



[Sage.edu/Commencement](https://sage.edu/Commencement)



Russell Sage College Commencement

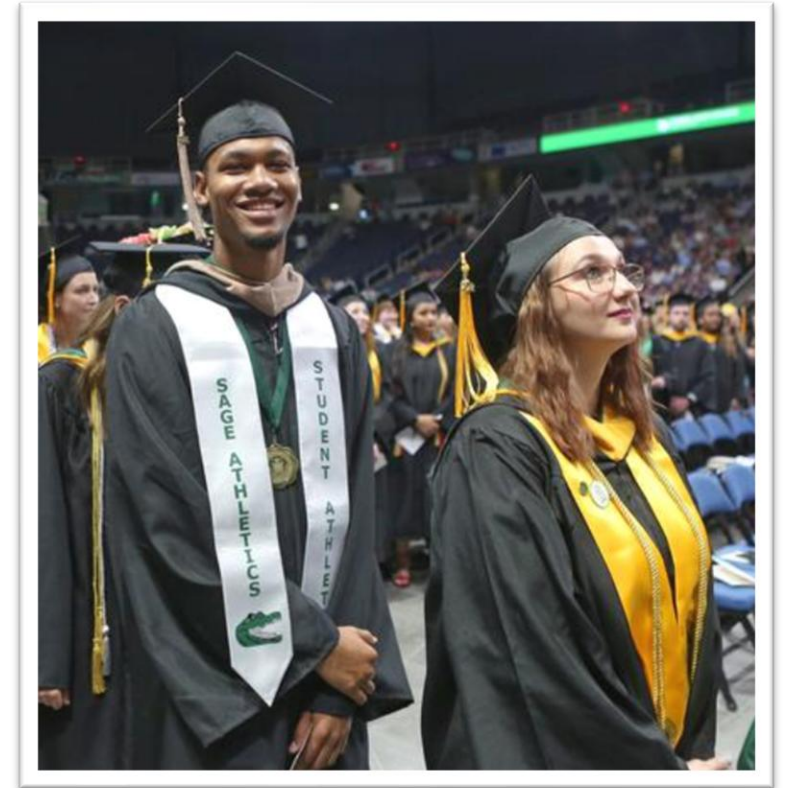
May 16, 2026

Presented by: Stacy Gonzalez
Dean of Students

Russell Sage College Commencement 2026

Commencement Details:

- Saturday, May 16, 2026
- MVP Arena (*formerly Times Union Center*)
51 South Pearl Street in Albany
- Ceremony Begins: 1:00 PM
 - Doors Open for Grads & Guests: 11:30 AM
 - Grads must check in for Line up by: 12:00 PM
- No Tickets Required & No Guest Limit



Pre-Ceremony Check List

- ✓ **Obtain your Academic Regalia** - All graduates must wear academic regalia [Cap, Gown, Tassel, Hood or Stole (for College Experience Program grads)]
 - Pick up your cap & gown from the Bookstores **BEFORE** Saturday.
 - If you didn't order your cap & gown online in advance, regalia items are available for purchase in the **TROY** bookstore only.

ALBANY BOOKSTORE: Mon-Thurs, 9AM-4PM and Fri, 9AM-3PM

41 Union Drive | Gozzo Student Ctr (*Albany College of Pharmacy*) | 518-694-7378

TROY BOOKSTORE: Mon-Thurs, 9AM-4PM and Fri, 9AM-3PM

Gurley Hall First Floor, Troy Campus | 518-274-0199



Pre-Ceremony Check List

✓ Verify that your Regalia is Correct

- CEP, Bachelor's and Master's caps and gowns are black.
- Doctoral gowns are green with a black tam and gold tassel.
- The **inner lining** for all hoods are **green and white** (Sage's colors) and the **velvet trim** on the hood corresponds with your degree.
- College Experience Program grads wear **Royal Blue stoles** in place of a hood.
- You can swap out items in the Bookstores before Saturday, if needed. Bookstore staff will have items available for swap or purchase (**Cash/Card**) at the ceremony for any last-minute needs.

