



Forest Science, B.S.

## **Course Planning Guide**

Department of Forest & Wildlife Ecology

Reference this guide to learn about the unique requirements, procedures, resources, and information for students in the Forest Science major.

Last updated: June 2023

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Course Selection .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Course Rotation Schedule .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Options for Gen Eds .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Options for Gen Eds continued.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<b>Degree Completion .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Sample 4 Year Plan.....</i>	<i><b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b></i>
<i>Sample 2 Year Plan (for transfer students).....</i>	<i><b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b></i>
<i>Capstone Options.....</i>	<i><b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b></i>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Policies and Requirements.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Advising, Enrollment, and Course Selection.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Advising, Enrollment, and Course Selection continued .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Other Common Questions .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Other Common Questions continued.....</i>	<i>14</i>

## Forest Science Course Planning Guide

Welcome! You are receiving this information because you are an interested or new student in the Forest Science B.S. program at UW-Madison. This guide is meant to complement information found in the [Degree Audit Reporting System \(DARS\)](#), [Guide](#), and [Course Search & Enroll](#) and should *not* be used a substitute for meeting with your academic and faculty advisors.

The Forest Science major has a relatively high number of required courses, most of which are term specific. Therefore, it is crucial to plan ahead and consult with advisors regularly. When planning, you and your advisor will also check for enrollment requisites (found in Guide and Course Search & Enroll) to ensure proper course sequencing.

We hope you will find this information helpful as you map out a plan to complete the major in your **Degree Planner** tool in Course Search & Enroll! Information on how to use the Degree Planner can be found here in the Office of the Registrar's Knowledge Base: <https://kb.wisc.edu/registrar/98640>

Once you finish creating your plan, you can run a DARS "What-if" report **including planned terms** to make sure you are on track to graduate when you intend to. Information on how to do this can be found here: <https://kb.wisc.edu/registrar/94068>

Screenshot from **DARS** (Degree Audit Reporting System):

**Run degree audit** [X]

- 1 Select academic plan/program
- 2 Choose audit settings

Include courses from

- Previous, current, future, and planned terms**  
Includes courses already completed, enrolled courses that are in progress, enrolled courses that have not started, and courses in the degree planner from future terms that are not enrolled.
- Previous, current, and future terms**  
Includes courses already completed, enrolled courses that are in progress, enrolled courses that have not started.
- Previous and current terms**  
Includes courses already completed and enrolled courses that are in progress.
- Previous terms**  
Includes courses already completed.

Honors Degree Options  
Keep current status [v]

Back Request audit

## Course Rotation Schedule

Note that many courses are only offered in certain semesters – pay attention when mapping your plan for degree completion!

Course Offerings by Term (as of Spring 2023)		
Fall only	Spring only	Multi-Term
F&W ECOL 100 – Forests of the World	SOIL SCI 230 – Soil: Ecosystem and Resource	F&W ECOL 360 – Extinction of Species (Fall and Summer)
F&W ECOL/BOT 402 - Dendrology	F&W ECOL 300 – Forest Biometry	Major elective options
Soil Sci 301 – General Soil Science	F&W ECOL 305 – Forest Operations	AAE 215 or Econ 101 (intro economics for Forest Science)
F&W ECOL 318 – Principles of Wildlife Ecology	F&W ECOL 379 – Principles of Wildlife Management	Biology, Chem, Math, Statistics
F&W ECOL 390 – Learning to Action: Professional Dev. (Forest Science)	F&W ECOL 395 - GIS Tools For Ecologists	GEOG 377 – Intro GIS
F&W ECOL 450 –Disturbance Ecology Lab II	F&W ECOL 448 – Disturbance Ecology	F&W ECOL/BOT 402 - Dendrology may be taught in Summer
F&W ECOL 515 –Natural Resources Policy	F&W ECOL 449 – Disturbance Ecology Lab I	Independent Research (can count towards capstone)
F&W ECOL 550 - Forest Ecology	F&W ECOL 410 – Principles of Silviculture	<b>ODD Summers Only</b>
F&W ECOL 551 - Forest Ecology Lab	F&W ECOL 411 – Practices of Silviculture	F&W ECOL 658 – Forest Resources Practicum (Forest Science Summer Camp)
F&W ECOL 561 – Wildlife Management Techniques	ZOOL 510/511 – Ecology of Fishes and Ecology of Fishes Lab	<b>EVEN Summers Only</b>
F&W ECOL 590 - Integrated Resources Capstone (Forest Science)	F&W ECOL 520/521 – Ornithology and Birds of Southern Wisconsin	F&W ECOL 424 – Summer Field Practicum (Wildlife Summer Camp)
F&W ECOL 660 – Climate Change Ecology	F&W ECOL 652 – Decision Methods for Natural Resource Managers	

