Virtual Commencement Rehearsal

An online resource for students: providing important information about participating in the University’s Commencement ceremony.
Greetings Mountaineers!

Congratulations on your upcoming graduation from Appalachian State University! Commencement is a special day of recognition and celebration of your many accomplishments.

The entire ASU community takes great pride in your achievements, and it is our sincere hope that you will plan to participate in the Commencement ceremony so we can recognize your hard work and success.
About the Virtual Commencement Rehearsal

To ensure that students have all the pertinent information necessary to make their Commencement day a success, this Virtual Rehearsal has been created as a resource to provide details about the ceremony.

In particular, you will learn:

• When to arrive
• Where to go
• What to do
• What to expect from the ceremony
Applying to Graduate

Before you can participate in Commencement, you need to first apply to graduate.

- Students who have enough earned hours to be eligible to apply for graduation will receive an email at the beginning of the term alerting them that the application for graduation is open. The email will also provide detailed instructions on how to apply through your AppalNet account.

- **Even if you do not plan to attend the Commencement ceremony, you must still apply to graduate.** The application for graduation is what alerts your College to perform a graduation check-out on you. The graduation check-out is what prompts the Registrar’s Office to award your degree once the College confirms all requirements have been met.

- Students who do not submit an application for graduation will not have their degree awarded and will not receive a diploma.

- Graduate students will not receive an alert and typically apply the semester they plan to graduate.
Applying to Graduate (continued)

Undergraduate students must apply for graduation in the term immediately BEFORE the term in which they will complete all coursework for graduation (including internships, study abroad, etc.). This will allow Colleges to send information about remaining graduation requirements before students register for their final semester.

• **Graduating in a fall term?**
  Then you must apply by the 4th week of the previous spring semester.

• **Graduating in a spring term?**
  Then you must apply by the 4th week of the previous fall semester.

• **Graduating in a summer term?**
  Then you must apply by the 4th week of the previous spring semester.

You will receive an email from the Registrar’s Office at the beginning of the term with details about the application process and important deadlines to meet. The application for graduation is available in AppalNet. It will be opened after the first week of classes and is available for 4 weeks.

If you have questions, please contact graduation@appstate.edu or the dean’s office of your major.
Applying to Graduate (continued)

It is important to keep in mind that walking in the Commencement ceremony is not synonymous with graduating. While the ceremony is an important representation of the completion of your academic career, the actual process of clearing a student to graduate and awarding their degree is separate.

Based on your application to graduate, your Dean’s Office will review your record and notify you by email whether you have met the requirements to be awarded your degree, or reviewed short.

If you are reviewed short, you will need to reapply to graduate for the future term in which you anticipate completing all remaining requirements. Your degree will not be awarded until you have been cleared by the College as meeting the requirements for graduation, and have an active graduation application for the term in which you are cleared.
Diploma Mailing Address

When applying to graduate, the online graduation application requires you to indicate a diploma mailing address. This is the address to which your official diploma will be mailed following the ceremony.

Diplomas are mailed approximately 10-12 weeks after graduation. Therefore, it is important that you provide a mailing address that reflects where you will be living two months AFTER graduation rather than where you are currently living.

Duplicate orders for diplomas that are lost or delivered to an expired address will incur an additional fee. The fee for duplicate diplomas for undergraduate students is $15 per diploma, and for graduate students is $25 per diploma.
Graduation Expo

Once you have applied to graduate, make plans to attend the Graduation Expo, which is held at the University Bookstore each semester (fall and spring).

At the Graduation Expo, you can:

• Order your cap and gown
• Order invitations
• Order a class ring

Visit the University Bookstore’s website for Expo dates and information.
Commencement Regalia

Only traditional academic regalia, consisting of a cap, gown, and hood (if applicable) can be worn at Commencement.

• Your regalia should be ordered and picked up from the University Bookstore prior to the ceremony.

• Please contact the University Bookstore for hours of operation and pick-up deadlines.
Honor Cords and University/Departmental Honors

Latin Honor cords are worn by those candidates who have earned a designation of *Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude*, or *Summa Cum Laude*, based on both their cumulative GPA and number of institutional hours. For details on the University’s Latin Honors Policy, please visit our website. Latin honor cords will be available for pick-up approximately two weeks prior to commencement and on the day of the ceremony. An email will be sent to those who are eligible with information and instructions on where and how to pick up their cords.

