COMMENCEMENT TIPS

Commencement is a joyous occasion and one of the happiest days on campus. The university community celebrates graduates' accomplishments and hopes that it is a truly memorable and meaningful occasion for all.

- For your safety and the safety of others, please refrain from arriving for the ceremony under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or other substances.
- Using your phone or another electronic device during the ceremony may create a safety issue or be distracting to other degree candidates. Please be mindful of behaviors that may negatively impact the ceremony experience.
- In order to facilitate a safe and secure environment, degree candidates must stay seated on the arena floor for the duration of their ceremony (approximately two hours).

For more information about Commencement, please visit WWW.TOWSON.EDU/COMMENCEMENT
BEFORE THE CEREMONY

■ WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?
Most degree candidates wear business professional or business casual attire. Because candidates walk long distances to and from the ceremony, we also recommend that you wear comfortable shoes. There are also a limited number of seats in the robing area, so you should expect to be standing for at least one hour before the start of the ceremony.

■ WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING?
- Cap & gown
- Photo ID
- Cell phone

These are the only items that are permitted in SECU Arena. You will be required to bag-check any other belongings (e.g., large bags, umbrellas, cameras, etc.), which can be retrieved after the ceremony.

Degree candidates will be permitted to bring a crossbody bag that does not exceed 10x10x2 inches, but it must be worn under the gown.

To ensure everyone’s safety, security contracted by the university will conduct bag-checks and related security procedures prior to admittance in the robing room.

■ WHERE DO I PARK?
Degree candidates may park in Lots 13/14, but you must display your “Graduate” parking permit in order to access this parking area. If you misplace your permit, you can park in the Union Garage and take a shuttle to the arena.

■ WHAT TIME SHOULD I ARRIVE?
- Morning ceremonies: 8:30 a.m.
- Afternoon ceremonies: 1:30 p.m.

Candidates who arrive late may not be able to participate in the ceremony.

We also recommend eating something before arriving to prevent you from feeling faint before and during the ceremony.

■ WHERE IS THE ROBING AREA?
The candidate robing area is located in the Towson Center gymnasiums.

■ WHERE DO MY GUESTS GO?
If you are carpooling with your guests, they will be directed to the SECU Arena. Degree candidates will be directed to the robing area in the Towson Center. The arena doors open for guests at 8:30 a.m. (for the morning ceremony) and 1:30 p.m. (for the afternoon ceremony).

Please remember to give your guests their ceremony tickets as they will not be able to enter the building without them. As a reminder, ALL guests will need a ticket to enter (this includes infants and children) due to building safety codes.
AT THE CANDIDATE ROBING AREA

WHAT SHOULD I DO FIRST?
Upon arrival at the candidate robing room, please check in at the tables along the back wall to get your student name card (your photo ID is required during this process). Please hold on to this card and avoid folding and/or bending it! This is what will be used to display your name on screen in the arena and will be presented to the faculty member who will read your name as you cross the stage.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO IN THE ROBING AREA?
Alumni volunteers will be circulating the room to connect with degree candidates and provide more information about the alumni association. You can also visit the Office of Civic Engagement’s table to learn about the Tiger pledge and receive a commemorative pin. Light refreshments are available on a first come, first served basis. Restrooms are located just outside of the robing area.

WILL PHOTOS BE TAKEN?
Yes. GradImages, an outside photography company, will be on site to take individual and group photos that you have the option to purchase after the ceremony (proofs will be sent to your mailing and electronic addresses). University and alumni photographers will also be taking photos that could show up on the university’s social media accounts.

WILL PHOTOS BE TAKEN?
Staff and volunteers will be circulating the room to answer questions and provide assistance. Please listen for important reminders and instructions given by staff in the robing area. Candidates must comply with all instructions given by authorized university staff members.

HOW DO WE LINE UP?
Candidates will be lined-up alphabetically (not by major) for the processional. Please follow the instructions of university staff and volunteers during this process.

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH SIDE OF THE ARENA I WILL BE SITTING ON?
Once all degree candidates are lined up for the processional and are leaving for the arena, staff will split the lines as you exit the door. There is no way of knowing which side you will end up on until this point. There are no bad seats in the arena, so your guests will be able to see you well throughout the ceremony.
DURING THE CEREMONY

- **HOW LONG WILL THE CEREMONY LAST?**
  The ceremony will last approximately two hours, depending on the number of degree candidates in your ceremony.

- **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE CEREMONY?**
  During the ceremony, several speakers will address the graduating class before degree candidates’ names are called. You must remain seated throughout the ceremony unless instructed otherwise.

- **DO I RECEIVE MY DIPLOMA AT THE CEREMONY?**
  No. Diplomas will not be issued during the ceremony because final course grades have not yet been submitted and a final evaluation of each student record will still need to take place. Instead, undergraduate degree candidates will receive a commemorative scroll and graduate degree candidates will receive a diploma folder.

- **WHAT DO I DO WITH MY NAME CARD?**
  Hold on to your name card during the ceremony. When it is time for you to cross the stage, a marshal will signal your row to stand and come forward. Bring your name card with you!

- **HOW DO I CROSS THE STAGE?**
  The marshal will direct you to approach the stage, where a staff member will scan your card so that your name appears on the screen. You will then present your card to the faculty member at the top of the stairs. When your name is called, walk forward, take your scroll or diploma folder, shake hands with the dean, and walk down the center stairs and return to your chair.

- **WHAT IF I DON’T WANT TO SHAKE HANDS WHEN I CROSS THE STAGE?**
  If there is a religious, cultural, or personal reason that you would prefer not to shake hands while crossing the stage, please place your right hand on your chest as a signal to the dean who is distributing scrolls/diploma folders.

- **WHO WILL CALL MY NAME WHEN I CROSS THE STAGE?**
  Faculty members read the names of degree candidates as they cross the stage and receive a scroll. Degree candidates can assist readers by providing a phonetic pronunciation or name recording during the ceremony registration process. Faculty members make every effort to pronounce all names audibly and properly.
AFTER THE CEREMONY

WHERE DO I GO AFTER THE CEREMONY ENDS?
The recessional route will take degree candidates back to the robing area in the Towson Center. Due to crowd safety procedures, you will not be permitted to leave the arena floor during the recessional to meet family inside the arena.

WHERE CAN I MEET MY FAMILY?
There will be numbered flags (1-4) placed throughout the SECU Arena courtyard to serve as meeting locations. We recommend that you coordinate a meeting place with your family ahead of time to assist with this process.

WHERE CAN I FIND A RECORDING OF THE CEREMONY?
All ceremonies will be posted on TU’s YouTube channel approximately one week after the last ceremony. Ceremony videos will also be posted on towson.edu/commencement.

HOW DO I ACCESS PHOTOS THAT WERE TAKEN AT THE CEREMONY?
GradImages will mail you a complimentary proof of the photo taken before you crossed the stage, as well as the photos of you onstage, with information on how to order enlargements. Photos taken by the university’s photographer can be found on TU’s social media accounts: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY DIPLOMA?
Diplomas are mailed after the final evaluation of each student’s record takes place. For more information about the diplomas, please visit the Graduation Office’s website at towson.edu/registrar/graduation.
Towson University's policies, programs and activities comply with federal and state laws and University System of Maryland regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, sex, disability, and sexual orientation.

Towson University is a smoke-free campus.

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