See this online [chart](#) to verify your hood color.



* Check out these online videos to learn how to wear your [CEP or Bachelor's](#), [Master's](#), and [Doctoral](#) regalia. (Bachelor's students can click on the master's link to see how to wear hood.) *

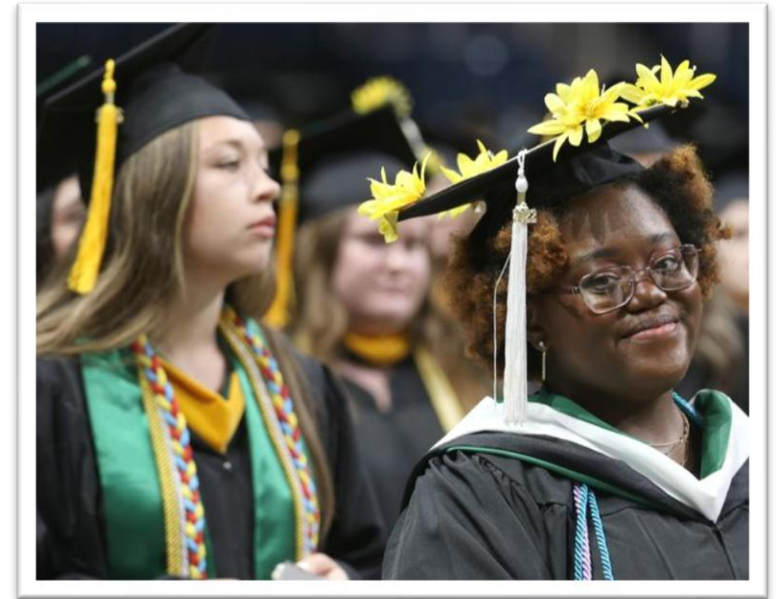
Pre-Ceremony Check List

✓ Pick up Honor Cords, if eligible.

- Undergraduate May 2026 graduates who meet criteria for **Latin Honors** should be emailed by the end of day May 13 with instructions to pick up gold honor cords from the Solutions Desk (library).
- The Student Life Office distributes blue cords to **Graduate Broughton Fellows** and red, white, & blue cords to **Veterans**.
- The Advancement office provides white philanthropy cords to those who [contribute \\$20.26](#) or more to the College. The deadline to order is **May 13th**.

Email annualfund@sage.edu with any questions.

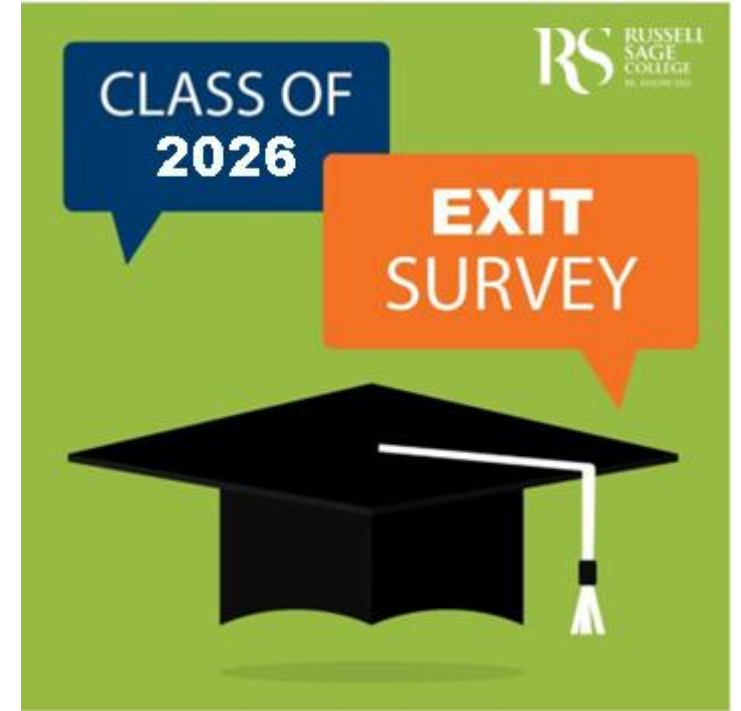
- Some other departments may make their own arrangements to distribute honor cords and stoles. (These are typically just for undergraduates.)



