

CEE Undergraduate FAQ

Undergraduate Frequently Asked Questions

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Syracuse University was established by the Board of Trustees in 1876. Graduate degrees have been awarded since the 1920's. Civil and Environmental Engineering is one of four departments within the College of Engineering and Computer Science. The department has a long tradition of excellence in graduate teaching and research. Graduate students work closely with their faculty advisors on a variety of research projects. The CEE faculty has a wide range of research and teaching interests. The graduate programs are divided into two disciplines: Civil Engineering and Environment Engineering. Degrees in Civil Engineering are chosen to include an emphasis in Construction Engineering and Management, Geomechanics and Geotechnical Engineering, or Structural and Materials Engineering. Degrees in Environmental Engineering can encompass a broad range of topics or can be more focused on water quality, hydrology, air quality, sustainable infrastructure, or other topics.

We encourage you to become familiar with the [research areas](#) in the Department, to reach out to our [faculty](#) for support, and to become actively engaged in the Department community. One way we encourage our students to become involved is by attending the seminar series we hold throughout the academic year. This is an opportunity to learn about advances in the academic community and to network with faculty and students from across campus.

We are committed to helping you achieve your career goals. Students can take full advantage of what the University has to offer by learning about the [graduate resources](#) available in the College and the [campus resources](#) available at the University.

For the most current information about your degree of study, you can refer to the [Graduate Course Catalog](#). The Graduate School maintains a checklist of [Graduate Requirements](#) that all graduate students should be familiar with to ensure they are on track for degree completion. This site also has many necessary forms, dates and deadlines, and access to resources.

1.0 How and when can I register for courses?

All returning CEE students are required to early register. Fall registration begins in April; Spring registration begins in November. The student is responsible for course registration.

Newly matriculated students will be registered for courses by the Student Records Office.

Please refer to the Registrar's [Academic Calendar](#) for specific dates.

1.1 Unable to register?

If you have a hold on your account, you will see a red circle with a line through it in Myslice. Click on that and it will indicate which office to contact. All registration should be completed before the add deadline. If the add deadline has passed, Myslice will not allow you register; this policy is strictly enforced.

See [Academic Calendar](#)

2.0 What is the deadline to drop classes, withdraw etc.?

Deadlines typically follow the below schedule. You will always want to check the Registrar's [Academic Calendar](#) for the official dates.

- Schedule Adjustments - First week of the semester
- Add Deadline – One week after the first day of classes
- Deadline for Grading Option (audit) - Three weeks after first day of classes
- Academic/Financial Drop Deadline - Three weeks after the first day of classes
- Withdrawal Deadline - Two weeks before the last day of classes
- Early Registration - Approximately four weeks before the last day of classes

When turning in forms/petitions or any type of paperwork which is time-sensitive and/or requires departmental signatures, it can take up to 5 business days to be reviewed. Do not wait until a deadline to submit paperwork.

Be aware, throughout the semester, of the Academic Calendar and plan accordingly. The student is responsible for adhering to deadlines as posted in the Academic Calendar by the Registrar.

2.1 Can't drop a class?

It is best to drop classes before the add deadline; after this date it becomes a manual process.

If the add deadline has passed, Myslice will not allow you to drop a class on-line if you are an international student; all registrations for international students must be verified.

If it is not your last semester, you cannot drop below 9 credits if you are a full-time student.

Did you turn in your last semester memo? (If it is your last semester and you filed your diploma request when you early registered, you should have received your last semester memo during the first two weeks of classes.)

See [Academic Calendar](#)

3.0 How do I enroll in an Independent Study?

Independent Study courses require the submittal of a Proposal to the Registrar's Office. The student will coordinate with a faculty member on the requirements of the Independent Study and criteria for assessment. After the faculty sponsor (must be f/t faculty from CEE) completes and signs the Proposal for Independent Study, the student must email the form to [Nicholas Clarke](#), who will obtain the advisor's and Program Director's signatures.