*Last updated 3.20.23*

## Options for Gen Eds

Looking for courses that meet Social Sciences, Humanities, or Ethnic Studies requirements? Check out options in the ENVIR ST, GEOG, and AMER IND subjects.

→ Pro tip – narrow your search by using the filtering tools in [Course Search & Enroll](#)

The screenshot displays the 'Course Search & Enroll' interface. At the top, navigation links include 'Course Search', 'My Courses', 'Scheduler', 'Degree Planner', and 'Degree Audit (DARS)'. The main search area is titled 'Search for courses' and shows '17 results' with a 'Relevance' dropdown menu.

**Search Filters:**

- Subject:** Environmental Studies - Gaylord Nelson...
- Keywords:** (empty field)
- Seats:**
  - Open
  - Wait listed
  - Closed
- Breadth:**
  - Biological Sciences
  - Humanities
  - Literature
  - Natural Sciences
  - Physical Sciences
  - Social Sciences
- General Education:**
  - Communication A
  - Communication B
  - Quantitative Reasoning A
  - Quantitative Reasoning B
  - Ethnic Studies

**Course Results:**

Course ID	Credits	Course Title
ENVIR ST 101	1.00-2.00 credits	Forum on the Environment
ENVIR ST 113	3.00 credits	Environmental Studies: Environmental Humanities
ENVIR ST 139	3.00 credits	Global Environmental Issues
ENVIR ST 213	3.00 credits	Global Environmental Health: An Interdisciplinary Introduction
ENVIR ST 309	3.00 credits	People, Land and Food: Comparative Study of Agriculture Systems
ENVIR ST 333	3.00 credits	Green Urbanism
ENVIR ST 339	4.00 credits	Environmental Conservation
ENVIR ST 343	3.00-4.00 credits	Environmental Economics
ENVIR ST 402	1.00-4.00 credits	Special Topics: Social Perspectives in Environmental Studies

Page 1 of 1

## Options for Gen Eds continued

Remember - courses **cannot double count** across these categories but *can* be used to meet other major and college-level requirements. For example, F&W ECOL 515 can count towards both major and Social Science requirements. When in doubt, check DARS and consult with your academic advisor.

Humanities or Ethnic Studies	Humanities or Social Science	Humanities	Social Science	Ethnic Studies	Comm B
ENVIR ST 306: Indigenous Peoples and the Environment  AMER IND 341: Indigenous Environmental Communicators	HIST SCI 132: Bees, Trees, Germs, and Genes: A History of Biology  HIST SCI/C&E SOC 230: Agricultural and Social Change in Western History	GEOG 460: American Environmental History  ENVIR ST 328: Environmental History of Europe,  ENVIR ST 404: Racism & Environmental Science  AMER IND/GEOG 410: Critical Indigenous Ecological Knowledges  HIST SCI 301: The Origins of Scientific Thought  HIST SCI 404 – A History of Disease	F&W ECOL 515 – Natural Resources Policy ( <i>or</i> can count towards Comm B)  Many more options in AMER IND and ENVIR ST subjects!	AMER IND/BOT 474: Ethnobotany  Many more options in AMER IND and ENVIR ST subjects!	BIO 152: Intro Biology  F&W ECOL 515: Natural Resources Policy

Note: The courses above are used as examples because they relate to biology and/or ecological issues and can double count towards major requirements. Feel free to find courses that are NOT directly related to the sciences if you prefer to take something different. You can search for gen eds in subjects such as psychology, history, philosophy, anthropology, and many more.