Pre-Ceremony Check List

✓ Complete Online [Exit Survey](#).

- August 2025, December 2025, and May 2026 should complete this online survey through [Handshake](#) and tell us what your post-graduation plans are!
- Those who do, will be entered to win **one of ten \$50 Amazon Gift Cards**.
- Need help figuring our post-grad plans? [Make an appointment with the Career & Self-Discovery Center](#)! All grads are eligible for free career counseling at Sage for LIFE!



Pre-Ceremony Check List

✓ Review all Commencement Info that was emailed to you and available online and reach out with any questions at: deanofstudents@sage.edu.

- Read the [Grad Guide to Commencement](#) that was emailed.
- Review recent commencement related emails, including the ones that include personalized info about your degree, hood velvet trim color, and your seat assignment.

✓ Share information with your guests so they are prepared to enjoy the ceremony in person or online.



**Russell Sage College Commencement 2026**
Important Information for Graduates and Guests

Tasks to be Completed in May BEFORE Commencement Ceremony

- ✓ Obtain your Academic Regalia - All graduates must wear academic regalia (Cap, Gown, Tassel, Hood)
* Grads can pick up regalia ordered online or purchase new regalia items through the campus bookstores the week prior to commencement Monday-Friday (hours listed below). Go to the [Herfi Jones website](#) to check the status of an online order with home delivery. Contact the Bookstores directly with any questions.
ALBANY BOOKSTORE:
Mon-Thurs, 9AM-4PM and Fri, 9AM-3PM
41 Union Drive | Gorzo Student Ctr (Albany College of Pharmacy)
518-694-7378
TROY BOOKSTORE:
Mon-Thurs, 9AM-4PM and Fri, 9AM-3PM
Gusley Hall First Floor, Troy Campus
518-274-0199
- ✓ Verify that Your Academic Regalia is Correct. College Experience Program (CEP), Bachelor's and Master's caps and gowns are black; Doctoral gowns are green with a black tam and gold tassel. CEP grads wear a royal blue stole and all other grads wear a hood with an inner lining that is green and white (Sage's colors) and velvet trim that corresponds with your degree per this [chart](#). You can swap out items in the Bookstores, if needed. Check out these online videos to learn how to wear your [CEP & Bachelor's](#), [Master's](#), and [Doctoral](#) regalia.
(Bachelor's students can click on the master's link to see how to wear your hood.)
- ✓ Pick Up Honor Cords (if eligible). Undergraduate May 2026 graduates who meet criteria for [Latin Honors](#) will be emailed by May 13 with instructions to pick up gold honor cords from the Solutions Desk. Some other departments may make their own arrangements to distribute honor cords and stoles. (These are typically just for undergraduates.)
- ✓ Complete the Online Exit Survey. Tell us about your post-graduation plans through Handshake and be entered to win 1 of 5 \$50 Amazon gift cards. Need help? [Make an appointment with the Career & Self-Discovery Center](#) before you go!
- ✓ Attend the (optional) Graduation Info Session on [Zoom](#) on DATE TBA (or view the video after the session).
- ✓ Reach out with any questions. Continue to check email often for updates regarding commencement and be sure to share all pertinent information with your guests. Contact deanofstudents@sage.edu with any questions.

Commencement : Saturday, May 16, 2026 at MVP Arena in Albany
Graduates arrive for Line-up by: 12:00PM & Ceremony begins at: 1:00PM

Graduates and guests should arrive early to allow time for parking and security check.