University, College, and Departmental honors are awarded to those students who complete successfully a series of Honors courses and a Senior Honors Thesis.

Students who have earned Latin, University, and/or Departmental honors will have their honor printed on their Marching Order card to be read after their name as they cross the stage during the Commencement ceremony.

Military cords are worn by students who serve or have served in the military armed forces. These red, white and blue cords can be picked up in the Registrar’s Office prior to Commencement, or at the check-in table on the day of the ceremony. Students wearing military honor cords will also receive special recognition during the ceremony.

Masters students do not receive Latin Honors but can be honored through induction into the Cratis D. Williams Society or Alpha Epsilon Lambda Graduate Honor Society. For more information, refer to: [http://www.graduate.appstate.edu/students/graduation/index.html](http://www.graduate.appstate.edu/students/graduation/index.html)
Commencement Ceremony Logistics
- GUESTS

On the day of the ceremony, guests of candidates should:

- Plan to be parked approximately 45 minutes prior to the ceremony start time to allow enough time to get from the parking lot to the Convocation Center and find seating. Parking for the disabled will be available in the lot adjacent to the Holmes Center. **Doors open one hour prior to the start of each ceremony.**

- Enter on the Concourse Level of the Convocation Center. The concourse can be accessed by way of the SW entrance off Holmes Center Drive.

- Be aware that Commencement ceremonies have open seating. Parent and guest seating is on the upper concourse level. Electronic sign boards are available at each entrance for directions. There is no limit to the number of guests allowed and tickets are not required.
Commencement Ceremony Logistics
- CANDIDATES

On the day of the ceremony, candidates should:

• Arrive at the Holmes Convocation Center **ONE HOUR** prior to the start of the ceremony.

• Enter the Holmes Convocation Center through the ticket box entrance on the lower level and proceed to the check-in table.

• Candidates will pick up their pre-printed Marching Order name cards at the check-in tables, sorted by last name.

• Just before walking across the stage, the candidate will hand the card to the ceremony name reader.
Marching Order Card

The Marching Order card is a pre-printed name card with important identifying information about you and your degree program. You will hand this card to the reader as you walk across the stage during the ceremony, so it is important that you keep it with you throughout the ceremony.

The card will also be used by the official Commencement photographer, GradImages, to expedite mailing of photograph proofs taken during the ceremony.

Upon pick-up, review your card for errors:

- If corrections are needed, the staff at the card table can assist you.
- If you wish to provide a phonetic spelling of your name to assist the card reader when you walk across the stage, write it on your card.
Lining Up

After checking in and picking up the Marching Order card, candidates should proceed to their assigned hallway for line-up.

- Commencement staff will direct candidates to the appropriate hallway based on your College.
- Candidates will remain in their assigned hallway until it is time to process into the arena.
- Restrooms and drinking fountains are available throughout the Convocation Center. If you need assistance, please check with the staff member who is serving your hallway.
Personal Belongings

You will not be allowed to bring purses, coats, or umbrellas into the student staging area. At the conclusion of the ceremony, you will exit to the concourse level and do not return to the event level hallways where you were staged prior to the ceremony.

• Please make arrangements with your guests to hold personal items and valuables during the ceremony.

• Any items left in the staging area will be taken to a table in section 15 on the upper concourse for pick-up after the ceremony. However, these items will not be monitored and the Holmes Center and Registrar’s Office staff are not responsible for lost or stolen items.
Order of the Processional

When the ceremony begins, the order of the processional will be as follows:

• The University Mace
• The University Banner
• The Degree Candidates
• The Faculty
• The Platform Party
Seating

Candidates will be seated in the order in which they processed.

If you want to sit with someone, please make sure you line up in front of or behind each other, rather than across from each other.

For the safety of everyone, the aisles must remain clear and candidates should remain in their seats until called to the stage for the conferral of degrees.
Safety and Security

For the safety and enjoyment of all candidates and guests, we ask that you please keep in mind the following:

• Remain seated throughout the ceremony, except when instructed to stand by the marshals.

• Cellular and other mobile devices should be set to silent mode until the conclusion of the ceremony.

• Air horns, noisemakers and other props are not permitted to be used at any time during the ceremony.

• Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, weapons, and contraband of any type are prohibited in the Holmes Convocation Center. Prohibited items will be confiscated upon entry.
The Ceremony

The ceremony is a celebration of our graduates and their many accomplishments at Appalachian State University. A variety of invited speakers will address graduates and guests, followed by the conferral of degrees by College.