After the Program Director approves, it will be forwarded to the Student Record's office (with a cc to student) for Dean's approval. They will forward it to the Registrar. The Registrar's office will post the Independent Study to your course registration. (Please allow 7-10 business days or longer during high volume periods).

[Proposal for Independent Study Course](#)

4.0 Can I retake double-numbered coursework?

Some courses are double-numbered and have both undergraduate and graduate level sections available (typically as 400-/600-level courses). This allows both undergraduate and graduate students to take the same course, with additional coursework required of graduate students.

Students are prohibited from taking both levels of a double-numbered course. A student that completes the undergraduate-level section may **not** later complete the graduate-level section.

5.0 Is there a requirement to be in class on the first day?

Attendance in classes is expected in all courses at SU beginning with the first day of classes. Students who do not arrive and attend classes starting on the first day of their classes may be academically withdrawn by their college or departments as not making progress toward degree by failure to attend.

6.0 I'm newly hired by the department. What should I do? How do I get paycheck /direct deposit?

Make sure that you register as soon as open enrollment starts. Failure to register on time will mean you are not a student and thus cannot receive an assistantship appointment.

All employees are STRONGLY encouraged to sign up for Direct Deposit. Step-by-step instructions are found [here](#). Please contact Payroll at payroll@syr.edu or 315-443-4042, option 2. Should you have any further questions, please email [Weisi Liu](#)

[Information for new hires \(have a PDF to Link to\)](#)

[Payroll Direct Deposit Request Form](#)

[I-9 instructions](#)

7.0 I'm an hourly paid student. How do I complete my timesheet?

Timesheet instructions are found [here](#). Be sure to submit timesheets based on time actually worked. Submitting timesheets for pay periods in the future is not permitted.

Please contact the department's budget manager if you believe FICA taxes are being withheld from your paycheck in error.

8.0 Can a student use ROTC courses to satisfy the SS/HUM requirement?

No, unless the ROTC courses in question have the approved SS/HUM prefixes.

9.0 Can language courses be used as professional electives?

No, they can only be used as SS/HUM electives.

10.0 Can ROTC courses be used as professional electives?

No, unless they are offered with prefixes found in the list of Schools/Colleges and Departments approved for professional electives.

11.0 Can Independent Study courses be used as professional electives?

Yes, if they are registered as 300 or above in the approved list of Schools/Colleges or Departments, and endorsed by the student's advisor, the instructor and the department chair.

12.0 Can Physical Education courses be used as free electives?

No, physical education courses cannot be used by engineering students to count as free electives.

13.0 What are technical electives?

Technical electives are upper level courses (courses numbered 300 and above) with the CEE prefix. Courses without the CEE prefix can be used as technical electives only through petition. These petitions will only be approved if the course is equivalent to courses that are typically offered in civil and environmental engineering departments.

14.0 Can Independent Study courses be used as technical electives?

Yes, if they are registered as CEE 490, and approved by the student's advisor, the instructor and the department chair.

15.0 Can a student take a course and its required prerequisite(s) concurrently?

No. Before a student can enroll in a course, all the required prerequisites must be successfully completed.

16.0 What is the difference between the course sequence WRT 105, WRT 205 and ENL 211, ENL 213?

WRT 105 and WRT 205 are for students whose native language is English. ENL 211 and ENL 213 are for students whose native language is not English. It is possible for students whose native language is not English to take WRT 105 and WRT 205 in place of ENL 211 and ENL 213, but they must get approval from the director of the Writing Program. Students whose native language is English cannot take ENL 211 and ENL 213 in place of WRT 105 and WRT 205.

17.0 Are there designated minors that a student can take?

A list of official minors is given in the [SU Bulletin-Undergraduate Course Catalog](#). The list is updated periodically when new minors are approved (or dropped). The required coursework for each minor is described in the Bulletin.

