Degree Works is a degree audit software that provides Aims Community College with tools to assist advisors with their student’s graduation goals in mind. Students can use Degree Works to help create the perfect schedule and graduate in a timely manner.

**Degree Works Benefits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Students</th>
<th>More personalized advising</th>
<th>Improved completion rates and time to graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real-time advice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive “What If?” scenario planning</td>
<td>Improved retention and graduation rates</td>
<td>Robust analytical and decision support tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More transparent course and credit transfer</td>
<td>More transparent transfer articulation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy access to related services and advice</td>
<td>Clear and consistent degree plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More timely degree certification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* [https://www.ellucian.com/Solution-Sheets/Ellucian-Degree-Works/](https://www.ellucian.com/Solution-Sheets/Ellucian-Degree-Works/)

**How To: Log In**

Step 1: Open a browser: Type [www.aims.edu](http://www.aims.edu) into the address bar.

Step 2: Click on the MyAims login.
Step 3: Using your Aims user ID and password log into MyAims.

How To: Access Degree Works

Step 1: Click on the “Student” tab OR “Faculty” tab

OR

Step 2: Click on “Degree Works (Graduation Self-Check)”

Degree Worksheet - This is a view of a student's academic progress, demographics, advising PIN, certificate/degrees awarded, degree declare/major, classification, cumulative GPA, academic standing, Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status/FA, and holds. This allows users to determine which requirements for the degree are met or in progress and a whole lot more.
Section 1: Student Search

If you do not have a student’s Aims ID number (A#) you may search for the student by name using the “Find” button. The pop-up window will provide you with the following options to find a student.

A new window will open and you will be able to put in some identifying information.

***Best to use First and Last Name information, but if you have a specific caseload (ex: Business Tech AAS) you could search from that list of degree/program declared students and select your student to work with from there.

Be sure to only select your student you will be working with and deselecting all others. Once you have unchecked and checked the student you will be working with click “OK.”
Section 2: Student Demographic Information

Now you’ve selected a student be sure to confirm you’re working with the right student. This is a great opportunity to ask the student, “What do you plan to study?” This is an opportunity to verify the student’s academic goals match what we have in the system. If not, you will want to direct the student to complete a “Change of Information” form or have the complete “Change My Major” in MyAims. Please note: Any changes to major occur after drop will be effective for next term.

Please note: The “Degree” pull down can be used to confirm if the student is declared in two different degree/majors.

In these locations one could verify that a student has a PIN (registration hold) that will prevent them from making any registration additions/changes. Under “Registration Holds” this will give a brief description of a hold(s) that the student may have that they will need to take care of prior making any additions/changes to registration. Both areas may require a visit with an Academic Advisor.

This is where you will see any previous degrees from Aims awarded. Please note: A student CANNOT be awarded two Associates of Arts (AA) or two Associates of Science (AS) degrees. However, a student can obtain an AA and AS degree.
Section 3: Degree Progress

Monitors student academic process through each completed area.

Section 4: Degree Declared

If a student is declared in a State Articulation Agreement, it is important to check the Colorado Department of Higher Educations (CDHE) website for the most up-to-date update/changes that may have taken place. **CDHE Transfer Guides:** https://highered.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/TransferDegrees.html

Please note: When advising a student, know what catalog year a student is using when looking at his/her Degree Works declared page. This area also includes the students cumulative GPA and total number of credits required for degree. Each core area then shows number of credits required and the courses approved for the degree core area. **Example:** Associates Science-Liberal Arts
Here is an example when there are classes in progress and/or taken already, but there are outstanding credits:

When using Degree Works to look at what classes to select here are a few cool features:

- Hover with cursor
  This allows the user to hover over the course and view the name of the course and number of credits.

- Click on the course
  This allows the user to get a little more information about the course itself: description, prerequisites, and history of when it was offered in the past. Why is offered in the past important? Well, there are some courses that are ONLY offered during certain semesters and this could delay graduation.

- Special Characters
  As an advisor it is important to understand what the “*” and “@” mean:
  “*” = Classes
  “@” = Any classes in this area can be considered.

Example of “Click on the Course” (new window pop up):
Section 5: “WHAT IF” Tool

When working with students you may explore other degrees by using the “What If” tool. Click on the drop down list search for a major, select the major and then click Process What-If.