## Forest Science 4-year Plan (Example)

This plan is an EXAMPLE of how major requirements MAY be met. All other university requirements must be met to be eligible for graduation. Check DARS academic record to ensure accuracy. Students should maintain an average of 15 credits per semester (30 per year) to reach 120 credits needed to graduate in four years or less. See [Course Guide](#) for credit values, requisites, and additional course information.

Fall	Spring	Summer
<p><b>F&amp;W ECOL 100 Forests of the World</b> (optional, recommended) *</p> <p>AAE 215 or Econ 101 (215 counts for Social Science) Math 113 (depends on placement) Chemistry Requirement (103 or 108) Comm A (if needed)</p>	<p>Stats 301 or 371</p> <p>Humanities</p> <p>Ethnic studies</p> <p>Chemistry Requirement (if not already completed)</p>	<p><b>F&amp;WE 658 Forest Resources Practicum</b> (Summer Camp, only offered in ODD years. Recommended as early as possible.) *</p>
Fall	Spring	Summer
<p><b>F&amp;WE 402 Dendrology*</b></p> <p><b>Soil Sci 301 Soil Science*</b></p> <p>BOT 130 or BIO 151 (student choice)</p> <p>Major elective</p> <p>Humanities</p>	<p><b>F&amp;WE 300 Forest Measurements</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 652 Natural Resource Economics</b></p> <p><b>GIS requirement (GEOG 377 or 371, F&amp;W ECOL 395)</b></p> <p>BIO 101 and 102 or BIO 152</p>	
Fall	Spring	Summer
<p><b>F&amp;WE 550 Forest Ecology*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 551 Forest Ecology Lab*</b></p> <p>CALS International Studies (F&amp;W ECOL 360 recommended)</p> <p>Major Elective</p>	<p><b>F&amp;WE 410 and 411 Principles and Practices of Silviculture*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 448 Disturbance Ecology (lecture)*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 449 Disturbance Ecology Lab I*</b></p>	<p>Internship (required before enrolling in F&amp;WE ECOL 390)</p> <p>Internship does not need to be taken for credit. See advisor and department website for details</p>
Fall	Spring	Summer
<p><b>F&amp;WE 390 Professional Development*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 515 Natural Resources Policy</b> (can count for Social Science or Comm B) *</p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 590 Integrated Resource Capstone*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;W ECOL 450 Disturbance Ecology Lab II*</b></p>	<p>Wildlife ecology elective requirement (several options, student choice)</p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 305 Forest Operations*</b></p> <p>Major elective (12 credits needed)</p>	

\*Term-specific – Consult with advisor and see [Department Course Rotation Schedules](#)

**Bold Dark Green = Forest Science Core (MUST take, no exceptions)**

Unbold Green = Satisfies Gen Ed/CALS/ Major Requirement

Bright Green = Major elective

## Forest Science 2-year Plan (Example)

This plan serves as an *example* to transfer students and/or those who declare the Forest Science major after sophomore year. It assumes gen eds, math, stats, chem, bio requirements are complete. **Course sequencing and completion within four years total cannot be guaranteed.** All university requirements must be satisfied to be eligible for graduation. Check DARS academic record to ensure accuracy. Students should maintain an average of 15 credits per semester (30 per year) to reach the 120 credits needed to graduate in four years total. See [Course Guide](#) for credit values, requisites, and additional course information.

Fall	Spring	Summer
<p><b>F&amp;WE 402 Dendrology*</b></p> <p><b>Soil Sci 301 Soil Science (or Soil Sci 230 in Spring)*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 515 Natural Resources Policy (can count for Social Science or Comm B)*</b></p> <p>Amer Ind 341: Indigenous Environmental Communicators (major elective) *</p>	<p><b>F&amp;WE 300 Forest Measurements</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 410 &amp; 411 Principles and Practices of Silviculture*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 652 Decisions Methods for Natural Resource Managers</b></p> <p>Major elective (student choice)</p>	<p>F&amp;WE 360 Extinction of Species (CALS International Studies and Wildlife Ecology Requirement) *</p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 658 Forest Resources Practicum (Summer Camp, only offered in ODD years. Recommended as early as possible.) *</b></p>
Fall	Spring	Summer
<p><b>F&amp;WE 550 &amp; 551 Forest Ecology and Forest Ecology Lab*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 390 Professional Development*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 590 Integrated Resource Capstone*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;W ECOL 450 Disturbance Ecology Lab II*</b></p> <p><b>GIS requirement (GEOG 377 or 371, other options may be offered on occasion)</b></p>	<p><b>F&amp;WE 305 Forest Operations*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 448 Disturbance Ecology (lecture)*</b></p> <p><b>F&amp;WE 449 Disturbance Ecology Lab I*</b></p> <p>F&amp;WE 520: Ornithology (major elective) *</p> <p>Major elective (student choice)</p>	