- Doors to the Arena will open at 11:30 AM. Guests who arrive before this time will need to wait in line outside the Arena. No tickets are required and there is no guest limit for the ceremony. There is no reserved seating. All seating, including space for wheelchairs, will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- MVP Security will check all bags upon entry. Prohibited items: alcohol, all smoking/tobacco products, backpacks, coolers, large signs, confetti cannons, outside food/drink.
- Concessions will be open before and during the ceremony for guests, and will close about an hour before the conclusion of the event. Grads won't be able to access this from where you're seated, so make sure you eat before the ceremony!
- Graduates must check in through the Beaver St. entrance. Guests will not be permitted entry here. Guests must enter through the South Pearl or Market Street entrances or via the Concourse level of the Parking Garage.
- Grads are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes as you will be standing in line for the procession for close to an hour.
- Flowers and other gifts will be available for purchase in the Arena Atrium.
- Out of respect for all graduates, all must remain for the entire ceremony. The ceremony should last about 2.5 hours. Don't make dinner plans before 4:30 PM to allow time for the full ceremony and leaving the parking garage.

Parking & Accessibility
* Information *

- We highly recommend parking in the garage located directly behind the MVP Arena, which provides direct, covered access to this building on the Concourse level at a reduced rate of \$5 for this event. Entry to this garage is directly off of Market St., just before you reach Eagle St.
- On-street parking is available around the MVP Arena, along with several small parking lots with variable rates, including:
 - * Go to parkalbany.com for more options.
- Guests with mobility impairments are encouraged to use a wheelchair to navigate the large Arena. There will be space reserved for wheelchairs on a first-come, first-served basis on the top tier of the Concourse level. Sage staff will be on hand to assist guests toward available seating, but guests will need to be able to navigate the space on their own and are encouraged to arrive by 11:30 AM.
- Those who arrive after the concourse level spaces are filled may be directed to additional accessible seating on the floor of the Arena after the ceremony begins.

GRADS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO LEAVE THE CEREMONY BEFORE IT ENDS
* Make sure to plan accordingly. Guests can leave early, but grads will not be permitted to leave the floor of the Arena. *

Pre-Ceremony Check List

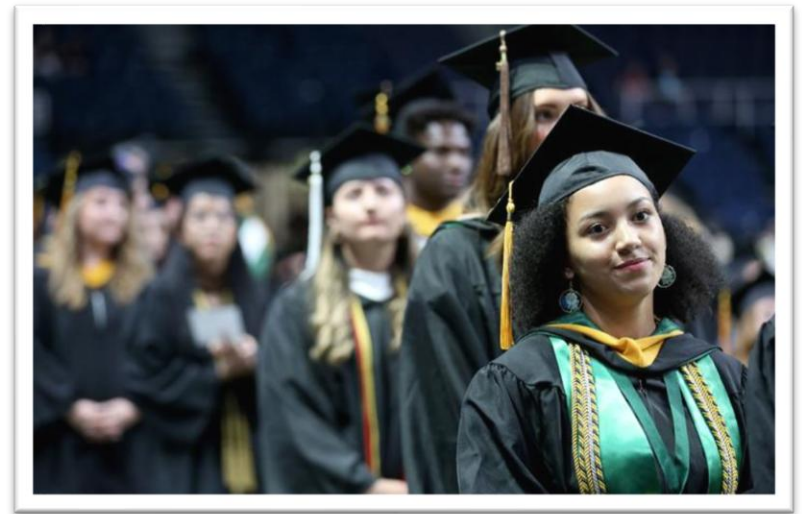
✓ Eat before you come and wear comfortable shoes!

- You will be standing in line before processing into the Arena for about an hour. **Be prepared to stand a long time!**
- We will provide water to grads while you wait in line.
- Ceremony will last about 2.5-3 hours and you will need to remain in your seats except when you are directed to stand and receive your diploma on stage.
- Concessions will be open on the concourse level of the Arena for GUESTS, but not grads, since you are not on that level.