Step 1: Click on the “What If” tool, which will bring you to a screen that looks like above picture.
Step 2: Select “Major” from the pull down menu. Once you’ve selected the “Major” it will appear in the “Chosen Areas of Study” box. As the button below the box indicates, “Remove,” if you selected the wrong “Major” you can click on the “Major” and then click on “Remove.”
Step 3: Select the appropriate catalog year from the pull down menu. Once you’ve reached this step this is a great stopping point if you need to print a clean version of a “What If” Degree Works plan. Select the “Save as PDF.” From here a new window will open and you can select the print icon to print a nice clean version—You’re welcome.
Step 4: Click on the “Process What If” button, this will now change temporarily the view of Degree Works and the requirements for the selected degree. To return to the original view simply click on the “Requirements” button.

Tips When Using “What If”
- Transfer In of courses are lost.
- Substitution Memo’s may not apply.

Section 6: Degree Summary (AA/AS/AAS/AGS/C Requirements Area)

Example: AS Degree Requirements
***Please note: That this area falls under the “Progress Bar” and if a student does not complete a graduation application for the declared degree the students’ progress will indicate an discrepancy in the progress bar percentage.

Section 6: In Progress/Not Applicable/Exceptions/Transfer

In Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-progress</th>
<th>Credits Applied: 9</th>
<th>Classes Applied: 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BID 112</td>
<td>REG 5</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAT 121</td>
<td>REG 4</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“In Progress” can be found at the bottom of the Degree Works page. Here you will be able to see what classes the student is current taking during the term and possible future terms (see yellow circle). Also, in this area you will find the number of attempted credits that terms (see orange circle). Finally, you will see out of the number of credits how many classes are there this term (see red circle).

Not Applicable to Program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Applicable to Program</th>
<th>Credits Applied: 18</th>
<th>Classes Applied: 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAA 090</td>
<td>B 3</td>
<td>Summer 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR 094</td>
<td>A 3</td>
<td>Summer 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS 121</td>
<td>A 2</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS 122</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS 123</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS 124</td>
<td>A 2</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS 170</td>
<td>S 1</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courses that fall into this category:
Courses fall into this category when they are not required for the declared degree program or are developmental education coursework (MAT050, CCR092, etc.). Here you will be able to see what term the course was taken (see yellow circle). As well as the number of credits that do not meet the current declared degree and the number of classes, that was (see red circle). **Please note:** If a student is taking out or plans to take out financial aid there could be a point in the students’ academic career that they may “max out on credits.” Having a conversation with the student concerning maxing out on credits is important, as at some point they will have to pay out of their pocket.

Not Applicable – Insufficient:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Applicable - Insufficient</th>
<th>Credits Applied: 5</th>
<th>Classes Applied: 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHE 101</td>
<td>W 5</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courses fall under this category when a student does not pass or withdraws from them. Here you will be able to see what term the course was taken (see yellow circle). As well as the number of credits
that do not meet the current declared degree and the number of classes that was (see red circle).

Exceptions – Split Credits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Credits Applied</th>
<th>Classes Applied</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BID 111</td>
<td>Gen College Biol I w/Lab [SCI]</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BID 112</td>
<td>Gen College Biol II w/Lab [SCI]</td>
<td>REG (5)</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAT 121</td>
<td>College Algebra [MATH]</td>
<td>REG (4)</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Split Credits will indicate a course that exceeded the minimum credits for a core requirement which created an “overflow” of credits into elective credits. (ie- Core Math requirement= 3 credits, student completed MAT121 which is 4 credits. The credits are “split” between the core math requirement (3) and elective credits (1).

Section 7: Planner

The Planner feature allows students to build a semester by semester plan to complete their degree requirements. Required coursework can be dragged from the Degree requirements area on the left into the planner on the right. Students must name their plan in the Description area prior to saving it. Multiple plans can be saved by giving each a different name. Please note: If a student creates a plan as one degree, but later declares something different, the plan is deleted.
Step 1: Click on “Planner” button
Step 2: Name the plan under the “Description”
Step 3: Select the “Academic Year” it will be active
Step 4: Select the number of semesters needed
Step 5: Drag and drop a class in from the left or input “SUBJECT_#” and the number of credits.
Step 6: Notes can be added at the bottom.
Step 7: “Save Plan”

**Section 8: GPA Calculator**

There are 3 different grade calculators in Degreeworks: **Graduation, Term, and Advice**.

