

Roger Williams University Senior Distinction Guidelines

The Senior Distinction award recognizes outstanding senior projects or theses at the Department and School/College level. Senior Distinction provides an opportunity to celebrate outstanding undergraduate student scholarship within the student's major or minor program. By encouraging students to pursue Senior Distinction, the University elevates the quality of undergraduate student scholarship and better prepares students for future academic study.

This award recognizes outstanding student work for any of the following: critical or textual analysis; creative performance or exhibit; a business plan; interpretation of a text or art object; laboratory or field experiment; case study; novel or short stories; or an applied project.

Students may be able to receive academic credit for completing the thesis. These credits may be part of a formal course or may be earned by enrolling in an independent study course.

Eligibility and selection requirements will be set by the Department or School. Each School/Department will provide to the Provost's Office a written document outlining the eligibility requirements (i.e., minimum GPA, proposal, prerequisites, etc.) and selection criteria that will be used to confer this honor.

Conferral Process

Notice in Commencement Program

Each Department/School will nominate students to receive Senior Distinction recognition using the [Nomination for Senior Distinction Form](#) by May 1/December 1 (December graduates). The Provost's Office will then provide the information for inclusion in the Commencement program.

Official Transcript Notation

In order for students to complete the Senior Distinction recognition, including official transcript annotation, the School/Department must complete the [Certification of Completion and Evaluation for RWU Senior Distinction Form](#) to certify final approval of the project/thesis as noted in the commencement program by June 1/January 2 (December graduates). The Provost's Office will forward the names of these students to the Registrar's Office by June 1/January 2 (December graduates) to be notated on the student's official academic transcript.

Step-by-Step Process for Senior Distinction

1. At the beginning of the fall and spring of each academic year, the Provost's Office encourages students to pursue the award of Senior Distinction for a senior project or thesis.
2. Students work with their faculty mentor to determine eligibility for Senior Distinction as per the School/Departmental guidelines.
3. Students work with their faculty mentor to identify a minimum of one (1) additional evaluators for their thesis/project. The student and faculty mentor have the option of adding a second evaluator.
4. In March/October (December graduates), the Provost's Office solicits faculty nominations for Senior Distinction. Faculty complete the [Nomination for Senior Distinction Form](#) by May 1/December 1 (December graduates).
5. The Provost's Office will provide Senior Distinction information for inclusion in the Commencement Program.
6. After the student completes the thesis/project, it is evaluated by the nominating faculty mentor and the additional faculty evaluator(s).
7. After the thesis/project is evaluated by the nominating faculty mentor and the additional faculty evaluators, the student should submit a final copy in electronic format to Mary Wu, the Digital Scholarship/Metadata Librarian. The thesis/project will be deposited to the RWU Digital Commons for long-term preservation and access. Refer to the Library's Thesis Submission Guidelines for instructions, and contact Mary Wu (mwu@rwu.edu) for further assistance.
8. By June 1/January 2 (December graduates). if the project was still in progress or awaiting evaluation, the nominating faculty mentor must complete the [Certification of Completion and Evaluation for RWU Senior Distinction Form](#).
9. The Provost's Office will forward the names of these students to the Registrar's Office on June 1/January 2 (December graduates) to be notated on the student's official academic transcript.