Commencement Information Booklet – Quick Reference Guide

Arrival Times
- **Graduates:** Graduates should arrive an hour and a half prior to the start of the ceremony. (8:30 am for the morning ceremonies and 1:30 pm for the afternoon ceremonies)

- **Guests:** Doors open for guests an hour and a half prior to the start of the ceremony. All seating is first come first served, general seating. (8:30 am for the morning ceremonies and 1:30 pm for the afternoon ceremonies)

Attire
- Students are to wear the approved commencement regalia
- Appropriate business attire should be worn beneath the regalia
- It is recommended that students and guests wear comfortable shoes as there is a lot of walking involved

Ceremony Length
Approximately 1.5 hours- 2 hours.

Concessions
Concessions are available when the doors open (1 and a half hour prior to start of ceremony) and remain open throughout the ceremony. Items are allowed to be taken to guest seats.

Emergencies
Contact University Police (410) 704-4444 and/or 911. The following coordinates can be used when giving the location of SECU arena 39.38980 -76.61565 or 7500 Osler Blvd.

First Aid
A first aid station is provided inside the arena in case of emergency and is located on the concourse level (on the same side of the arena as the will call area).

Flowers/Gifts
Flowers are available for purchase outside the SECU Arena.

Balloons and noisemakers are **not allowed** in the arena.

Graduate Procession
The graduates will be in alphabetical order when they process into the arena, alternating on each side. The Jumbotron allows parents and guests to see all graduates well, despite not knowing which side they will enter the arena ahead of time.

Meeting Location
Families can meet their graduates after the recession in the Tiger courtyard (between Towson Center and SECU Arena). There are flags numbered 1 – 4 placed throughout the courtyard to serve as meeting locations.
Parking/Shuttles/Etc.

A commencement permit or state issued handicapped permit/license plate is required to have access to any parking lots located near the Towson Center and SECU Arena (this includes Lots 13, 14, 19, 20, and 21).

Vehicles will NOT be permitted near the Towson Center or SECU Arena to drop off passengers. No vehicles will be permitted in the area at all unless they have the proper hang tag issued by the University Store or the Commencement Office.

Individuals who do not have a commencement permit or handicapped permit/plate MUST park in the Union Garage and take the shuttle or walk to the Arena. No permits are needed to park in the Union Garage.

Shuttle buses will run continuously between the Union Garage and the Towson Center 1 ½ hours before the ceremony, during the ceremony and for 1 ½ hours after each ceremony.

Regular shuttle routes will not be in operation.

Reserving Seats
Any seating that is being held/reserved by a guest in the arena must be released 15 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony to seat other guests. Please note, special needs seating and reserved section seating (Sections 104 & 106) will be held until the start of the ceremony.

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Restrooms
Restrooms are located on all 3 sides of arena.

Seating
All seats in the upper deck are open and most seats below are open, except Sections 104, 106, and the black club seats (special needs seating), which are located at the top rows of all three sides. Once the lower seating is full, guests will be directed to sit in the upper level. Remember, there is no “bad” seat in the arena! Guests will be able to see everything well from any section.

Please note, there is NO ASSIGNED SEATING in any sections of the arena. Guests are not permitted to stand on the concourse level to watch the ceremony and will be directed to a seat.

Sign Language Interpreters

Sign Language Interpreters are available in Section 104. This section is limited in seating so please be courteous to other guests.

Special Needs Guests

- **Seating:** These areas are located on the concourse level of SECU Arena (Sections 104) and are limited to the person with special needs plus one guest.
- **Parking:** Guests needing handicapped parking can park in Lot 21, in front of the Towson Center. They do not need a special TU parking permit, but they must have their state issued handicap placard or handicapped license plates to gain admittance to Auburn Drive and parking Lot 21.
- **Special Assistance:** There will be a tent in front of the Towson Center labeled “Special Assistance” for those guests with mobility issues. Upon entering the door, guests will be greeted by volunteers who will transport them in wheelchairs to seats in the arena. At the conclusion of the ceremony, special needs guests are asked to remain in their seats until most of the arena has cleared at which time they will be picked up by the volunteers with wheelchairs.

- **Shuttle Service:** Shuttle buses will run continuously between the Union Garage and the Towson Center 1 ½ hours before the ceremony, during the ceremony and for 1 ½ hours after each ceremony. Regular shuttle routes will not be in operation.

- Other questions can be directed to Pat Critzer in Disability Support Services – 4-4423

**Tickets**
All guests entering the arena will need a ticket, due to Fire Marshal Regulations. This applies to children of all ages, including infants in carriers.

“Will call” is located at the ticket office on the 2nd floor concourse adjacent to the Tiger courtyard entrance.

**Video Recordings**

- There will be live streaming of all three ceremonies. This will done in the same method as in the past, which is an embedded video player at the top of www.towson.edu/commencement.

- In addition, we will be posting all ceremonies, in their entirety, on YouTube after the ceremonies. The link to these videos will also be found on www.towson.edu/commencement.
Responsibilities by Department

**Important NOTE: Graduation and Commencement are NOT the same thing!**
- **Graduation** is achieved at the end of one’s academic career after completion of all degree requirements for a particular program of study.
- **Commencement** is a ceremony in which graduates celebrate their accomplishments with family and friends.
- Not all students who graduate choose to participate in the commencement ceremonies, but ALL students who participate in commencement must have graduated (completed all of their degree requirements)

**Graduation Office (4-2095):**
- Graduation applications
- Eligibility to graduate
- Are responsible for sending out the diplomas after the commencement ceremonies
- For additional questions, please contact graduation@towson.edu

**Commencement Ceremony (Managed by the Office of the Provost, 4-4498)**
- Plan coordination of the ceremony:
  - Reserved ticket distribution
  - Stage party logistics
  - Student participants
  - Communicating parking and shuttle service for day of commencement
  - Special needs services
  - General or special requests about ceremonies
- Handle student appeals regarding special circumstances to participate in the commencement ceremonies
- For additional questions, please contact commencement@towson.edu

**University Store (4-2665):**
- Order and distribute student and faculty regalia
- Student cap and gown pick up (will be held in “The Nook” right next to Tiger Reels on first floor of UU)
- Student parking permit distribution
- Create and maintain list of students participating in commencement ceremonies
- Class ring, announcements, diploma frames, and other gift items

**Ticket Office (4-2244):**
- Set up student ticket accounts for online distribution of e-tickets
- Manage release of extra tickets for ceremonies after initial 4 tickets have been distributed
- Trouble shoot any issues with student ticket accounts

**Volunteer Coordination (Managed by Lauren Averell & Teresa Hardin in the President’s Office)**
- Lauren Averell: 4-4400

*Don’t forget to follow us on Social Media*

/towsonucommencement /tucommencement