Parking for the Ceremony

- On-street parking is available around the MVP Arena, along with several small parking lots with variable rates.
- **We highly recommend parking in the garage located directly behind the MVP Arena**, which provides direct, covered access to this building on the Concourse level at a **reduced rate of \$5** for this event. Entry to this garage is directly off of Market Street, just before you reach Eagle Street. You may also find parking in these nearby lots:
 - Grand Street Lot – 45 Grand Street, Albany, 12207
 - Green Hudson Garage – 45 Hudson Ave, Albany, 12207
 - Additional parking information is available on the [MVP website](#) or go to parkalbany.com for more options.



* Arena doors open
at 11:30 AM *

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- Overview of MVP Arena | Graduate and Guest Entrances**
- MVP Parking Garage (\$5)**
- MVP ARENA**
- ★ Graduates Check-in at Beaver St. Entrance by 12:00 PM
 - ★ Guest Entrance at Arena Atrium via South Pearl Street
 - ★ Guest Entrance at Concourse Level via MVP Parking Garage
 - ➡ Walkway to Concourse Level from Parking Garage (♿ accessible)
 - ➡ Entrance to MVP Parking Garage

Graduate Check-In

* Grads must check in by 12:00 PM *

- Upon check-in at the Beaver Street entrance, grads will receive a **NAME CARD** that you must retain.
 - This card includes your name as it will be announced as you cross the stage, phonetic pronunciation (if you provided it), your seat assignment and position in the line up for the graduate procession. Undergraduate cards may also indicate Latin Honors, e.g.: **[MAGNA CUM LAUDE]**.
- Grads will Line Up on Colored Ribbons in 2 Lines
 - **Red Ribbon:** All College Experience Program grads
 - **Green Ribbon:** All Bachelor's grads
 - **Blue Ribbon:** All Master's/Post-Master's Certificate grads
 - **Gold Ribbon:** All Doctoral grads (EdD, DPT, OTD)



The grad with this line up position will be on the BLUE ribbon in the #2 spot processing in on the RIGHT side of the Arena among fellow grads earning Master's degrees.



Guest Entry

* Doors open at 11:30 AM *

- **Guests can enter through one of two entrances**
 - **MVP Arena Atrium** (off of South Pearl Street)
 - Escalators, elevator and stairs lead up to Concourse level for guest seating
 - **Concourse Level** (via the MVP Parking Garage)
 - Guests enter right at the seating level
- **MVP Security will check all bags upon entry.**
 - Prohibited items: alcohol, all smoking/tobacco products, backpacks, coolers, large signs, confetti canons, outside food/drink.
- **All seating is first-come, first-served.**
 - Staff will be available to point guests toward accessible seating, but guests will need to navigate the long distance on their own.