1. The **Graduation** calculator helps students see what grades they need in their remaining coursework to graduate and achieve a goal GPA at time of graduation.
2. The **Term** calculator helps students see how grades they are anticipating in the current term will impact their cumulative GPA.
3. The **Advice** calculator tells them how many credits of A's or B's they need to raise their GPA to whatever goal GPA they enter.

**Graduation**
Term

Advice

Section 9: Class History

When accessing “Class History” just click on the link (see red firework). A new window will appear and will show a class summary per semester and have a breakdown for term vs. cumulative credits attempted, credits earned, quality points, graded credits attempted and GPA.
Section 10: Advising Log Notes

Step 1: Click on “Advising Notes”
Step 2: A new screen will appear

Step 3: Click on “Add Note.” This will be used when a new log note needs to be added to Degree Works. OR “Modify Notes” will be used ONLY in the case where you forgot to include something in your notes.

Step 4: Begin to your notes in the blank space provided. An advisor can also use some of the “Choose a predefined note from the list below” menu.

Step 5: Be sure once you’ve completed your notes to click on “Save Note.” Once you’ve saved your notes you will receive the following screen:
Log Note Tips (See Module 2 Log Notes for more extensive details)

Log notes are used to orient the reader to the student’s progress and path, clarify reasons for decisions, and document information provided to the student. With this in mind, log notes should briefly, clearly, and objectively summarize the advising session. Key items to include:

- Reason for appointment/session
- Intended major/academic goals, if changed or not already noted
- Recommendations/referrals, such as:
  - Course recommendations by semester
  - Major changes
  - Resources (tutoring, iFocus, MAAPS, etc.)
  - Contact receiving university
  - DAS (Referrals are only made after the student self-discloses a disability—the referral should be noted but not the specific reason.)
  - Personal Counseling (The referral should be noted but not the specific reason.)
- Specific information provided to the student, such as:
  - Transfer guides
  - Need to complete assessment requirements
  - Improve GPA
  - Key dates/events
- Details needed to explain decisions, such as:
  - The student needs evening classes due to work schedule
  - The student chose to take courses that the advisor did not recommend
  - The student opted to take a course outside of their program and study
  - The student could not register for AAA 090 because all sections were full

At times students will share extremely personal or sensitive information that is relevant to the meeting. It is best to use general language in these cases. For example, instead of writing “the student has missed classes due to side effects from a new anti-depressant recently prescribed,” write, “the student has missed class due to personal health issues...” “Advice is like medicine—the correct dosage works wonders, but an overdose can be dangerous.” (McKenzie, 1908, p.11).

Aims Community College has different types of resources available for referral, familiarize yourself with references and when to recommend them. It is also important to remember what can and cannot be put within Degree Works log notes.
### Advising Log Notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student has not had a math class in five years and is concerned about ability to succeed. Discussed the importance of starting math sequencing.</td>
<td>Student is scared of math and is avoiding it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dropped MAT120</td>
<td>Student dropped MAT120 due to unfair grading of policies of instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referred to financial aid.</td>
<td>First generation college student. Widowed mother. No financial support from family. Referred to financial aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student wanted it noted that he missed two weeks of classes as a result of hospitalization.</td>
<td>Student missed two weeks of classes because of hospitalization for cancer treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I asked the student to return for another advising session when he has prepared a list of courses for next semester.</td>
<td>Clueless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student may be overextended with classes, work, and activities.</td>
<td>Student should get priorities in order and quit that job!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student requested tutoring support. Referred to IMPACT and to Peer Coaching services.</td>
<td>Student in financial and academic distress. Referred to IMPACT for help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tips:
- When in doubt, leave it out.
- If appropriate, ask student’s preference and note that you have done that.
- Describe, do not evaluate.

### WHAT IS A STUDENT?

A **STUDENT** is the most important person in any educational institution.

A **STUDENT** is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him/her.

A **STUDENT** is not an interruption of our work. He/she is the purpose of it.

A **STUDENT** does us a favor when he/she enrolls. We are not doing him/her a favor by serving him/her.

A **STUDENT** is a part of our work—not an outsider.

A **STUDENT** is not just a statistic. He/she is a flesh and blood human being with feelings and emotions like us.

A **STUDENT** is a person who comes to us with his/her needs or wants. It is our job to fill them.

A **STUDENT** is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give him/her.

A **STUDENT** is the life blood of this and every other educational institution (source unknown).