Western Connecticut State University

Degree Works for Students
Degree Works: 
An Overview

Introduction:

Degree Works is an electronic degree audit system that provides you with crucial information about your degree requirements. Degree Works provides:

- The ability to track your progress towards degree completion without mistakenly taking courses not required for your major
- The opportunity to use the What-If option to see what degree requirements will be met if you changes majors
- The ability to view notes entered by faculty members
- A semester by semester adjustable plan of courses for students
- An easy way to view requirements and when they are offered

Accessing Degree Works:

To use Degree Works, you must log into your Banner Web account. This is done through the WestConn Essentials tab at www.wcsu.edu.

Click on the MyBanner Tab

You will now be at the Banner Web screen
To access Banner Web, click

You will be asked to enter your network username and password.

Username: [ ]
Password: [ ]

After logging into Banner Web, click the Degree Works For Student Tab under the Student Services banner

You will be redirected to Degree Works. If an audit is available, you will immediately see the degree audit, otherwise you will see the main Degree Works landing page.
Worksheet:

You are now on the Worksheet page of your audit.

Like the current program sheets on the web, Degree Works has two functions. The first function is to provide an audit of degree requirements. The second function is to provide advisors and students a semester-by-semester template of courses that are expected to be taken in order to graduate from Western within four years.

Legend:

The first area you will see is a legend. This will help you better understand the information in the audit. In addition to being the first thing you see, it is also listed at the bottom of the audit.

Critical Academic Information

Next there is the Student View. This has critical student information such as name, ID, Class Year, Advisor, cumulative GPA, School, Level, Degree and Major. We have also included some other important information such as student has holds, athletic information, Campus residency, Full-Time or Part-Time status, Catalog term and Confidentiality indicator.
There is a Degree Progress bar that indicates how much of the degree has been met by either completed or in progress courses. Understand this is just a guide.

**Audit Worksheet**

You will see a degree overview as well as the status of each requirement. Included in this section you will find:

- Minimum credits necessary to earn a degree at Western.
- Minimum cumulative GPA necessary to earn a degree at Western.
- Foreign language requirements for their degree (if necessary)
- General Education requirements
- Major requirements
- Minor requirements
- General Elective requirements

More detailed information about each category is found below the overview section. These sections contain more specific requirements for the degree. To access this information you may scroll down using your mouse or you may click on the links to the right of the requirement. This will bring you to the specific requirement.

Below is an example of the specific foreign language requirement and General Education requirements from the 2015 – 2016 degree requirements.
Each worksheet will have a section dedicated to the major requirements

Each Worksheet will have an area reserved for General Electives

Minor information will appear underneath the General Electives Area.

Courses that do not meet the requirements of the degree are listed as additional Electives

Understanding the audit

The following symbols are used in both the general overview area as well as the more specific degree areas of the audit to indicate if requirements have been met. They are:
• The red outlined box indicates if a requirement has not been met and no courses in progress will help meet this requirement
• Indicates that the requirement has been met
• Indicates that the requirement is in the process of being met
• Indicates that the requirement is in progress but may need to be reviewed by the advisor or Registrar’s

There is also information found on the right side of the audit that will help you understand what is satisfying each of the degree requirements.

If the course meeting the requirement was taken at Western and has been graded, the course subject, number, title will appear. In addition, to the right of the course you will notice if the course is in progress or has been graded as well as the credits and when the course was taken.

If a course is in progress, IP will appear until a grade has been issued for the course.

You will notice that transfer credit will post to the student’s degree audit with its equivalent course at Western listed as well as the original course and course number as well as the institution where the course was taken.

You may see courses listed in two formats. The first format is for courses that were taken at the other institution during the past 10 years. You will notice that the Term is listed as Fall 2014.

The other format you may see refers to the Banner Term code without the text narrative and appears as 198910. This is the only difference and the transfer credit is posted in the same way.

CLEP and AP Test scores are coded in Degree Works in the same format as transfer credit and you will be able to see that the credit is awarded because of AP work.

**Competency Based Education**
(New Students Entering Fall 2016 moving forward)

Degree Works is also set up to review the new General Education requirements. There are two parts of the General Education requirements. The first section of the
audit is a list of competencies. These are ten separate areas and students are required to meet each of them at least once.

