many people as possible (though such advice may vary wildly from person to person!). Seniors may also want to apply for the Transitional Leadership for the Workforce program, a series of seminars exploring the transition from Douglass to life beyond college. You can access information and applications on line at http://www.douglass.rutgers.edu/loc2_trans_ldrshp.html.

In the meantime, I want to bring some record-keeping matters to your attention. First, you should have discovered a Graduation Certification Notice in your DPO. This tells you what core and proficiency requirements you have fulfilled and what you may still need to satisfy. The notice does not account for the summer coursework, so if we’re missing requirements that you completed over the summer, don’t fret. We’ll update our records mid-year. In the meantime, do check to make sure our information is correct as of May 2002. Because many of you did not submit a degree checklist (ahem), we were sometimes remiss in recognizing transfer credits or requirements approved by the Student Academic Affairs Committee. The Certification notice also tells you how to fill out your diploma application. You must do this as soon as possible so that the registrar’s office can maintain accurate records--and order your diplomas. In the spring, you will receive more information about commencement from the Department of Student Life.

If you find errors on the Graduation Certification notice, submit the blue form that is enclosed with the notice; it is your responsibility to let us know if we have missed something, OR in the rare event, given you credit for something that you haven’t done. If this is the case, we will find our error eventually, and then it might be too late for you to take care of it! If you aren’t sure, check the on-line core requirement listing (http://www.douglass.rutgers.edu/c2_acad_for_curr.html). You should also be VERY careful to check your credits. If you repeat a course with a grade of “D,” you do not receive credit a second time. To figure out if the credits were properly calculated, check to see that the prefix “R” and “K” appear on your transcript next to those courses.

Things you need to know:

- ◆ If you have been withdrawn and readmitted, or taken a leave, or recently returned from study abroad, we may not have up-to-date records, in which case you do need to notify us or provide us with your most recent transcripts. *If you did not receive the Graduation Certification Notice in your DPO, contact me immediately via email (reynold@rci.rutgers.edu).*
- ◆ To order your diploma: Download the diploma application form and submit it to the registrar’s office as soon as possible: <http://registrar.rutgers.edu/NB/UG-DAPPL.HTM>
- ◆ We do not provide you with information about progress toward the completion of your major(s), so you will need to meet with a major advisor as soon as possible. That is extremely important: if possible, you should get something *in writing* from your department that states your remaining requirements. When it comes to your senior requirements, “surprises” are definitely not a good thing.

- ◆ Check with RTTRS to review your total credits and GPA. You will want to make sure that your courses have been properly credited.
- ◆ As I noted above, if you re-took a course with a grade of D, you will not get degree credit twice for the same course. Unfortunately, the registrar does not automatically remove the credits, so it gets confusing. In the worst case scenario, we will remove the credits just prior to graduation, leaving you without enough credits to graduate. This can lead to a lot of unhappiness.
- ◆ If you re-took a course with a grade of F, you should fill out an “F” form in our office (104 College Hall) to have the first F removed from the GPA.
- ◆ **“Walking.”** In the past, the graduation policy was firm: you could not walk, or participate in the graduation ceremony, unless you had completed ALL of your degree requirements. There were NO exceptions. This past year, we modified the policy slightly and allowed students to walk when they were only short one or two courses. The college needs to review the policy now that we have tried it both ways. We may revert to the old rules, in which case, you should do your best to complete requirements by May if you plan to participate in this year’s commencement ceremony. We will keep you informed about our decision.

I look forward to working with you all this year. I have enjoyed meeting some of you in my office—back in College Hall—this summer, and I hope you have a wonderful senior year.

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