\*Term-specific – Consult with advisor and see [Department Course Rotation Schedules](#)

**Bold Dark Green = Forest Science Core (MUST take, no exceptions)**

Unbold Green = Satisfies Gen Ed/CALS/ Major Requirement

Bright Green = Major elective



## Capstone Options

All CALS students are required to complete a final capstone, which is meant to be a cumulative project integrating the knowledge a student has acquired throughout their program. Students are required to integrate diverse bodies of knowledge to solve a problem or formulate a policy of societal importance with the intent of facilitating the transition to post-baccalaureate life.

A Capstone Experience should:

- Develop problem solving skills
- Expose the student to multidisciplinary approaches
- Develop teamwork and interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate effectively to multiple audiences
- Develop skills in accessing and using information resources (e.g., electronic databases, library resources, national repositories)
- Address societal, economic, ethical, scientific, and professional issues
- Communicate and extend the capstone experience via written, oral, and/or multimedia reports by each student

The Capstone Experience will normally be completed during the student's final 2 or 3 semesters. The intent is to have the student utilize and integrate their undergraduate learning into a culminating, or capstone, experience.

The Forest Science major requires students to complete the **F&W ECOL 590 – Integrated Resource Capstone** to satisfy the capstone requirement.

*Potential substitutions:* F&W ECOL 699: Special Problems or F&W ECOL 681: Senior Thesis. These options require instructor consent through a Capstone Agreement form.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Policies and Requirements

### I'm a sophomore – is it too late to join the major and graduate on time?

Not necessarily! You do want to make sure you are taking math, chemistry, and biology courses relatively early in your undergraduate career. These courses are often prerequisite requirements for more advanced courses in the major. If you are transferring from a major outside CALS or have not taken an introductory biology sequence, it may be more difficult to catch up. You will also want to take F&W ECOL/BOT 402: Dendrology and SOIL SCI 230 – Soil: Ecosystem and Resource or SOIL SCI 301 – General Soil Science as early as possible, noting that these courses are term-specific.

### Can I double major?

Yes, students have been able to double major in Forest Science and other majors on campus. However, because the Forest Science major has several core courses that are term-specific, careful planning is crucial. Because the major coursework alone is intensive and provides sufficient preparation into the forestry profession, it is not necessary for graduates to complete an additional major.

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) policy and procedures can be found [here](#). The best way to start the process is by building a 4-year plan to complete your primary major. Then, an advisor from your intended second major can help determine if adding an additional major is a good fit with your goals and overall student experience. In some cases, a certificate or other opportunities may be more beneficial than adding an additional major.

### Can I study abroad in this major?

Yes! Refer to the [Forest Science Study Abroad MAP](#) webpage for more information. Students in the major have completed a variety of different field experiences abroad. The best way to plan for a study abroad experience is to build out your plan to complete your degree in advance. If you plan to study abroad in a Fall or Spring semester, set aside a semester with lots of wiggle room for electives and focus area courses. There are also several study abroad programs that can be completed over the summer.

Courses taken abroad with direct equivalencies to courses in the major will automatically count in DARS once posted. Students should consult with their advisor when considering what courses to take abroad and how the equivalency process works.

### What's the process for Requesting a DARS Exception? Who makes the decisions?

Meet with your advisor if you would like to request a substitution for any major requirement. If you are taking a new course that has not been approved as an exception in the past, you may be asked to provide a syllabus that will be reviewed by the program's Curriculum Committee. Your advisor can help you navigate this process. Ultimately, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs) approves and processes all exceptions to curricular requirements.