Individual ceremonies may vary slightly by College, but in general, the order will be as follows:

The National Anthem
Welcome and Introductions
Greetings from the Board of Governors and Board of Trustees
Greetings from the Alumni Association
Commencement Address
Recognition of Honor Graduates
Presentation of Candidates
Conferring of Degrees
Tassel Ceremony
Singing of the Alma Mater
Recessional
Commencement Programs

• A printed program will be provided for each Commencement ceremony.

• Programs will be placed in each candidate chair on the floor of the arena, as well as provided on the concourse level of the arena for families and guests.

• To ensure that there are enough programs for each family, we ask that you please limit the number that you take to 1-2 per family prior to the start of the ceremony. You are welcome to take additional copies once the ceremony has concluded.

• Only those students who have applied to graduate by the specified deadline will have their names printed in the program. The Registrar’s Office widely communicates the deadline by which students need to apply to have their names printed in the program multiple times throughout the semester. This communication is done via the students’ ASU email account and on the website.
Hooding

• Doctoral candidates will be hooded during the ceremony at commencement by your sponsor. Thus, please bring your hood to the ceremony, but do not wear it. You should just carry it with you until you get up to the stage for the hooding ceremony.

• Master’s candidates will wear their hoods to the ceremony and will not be hooded during the ceremony.

• Undergraduate students do not receive hoods.
Degree Conferral

When the candidates are presented for the conferral of degrees:

- The candidates will be asked to rise
- The Dean will present the candidates to the Chancellor
- The Chancellor will confer the degrees
- The candidates will then be asked to sit back down until their row is called to the stage for the individual name reading
Walking Across the Stage

• Candidates will be called to the stage by College/department, and then row by row to have their names read.

• Marshals will direct candidates to the stage. Please stay alert and follow the directions being given by the marshals when it is your turn to walk across the stage.

• Remember to bring your Marching Order Card with you and present it to the reader when you reach the podium on stage. You will then walk across the stage and shake hands with the Dean.

• As your name is read, it will also be displayed on the monitor for guests in the arena to see.

• A photographer will be positioned at two points along the aisle leading up to the stage to take your official graduation photo. Please follow the instructions given to ensure the best photo possible.

• As you exit the stage, follow the directions being provided by the marshals to return to your seat.
Tassel Ceremony

At the end of the ceremony, undergraduate candidates will be directed to turn their tassel from the right to the left to symbolize the conferral of their degree.

We ask that caps not be thrown or tossed into the air, as this could result in injury.

Masters level students have already earned a Bachelor’s Degree, thus have already participated in their tassel ceremony. Their tassels should already be situated on the left side.
The Recessional

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the recessional will begin. The order of the recessional is as follows:

- Platform Party exits first,
- Followed by the Faculty,
- Followed by the Students

Students are to remain in their row until after the platform party and faculty have all recessed out of the arena. Students will exit to the concourse level as directed by the marshals at the appropriate time.

Please make arrangements with your guests to meet on the concourse level following the ceremony. A map of the Holmes Convocation Center Concourse can assist you in identifying a specific section in which to meet.
Photographs

Our photography vendor, GradImages, will send proofs of the photos taken of you at the commencement ceremony within approximately one week. Proofs will also be available for purchase online.

Ordering photos is completely optional. There is no obligation to buy commencement photos.
Diplomas will be mailed approximately 10-12 weeks after the end of the term in which you graduate to the diploma mailing address you provided on your degree application.

In order to receive your diploma or for your transcripts to be released, all account balances with the University must be cleared.

Our diploma vendor, Jostens, uses UPS as their delivery carrier for diplomas. Each diploma is packaged in a sturdy cardboard envelope and left at the door of the delivery address.

Diplomas will list the student’s legal name (as it appears in Banner), degree, and major. It will not list minors or concentrations. Those students who completed double majors will have both majors listed on a single diploma, while those who earned double degrees will receive a separate diploma for each degree.
Thank you!

From all of us in Enrollment Management and across the Appalachian State University campus, congratulations on your graduation and thank you for being a part of this wonderful community!

We wish you well in your future professional and personal endeavors and hope that you will remember your time here fondly. Whenever possible, please come back and visit.

As a new graduate of Appalachian, you automatically become a member of the Alumni Association. Learn more about staying connected and involved with the Appalachian family at: www.alumni.appstate.edu

Thank you for making a difference for Appalachian.