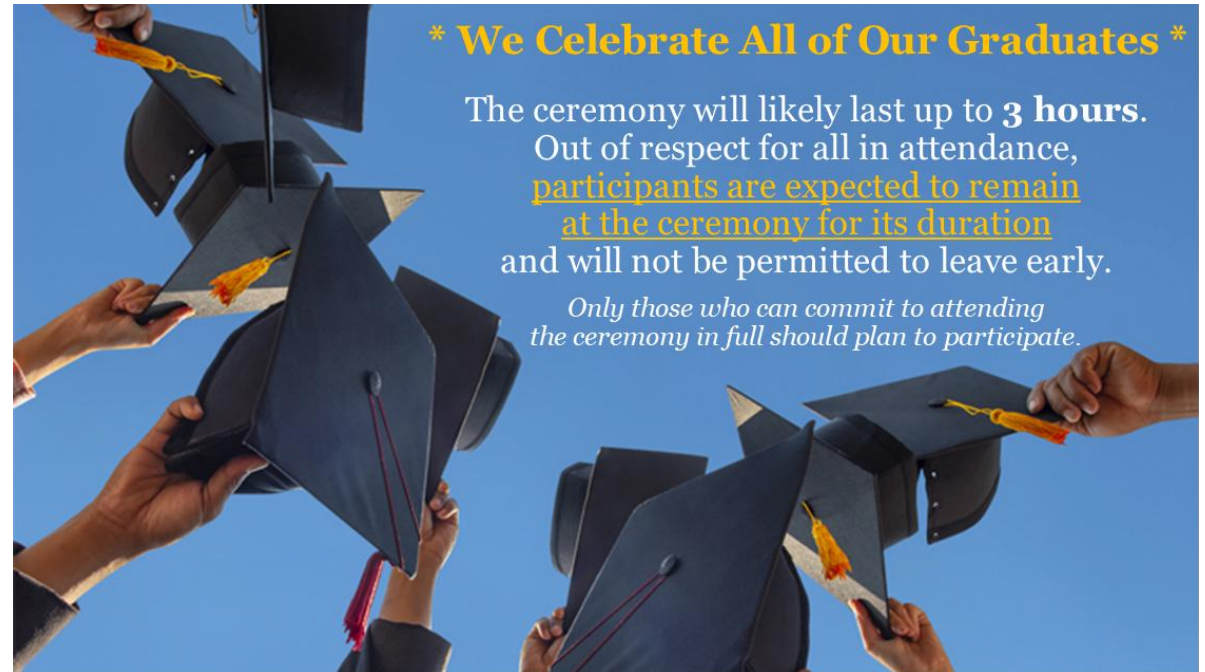


Students and Staff assisting with Commencement will be identifiable with name tags.



Order of Exercises

- ❖ PROCESSIONAL
- ❖ PATRIOTIC SONGS
- ❖ WELCOME
 - From Chair of the Board of Trustees
 - From President Shaftel
 - From Representative of the Class of 2026
- ❖ PRESENTATION OF FACULTY EMERITI
- ❖ CONFERRAL OF HONORARY DEGREES
- ❖ COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
- ❖ CONFERRAL OF ACADEMIC DEGREES
 - College Experience Program Graduates
 - Bachelor's Degrees
 - Master's Degrees and Post-Master's Certificates
 - Doctoral Degrees (Ed.D, DPT, OTD)
- ❖ CLOSING OF ACADEMIC YEAR
- ❖ RECESSIONAL MARCH



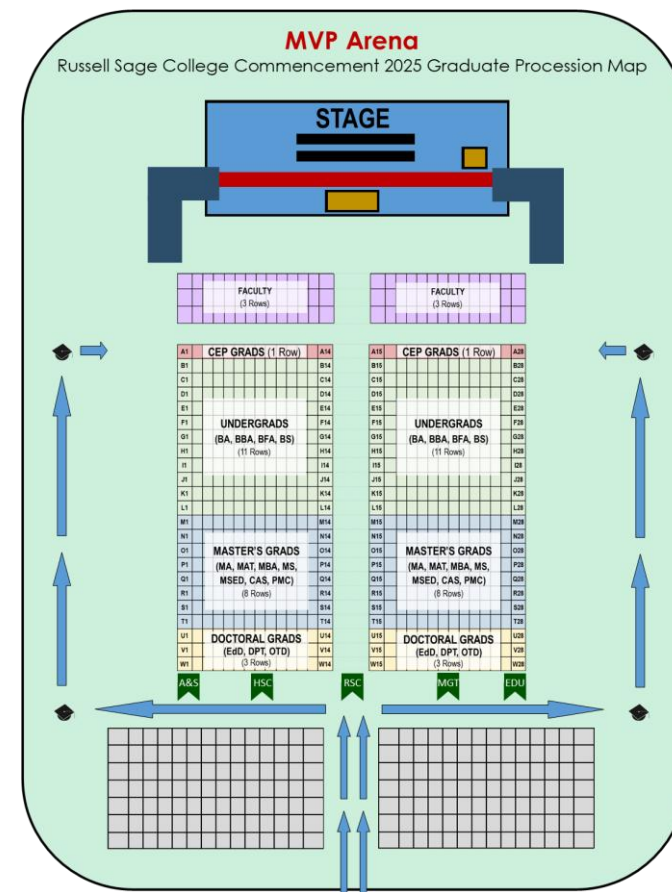
Guests may leave the ceremony before it ends,
but Graduates are not permitted to do so.
Graduates should expect to remain until 4:00 PM and
should not make dining reservations before 4:30 PM.



