Graduation and Commencement

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, students must satisfactorily complete no fewer than 120 credit hours with a cumulative, grade-point average of 2.0 or higher, both overall and in the courses required for their major field of study. The grade-point average includes only courses taken at McPherson College and is calculated by dividing the number of grade points earned by the number of graded hours.

For a complete list of graduation requirements, see Requirements for the Bachelor's Degree in the Degree Programs section and the Course Repeat Policy.

Conferral Dates

McPherson College will post degrees as they are earned. Commencement exercises are held each May for graduating seniors who are members of that class and who have successfully completed the graduation requirements, including applying for graduation and a positive senior audit. Please see the Participation in Commencement section for more details.

Graduation Checks

Students are highly encouraged to schedule two meetings with the registrar's office to confirm they are on track to graduate. The first should be performed sometime during the spring semester of the sophomore year or first semester of the junior year. The second graduation check should be scheduled for the spring semester before the senior year. All students should be cautious about changing registration during the year. Any change that brings a senior below the stated requirements for participation in Commencement results in the student not being able to participate.

Candidacy for the Degree

In the fall, members of the senior class apply for candidacy for the degree to which their courses apply. Application is made through the registrar's office. Only those members of the senior class that have been accepted as candidates for a degree may participate in Commencement events. Seniors not filing this application risk being overlooked for a diploma and inclusion in the Commencement program.

Participation in Commencement

Commencement exercises are held each May for graduating seniors who are members of that class and who have successfully completed the graduation requirements, including applying for graduation and a positive senior audit. *Please note*: Elementary education majors cannot participate in Commencement until after student teaching has been successfully completed. Secondary education majors may walk as a participator if they already have 114 earned credit hours and have met all the requirements for their major. They will then graduate after successfully completing their student teaching experience.

Only students who have successfully completed 114 credits out of the required 120 credits (meaning they do not have more than 6 credits outstanding) and with a minimum 2.00 grade point average (both overall residential and in the major as figured by tentative senior grade due date) and do not have a balance with the college are eligible to be included in the Commencement program and participate in Commencement and its related activities without having earned their degree. Students who participate in Commencement without actually graduating are referred to as "participators." The diploma is conferred and a complete transcript available for order following completion of all requirements.

Neither senior status, number of courses attempted, time spent in college, delays in submitting off-campus or transfer work, nor other circumstances or miscommunication eliminate the 114 credit requirement for participation in Commencement. The responsibility for understanding and meeting graduation requirements rests entirely with the student.

Diplomas

A diploma is issued to each member of the graduating class approximately six weeks after Commencement under the following conditions:

1. All requirements for the Baccalaureate degree have been successfully completed. A diploma is not issued to participators.
2. The recipient has no outstanding financial obligations to the college.

The fee for replacing a diploma is $40 (domestic) or $50 (international).