

GRADUATION

Students must complete the graduation application process one term prior to the term of completion (e.g., spring term graduates must apply during winter term).

The Graduation Application is available on Southwestern graduation (<https://www.socc.edu/graduation>) website. Official transcripts from accredited colleges and universities previously attended that apply toward a Southwestern degree or certificate must be on file with the transcript evaluator. All coursework from other colleges will be included in the cumulative GPA regardless of applicability to current coursework. The cumulative GPA, including transfer work, is used to determine eligibility for graduation honors. Final approval of the Graduation Application is given only after grades have been posted for the last term's work. Diplomas and one-year certificates are mailed to the students following this process and may take two to four months to receive.

Advisors are available to assist students in selecting coursework that applies to the degree or certificate, but students have final responsibility for satisfying graduation requirements.

The graduation ceremony (commencement) is held annually in June. The process above must be completed to be eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony.

A valedictorian will be chosen for the commencement ceremony. To be considered, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Meet the requirements for graduation with an associate's degree;
- Participate in commencement;
- Have the highest GPA for the students graduating with an associate's degree; and
- Should more than one student meet the criteria, the following procedure will be used: Students meet with the executive director of enrollment management who will choose one student to deliver the commencement message at the graduation ceremony. In the event a decision is not reached, a committee will be assembled by the executive director of enrollment management to hear a short speech prepared by each candidate. A majority vote will be considered final.