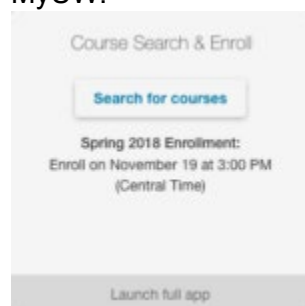
### If I re-take a course, will the new grade replace my old grade?

No, if you retake a course both grades will be on your transcript and calculated into your GPA. In most cases, it is not advisable to re-take a course where you earned a poor grade. Talk to your advisor for specific situations when it may be required to re-take a course you did not pass with a D or better. Note – Forest Science students must earn a C or better in all Forest Science core courses. These courses are denoted in DARS.

## Advising, Enrollment, and Course Selection

### How do I know when to enroll?

The Office of the Registrar will contact you with your enrollment appointment time. This happens in early November for Spring enrollment, and late March/early April for Summer and Fall enrollment. After times are assigned, you can find yours on the "Course Search & Enroll" tile in MyUW:



Note that this date is simply the *earliest date and time* you can enroll. You do not need to meet with your advisor on this date specifically. In fact, it is better to meet with your advisor prior to your enrollment appointment so you have enough time to build a schedule in your enrollment cart. Advisor's calendars start filling up once enrollment begins, so be proactive and plan accordingly.

### How often should I meet with my advisor? Do I have to do it every semester?

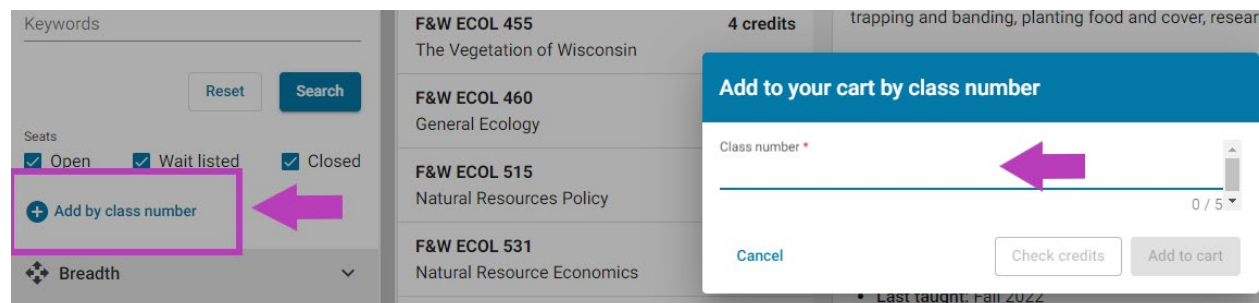
Freshman, sophomores, transfer students, and any student who has recently declared the major are required to consult with their staff and/or faculty advisor at least once per semester. This consultation must occur prior to enrollment for the upcoming term. Students may have an enrollment hold placed on their record that can be lifted after consulting with an advisor. **Most**

often, consulting happens through an advising appointment scheduled through Starfish but can also be done through drop-ins or via email. Students who have built their 4-year plan and have it saved as their “Primary Plan” in degree planner are encouraged to meet with an advisor regularly to discuss electives and progress towards degree completion.

### How do I enroll in research credits?

Independent study credits like F&W ECOL 299 and 699 require instructor consent to enroll. This means you will need pre-approval from the professor you will enroll under and who will give you a grade. You will also need to negotiate with the professor to determine how many hours you will be spending in the lab, which determines how many credit hours you should earn.

Once you have come to an agreement with your professor, they should notify an appropriate staff member to grant you the permission necessary to enroll for credits. Each section has its own unique 5-digit class number. The staff member who grants you permission can give you this number, which can also be found in Course Search & Enroll. When enrolling for research credits, we suggest using the “Add by class number” feature which looks like this:



### How do I know if I have an enrollment hold?

You can check to see if you have a hold on your account by logging onto your [MyUW Student Center](#), selecting Tasks and reviewing any Holds listed. Some holds require you to take action; others are informational only. Please [see this KB document](#) for details.

