

GVSU December Commencement

Student Information & Instructions

There is no rehearsal for Commencement, so please review this information closely to understand your responsibilities

Check-In and Line-Up:

- **Arrival Time:** Doors will be open at 9:00 a.m. to guests and participants (**one hour prior** to ceremony).
 - Upon arrival to the Van Andel Arena **proceed directly to the indicated line-up area**. Refer to the **map on the back of this document** to determine which college your major is in and where your college will be lining up.
 - Each student will receive two cards during the line-up process:
 - **One photographer's card** – A professional photographer has been contracted to take your picture while receiving your diploma. This card will be distributed with a pencil for you to fill out during the line-up process.
 - **One name card** - The staff member who is lining up students in your area will provide this card. If you have a difficult name to pronounce, you should write it phonetically for the readers otherwise phonetics are not needed.
 - To sit next to someone **in your college**, you should stand next to that person in line.
 - Once the staff member has officially lined you up, you should remain in line and **be ready to move 15 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony**. Please respect the staff assisting in the line-up process and follow their directions to ensure the processional goes smoothly.
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During Commencement:

- A **commencement program** will be placed on your seat in the arena so you do not need to carry one during the procession.
 - Each college will have a marshal who will lead the processional, and a seating assistant who will ensure the correct amount of students are in each row. **Be sure to move across the row and fill all seats.**
 - Please be sure to **turn your cell phone off** during the ceremony.
 - No guests are allowed to accompany graduates on stage.
 - **Conferring of Degrees:** The order of procession will be: Doctorate's, Master's, and then Bachelor's candidates.
 - Your **yellow photographer's card** will be collected as you approach the ramp to the stage
 - When you reach the top of the ramp, you will hand your **name card** to the reader.
 - All candidates will **shake the Dean's hand** from your college at center stage. Proceed to **shake the President's hand with your right hand and receive your diploma cover with your left hand.**
 - **Cap & Tassel:** The tip of your mortar board should point to the front.
 - **Doctorates/Master's tassels:** remain on the left side of the cap throughout entire ceremony.
 - **Bachelor's tassels:** start on the **right side of the cap** and will be **moved to the left side** during traditional moving of the tassel by the Provost at the end of the ceremony.
 - Each row of candidates will rise together and will sit down together after returning to their seats. Move at a brisk pace during the processional and recessional.
 - **After receiving your diploma return to your seat and be respectful of those students who have not yet been to the stage. All graduates will be REQUIRED to stay until the conclusion of the ceremony.**
 - The GVSU Commencement is a formal academic ceremony that brings with it certain expectations for your behavior. There is an appropriate time to celebrate. Participants who are uncooperative, untruthful or intoxicated will be removed from the premises. **Save your celebration for after the event!**
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After Commencement:

- **Do not** slow the movement of the recessional or **stop to greet guests**. You will be instructed to go completely through the main lobby area and then **exit the building out onto Ottawa Avenue**.

Congratulations! Approximately 1,100 graduates will be participating in the commencement ceremony. This ceremony should be completed in approximately two hours.

Let's make this a memorable occasion for you, your family and friends!