You will notice that separate competencies can be met by the same course. In addition, if a student takes the Writing Placement exam and tests out of Writing 101, the Writing 101 competency will be considered met.

In addition, students must take 3 competencies a second time to fulfill this requirement. Since students can retake any competency with the exception of First Year and Writing I, students have the option to complete 1 to 2 courses in each competency.

If no competencies have been met, the audit will reflect that the student must take 1 to 2 courses in a specific competency.

In this example, a student has completed two competencies in Critical Thinking

If a student has completing one competency and may take a second course in that competency, the audit will reflect 0 to 1 courses in that competency

It is important to note that the system will determine when a student has taken the maximum number of courses in a specific competency. This should not stop a student for taking additional courses within the competency if it is required for the student’s major. The courses will not count towards that competency but may count elsewhere in the audit. Additionally, since students can take their additional 3 competencies in any of the ten competencies, the system will not indicate when all the competencies and repeated competencies have been satisfied. It is your
responsibility to ensure that you have completed the second competency requirement.

**Searching for Courses**

Degree Works gives you the ability to search the academic schedule for courses that meet a specific competency. To search the schedule, all you need to do is click on with Attribute link in the Still Needed area.

When you click on this link, a box with detailed information about the course will appear. It provides you with a list of courses that meet that competency as well as a course description of each course. If the course is being offered during a term that is available for viewing, you will see the term, CRN, Seats Available, Title, and when the course meets.

**Course: HUM 222, 3 Credits, Sustainability**

*Course Description:* Sustainability is clearly an urgent and multi-faceted problem that calls for an interdisciplinary approach. This new course will address sustainable living from the perspectives of economics (business), ecology (science), and ethics (philosophy). A large part of this course will be dedicated to finding and bringing together the information on sustainability that has accumulated for some time now in these three different fields: business, science and philosophy. The course will use this project of gathering and evaluating information as an occasion to teach students skills in information literacy. Students will also gain skills in the health and wellness competency through a unit of the class specifically focused on personal sustainability which addresses health and lifestyle choices that will maximize personal well being.

**Attributes:**

- HW - Health & Wellness (HW)
- IL - Information Literacy (IL)

**Sections:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Cm</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Seats Open</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Meeting Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPRING 2017</td>
<td>41153</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>30 (out of 30)</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Tu Th 15:05 - 16:20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same process can be used to search for a course’s availability within the major. If you click on the link to the right of Still Needed, you will get the same results.

The new General Education requirement also has a course component. You must complete 40 credits outside of your major. Degree works has a separate area for these courses. Courses outside the major include any course directly associated with the major such as EDU courses taken by education majors. Courses listed in the major section but are not part of the major subject matter are also excluded from the 40 credits. For example, Chemistry students are required to take MAT 182 as part of their major and cannot be used in the 40 credits of breadth.
Most cognate courses count as part of the 40 credits outside the major. You will notice that WRT101 and cognate courses are embedded in this section of the audit. Please note that if a student does well enough in their placement exam to waive that requirement, the student will be required to fulfill those credits with another course outside their major.

### Notes:

You will find an area in Degree Works where advisors can record information for other faculty members and the student to view.

### What If:

You will notice on the left hand side of the Worksheet page a What If tab. This allows students to select different majors and produce a degree audit based on other majors. The What If Option also will help you understand how taking certain courses will help you complete your requirements.

To use the What If option, just click What If.

After you clicked on the What If option, you will be given the option to enter information to help determine the student’s success in a degree.

There are options for:
Level – Determines if the student is an undergraduate or graduate student (Required)

Program – This is the specific Degree and Major listed in Banner (required)

Catalog Term – This determines what requirements the student should be expected to meet. (Required)

Major – The Major is required even though you are selecting the program above. (Required)

Minor – If you would like to see where a student might be in a minor, select one from the drop down menu. (Optional)

Concentration– Most of the concentrations at WCSU are connected with the Program listed above. (Optional)

After you have determined the Level, Program, Catalog Term and Major, you can click either Process What-If which will give you the information you need on screen.
or you can Save as PDF. Save as PDF will allow you to save the document for your records or email it to a student. To create an audit, click either of the two options.