### Who is my faculty advisor?

All Forest Science students will be assigned to a faculty advisor based on the following alphabetical split:

- Scott Bowe: Last names A-B
- Zuzana Burivalova: Last names C
- Min Chen\*: Last names D-E
- George Meindl: Last names F-H
- Mutlu Özdoğan: Last names I-K
- Volker Radeloff: Last names L-M
- Jen Raynor: Last names N-O
- Adena Rissman: Last names P-R

Mark Rickenbach: Last names S-T  
Phil Townsend: Last names U-W  
Amy Trowbridge: Last names X-Z

**Your initial faculty advisor assignment is not necessarily permanent.** If you are looking for a faculty member to advise on a research project, the best way to start is to review the bios for [individual faculty in the department](#). Read about their research areas and peruse their lab website if they have one. If there is a professor you think you want to make a connection with, reach out to them directly. You can also find out what classes they teach and enroll in one of them. This is a great way to make a first connection. Faculty tend to remember students who enroll in their classes, participate, and are enthusiastic about learning more. If you do not have a preference for a particular faculty advisor or aren't sure where to start, your staff advisor can assign you to someone based on their availability and current advising load.

### What's the difference between a faculty advisor and a staff advisor?

Faculty advisors serve as mentors in a professional sense and are instrumental for students who wish to become involved in scientific research. Having a faculty advisor is crucial for students who want to complete an independent research project for their capstone.

Your staff advisor is more like a high school guidance counselor who can help you choose classes and understand program requirements. There is crossover between areas of expertise, so please feel free to ask either advisor any question. If one of us doesn't know the answer, we will make a referral!

### What's the Deal with 375 "Special Topics" Courses?

In the Department of Forest & Wildlife Ecology, the F&W ECOL 375 subject listing is a placeholder for new courses, courses without their own permanent number, or courses that are taught very infrequently. With advanced planning and advisor approval, these courses can count as substitutions for program requirements. If you have a question about any specific special topics section, talk to your advisor about requesting a substitution/DARS exception.

### Other Common Questions

#### Is the program accredited through the Society of American Foresters (SAF)?

Yes! To learn more about this credential, please visit the [Society of American Foresters](#) website.

#### What courses should I take if I want to go to graduate school?

One of the best things you can do if you plan to attend a research-based graduate program is to get involved in undergraduate research. See this tip sheet for more advice, including email templates: [TIPS FOR CONTACTING FACULTY ADVISORS in Russell Labs](#)

Beyond research lab experience, having a strong background in statistics and data science is very useful in preparing for advanced graduate study. Some programs may also prefer for students to have taken advanced mathematics and physics during their undergraduate career, but this is not always the case.

Minimum GPA requirements will also come into play. Most graduate programs require students to maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout their graduate career. Showing that you can maintain a strong GPA as an undergraduate student will be crucial to your success. While it may be possible to be admitted to some graduate programs with an undergraduate GPA below 3.0, it may make you a less competitive applicant or require that you provide additional evidence of admissibility to be considered. So keep up your GPA, especially in junior and senior years!

### Where can I find more information on transfer credits?

To review how courses from other institutions transfer to UW-Madison we recommend using the Transferology database and resources from the Registrar's Course Equivalency Service (CES). For more information please visit the [CES website](#).

### How do I apply for graduation?

1. [Apply to Graduate](#), ideally by the beginning of your final semester.
2. Run your DARS prior to the start of your final semester to ensure you will have satisfied all requirements.
3. At least 1-2 months before graduation, check the [Commencement website](#) to learn about attire rental and other important details.

Note: Attending commencement is optional. Students do not receive their diplomas at the commencement ceremony. Diplomas are mailed approximately 6-8 weeks after the end of each semester. This allows time for final grading, reviews by school/college degree clearance staff, posting of the degree to the student record (transcript), and processing of the diploma.

Your diploma will not be mailed if you still have certain types of holds on your academic record. When you [clear your holds](#), your diploma will then be automatically released for mailing. Contact the Registrar's Office with any specific questions about your diploma.

### Where can I find more information?

Please visit the [Russell Labs Hub Student Services](#) page and follow us on Instagram @uwrusselllabshub.