Graduate Procession

* Grads check in by 12:00 PM*

- If you line up on your assigned place on the line-up ribbon, you will be in perfect order for the graduate procession AND degree conferral.
 - Student Marshals will lead you to where you need to be.
 - You may not be lined up in perfect alphabetical order. Grads on the RIGHT side line up in reverse alphabetical order by row.
- Go to your **ASSIGNED SEAT** and **LEAVE SEATS OPEN** if someone doesn't show.
 - ROW LEADERS:
Grads in seats #14 and #15 are in the **INSIDE AISLE** and must start a **NEW ROW**.
Your Grad Name Cards will have this label on the back as a reminder.



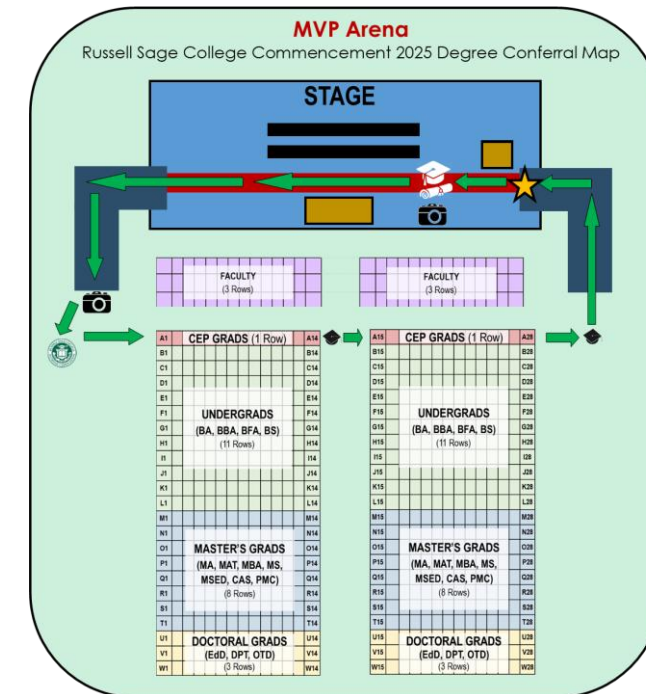
Grads must not move from their space in line after 12:30 PM



NEW ROW

Degree Conferral (*Your moment in the spotlight*)

- After the Commencement Address, degree conferral will begin by degree level.
- The Dean will ask graduates in each group to “*Please rise and approach the stage.*”
 - All grads in that group will then stand and file out to the right, row by row. For example, the grad on the LEFT side in Row B | Seat #14 will cross the center aisle and follow the grad on the RIGHT side in Row B | Seat #15. Once Row B has all filed out, then Row C goes (*the grad in seat C28 follows behind the grad in seat B1*), and so on, until all grads in that group cross the stage.
 - Student marshals and Sage staff will be present to guide and prompt you.



Grads must bring
your NAME CARDS
to the stage!

Order for Degree Conferral

- College Experience Program Grads
- ALL Bachelor's Grads
- ALL Master's and Post-Master's Certificate Grads
- ALL Doctorate Grads (First EdD, then DPT, then OTD)



Degree Conferral (*Your moment in the spotlight*)

As you cross the stage to receive your degree...

1. Bring your NAME CARD to the stage.
2. Staff will be on the ramp to the stage to guide you.
3. At the top of the ramp, you will hand your card to a staff member who will then hand it to the Dean.
4. WAIT until your name is said in full before you begin crossing the stage.
5. Pres. Shaftel will hand you your diploma and shake your hand. A photographer will capture this moment on film (*no need to stop and pose*).
 - *Those who prefer not to shake hands are asked to place their hand on their heart and nod at the President so he knows you not intend to shake hands.*
6. Continue across the stage and exit via the ramp. At the bottom of the ramp, another photographer will take your picture. (*This time you will stop and pose.*)



Grads will be handed diploma covers (not diplomas).

