

Electives Calculations for Undergraduates Using Total Hours Needed Aim (as of 10.20.2014)

The minimum Total Hours needed to graduate for most Molloy bachelor's degrees is 128 credits. A Total Hours Aim is assigned in Degree Audit to show the number of hours needed. Additional Aims are used when the hours needed are more. The Associate degrees have variations in Total Hours needed as well. (Hours and Credits are the same thing.)

No Electives are required for the AAS degrees or for the Graduate/Doctoral programs. All necessary requirements are specified and built as aims in degree audit for the students.

The **Total Hours Aim** is at the end of the Graduation Requirement Report and the Course Needs Report. It is a very useful tool for advising as it monitors:

- Number of Hours Needed
- Earned hours
- In-progress hours
- Minimum overall cumulative GPA for Graduation

Subtract the Earned and In-progress hours from the Total Hours to compute how many hours are still needed to graduate. The student may need more than the Molloy minimum Total Hours to graduate when there are excess unnecessary Electives. (This may be due to transferring in extra credits, changing majors with accumulation of credits that do not apply, or advising errors.) To graduate, the student must satisfy every Aim for the degree (every requirement as noted in the catalog), which include: FST, General Education, Major, Minor, Related, assigned Remedial (above and below 100-level) requirements and minimum Total Hours needed.

Students should not be advised to take unnecessary Electives, as their ability to pay for and afford college will be affected. Timely progression to degree completion in four years may not be possible, when students take the unnecessary courses.

Identifying Electives Needed

To identify Electives needed for undergrads, it is important to review the amount of Elective credits listed in Molloy College catalogs (2009, 2011 and 2013 which go with the entry year of the students into a program of study). Some adjustments to the number of Electives needed may need to be made for most students, as follows.

Adjusting Electives Needed

Adjust Electives needed to account for a variety of changes to the degree plan that are made:

FST – If waived, the student will need one more Elective.

PED General Education – If waived, the student will need one more Elective

Science Requirements of 3 credit minimum – If met by a 4 credit course, one less Elective is needed

Any Requirement – If 3 credits are needed and it is met by a 4 credit course, adjust by one less Elective.

Required credit courses at 100-level or above – If a student must take a college level skills course at the 100-level or above course that will also count towards the degree, less electives credits will be needed.

Minors – The Major requirements may not be reused for a Minor. (General Education and Related Requirements can be reused for a Minor.) Minors do reduce the number of Electives needed for the degree.

Honors Program Capstone – Newer students since Fall 2013 in the Honors Program will be taking a one credit Honors Capstone. That combined with the courses needed to complete the Honors Program, must be considered.

LAS requirements – Students must take the right number of LAS (Liberal Arts and Sciences) to graduate. If the student has excess Electives that are non-LAS, more LAS Electives will be needed.

Repeating a Course

Should a student pass a course, but not earn the minimum grade needed to meet a major or other requirement that course is being counted as an Elective until repeated. It is also counted in the Total Hours Aim. Once the student repeats

the course, the lower grade and credits are forgiven. **The student does not earn 3 additional credits when they successfully repeat a course.** Pay attention to calculating Total Hours credits for students who are repeating a course near graduation.

Substitutions

In the case of a student being advised to take an alternative course to replace a required course, approved Substitution Forms must be filed immediately. The approved courses will be marked immediately, so the student and advisor can see that the course is in-progress or being met. The correct minimum grade must be earned. It is important that these substitution forms are submitted, so the student shows as in pursuit of courses for their program of study and to aid correctly selecting courses.

Incompletes

For outstanding Incompletes when the student gets credits and meet a requirement, Electives must be adjusted. The unofficial transcript will show courses with Incompletes. (Incompletes no longer show in Elective “buckets.”)

Changes to our Electives Software

As of Fall 2014, we no longer have the Electives “bucket” called Non-applied Coursework also noted as Free Electives in the reports functioning as it once did.

All colleges are being asked to identify and report to the Department of Education on students taking unnecessary courses as they are not considered eligible for Title IV Financial Aid. There is also a new 150% Rule on the length of time that students can take to complete their degrees.

Courses that do not count towards the degree are no longer included in Elective “buckets”:

- Remedial Courses (Below 100-Level) that were not assigned an Aim will not show up in Elective “buckets”
- Courses with grades of Incomplete, Failure or Withdrawn (See above, on how to look up Incompletes)

There are two New Elective “buckets” now in use:

NACRSWK Aim = Non-Applied Coursework: Courses listed in this “bucket” may not be necessary for the degree. Any courses that are in-progress for this “bucket” need to be monitored to see if they are necessary to be taken. Was a course in this list approved for a Substitution? Are there Waivers affecting Electives needed to reach the Total Hours towards the degree?

ELECT = Free Electives/Unadjusted Electives: Courses that can be applied towards Required Electives necessary to meet the Total Hours aim. These are labeled Unadjusted Electives, because they are not customized in the software for individual student.

The ELECT Aim for Free Electives/Unadjusted Electives is under development. As the software is upgraded over the next year, it will one day better show how many Elective credits are needed and applied for the degree.

Why do you see both the “buckets” for Electives? It is more useful that advisors and students can see courses counting as Electives, so advising decisions for seeing if credits applied correctly or adding a minor can be made. The two “buckets” are useful tools.

Recommended Best Practices

- Promptly submit any Substitutions through the approval process so the student qualifies for Title IV Aid and is in pursuit of requirements for their program of study
- Review the Electives needed as the student progresses
- Don't advise students to take unnecessary Electives for Full-time/Half-time status: it will not help them to qualify for Financial Aid
- Make sure the student is in the correct Major, do not advise the student into courses for a major that they are not approved to pursue.