18.0 Can an undergraduate student take 600 level graduate courses?

An undergraduate student can take 600 level graduate courses by submitting a petition. Seniors are often well-prepared for these courses, and are encouraged to consider them as technical or professional electives. However, undergraduate students are not allowed to take course numbered 700 or above.

19.0 Can a student take courses outside of SU to count toward his/her degree?

Yes, provided that the course credits and content are comparable to those of the SU course and that a petition is filed and approved. Also, the student must obtain a grade of C or better for the course to be transferable. Note that only the course credits but not the course grade, will be transferred. Courses taken outside of SU will not be used to compute the student's GPA, nor can they be used to flag any grades on the student's transcript.

20.0 Can a student enroll through University College (UC) to complete his/her degree?

No, unless the student has already spent at least eight semesters at SU as a full-time student. After completion of at least eight full semesters at SU, students who need to register for eleven or less credits to complete their degree requirements can petition to enroll at UC and pay UC tuition on a per-credit basis. However, doing so means the student will lose his/her full time status, which may affect the terms of his/her financial aid eligibility for family health insurance and other benefits.

21.0 Can a student apply course credits beyond what are required for the B.S. degree toward a graduate degree?

Yes, if those additional courses are graduate-level courses pertinent to the graduate degree that the student is seeking. Most graduate schools accept up to six credit hours of transfer credits toward a graduate degree. The student needs to receive a grade of B or better before the course can be accepted for graduate credits.

22.0 Can a student register for less than 12 credit hours in a given semester?

If a student is a domestic student, he/she can register for less than 12 hours of coursework in a given semester. However, by doing so the student becomes a part-time student and this may affect the terms of his/her financial aid. If the student is an international student on F-1 visa, registering for less than 12 hours in a given semester other than the last semester is a violation of U.S. Immigration Law. To ensure that no problem will arise, you should contact the Slutzker Center of International Services for assistance.

23.0 Is a student required to repeat courses with D grades?

Students are required to repeat MAT 295 and MAT 296 if they receive Ds in these courses. For other courses, students are advised to consult with their advisors. The department has no policy to require students to repeat Ds, but depending on the course and the circumstances, it may be advisable for a student to repeat a low-grade course. For instance, if the course is an important prerequisite for the discipline that the student is pursuing, it is probably a good idea to advise the student to repeat the course.

24.0 What does flagging a course mean?

If a student receives a low (but passing) grade for a course taken at SU, he/she can choose to repeat the same course at SU. The new grade received for the course (regardless of whether it is higher or lower than the previous grade) will be used in place of the old grade to compute the student's GPA. However, it should be noted that even though the old grade will not be used to compute GPA, it will remain on the student's transcript. Also, a course can be flagged only twice. What this means is after the third time, all grades obtained from the third time onward will be used to compute the student's GPA.

25.0 Is ECS 101 (Introduction to ECS) required for transfer students?

It depends on the situation. If the transfer student knows how to use computer software for drafting, spreadsheets and math (e.g., AutoCAD, EXCEL, Mathcad, MATLAB, etc.), he/she probably does not need to take ECS 101. He/she should be advised to petition to apply any unused math, science, engineering, or technology credits toward ECS 101. If there are no unused math, science, engineering or technology credits, he/she should be advised to take a math/science/engineering course that is appropriate for his/her discipline and use the credits for ECS 101.

26.0 What happens if the number of credits of a course taken by a transfer student from another institution is less than that of a similar SU course?

One way to remedy the discrepancy is for the student to take an independent study for the number of credits that are short. For instance, consider a student who has taken a mechanics of materials course for 3 credits in another institution. That course, by itself, cannot be used to satisfy the requirement for ECS 325-Mechanics of Solids, which is a 4-credit course. In this scenario, the student can take a 1-credit independent study with the instructor of ECS 325. The 3-credit course plus this 1-credit independent study can then be used to satisfy the requirement for ECS 325.