May grads will receive their diplomas in the mail by the end of June.

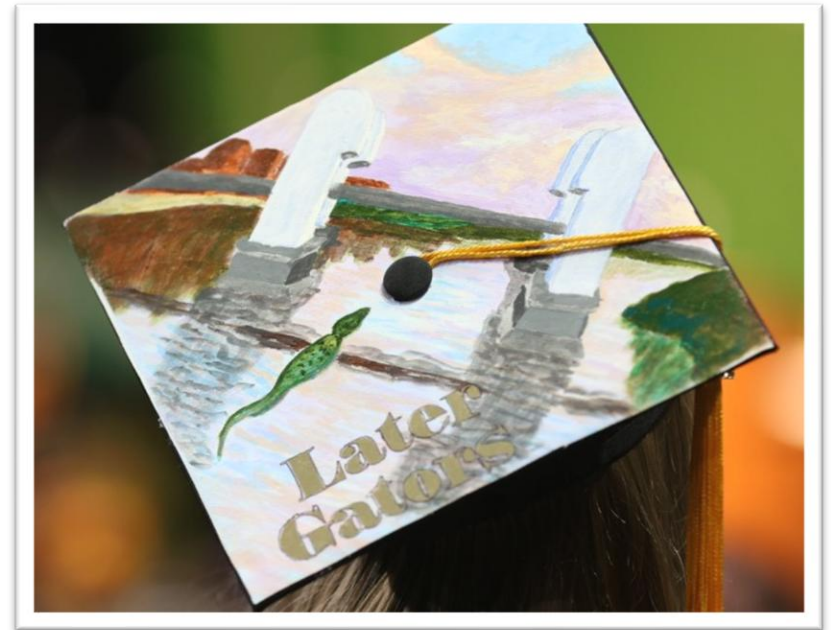
Additional Information

- Photographers from Genesee Photography Systems will take your photo as you walk across and exit the stage.
 - They will contact you directly with info about ordering these photos. These are typically posted online within a few days of the ceremony and the Student Life Office will send you a link when photos are available to view.
- You will receive a pin from the Alumnae/i Association before you return to your seat.
 - A representative of the Alumnae/i Association and Director of Alumnae/i Relations will hand you an Alumni Pin after you have exited the stage and Genesee Photography has taken your second picture. Return to your original seat after receiving your pin.
Graduates may not leave early from the ceremony.



Additional Information

- At the end of the ceremony, graduates will process out of the Arena after members of the Stage Party and Sage Faculty exit the stage and process down the center aisle.
 - Graduates will process through the center aisle, starting with Row A and ending with Row Z. Student marshals will be there to lead you to the back of the Arena through the faculty who will be eager to celebrate you.
- MVP Arena Staff will guide graduates and guests out of the Arena immediately following the ceremony.
 - You should plan to meet up with your family and friends OUTSIDE the Arena immediately after the ceremony. Be sure to pre-plan a location to meet your family after the ceremony!



Grads will exit the Arena on Beaver St. and will be directed to South Pearl St. to meet their guests. The street will be closed off from traffic.

Important Links



- Sage's Commencement Website with FAQs
 - [Sage.edu/Commencement](https://sage.edu/Commencement)
- Sage Commencement Microsite
 - <https://sites.google.com/sage.edu/commencement2026/>
 - Includes videos of our valedictorian and salutatorian, academic awards for undergraduate and graduate students, and link to the [Commencement Ceremony Livestream](#).
 - <https://www.youtube.com/RussellSageCollegeRSC>
- Sage's Exit Survey
 - Don't forget to complete the [Exit Survey](#) to tell us about what's next in your journey!



Email us at
deanofstudents@sage.edu
with any questions!