

ONLINE AND COHORT STUDENTS COMMENCEMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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ONLINE AND COHORT STUDENTS COMMENCEMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Commencement is a new and exciting experience for many students. Below are answers to questions asked by previous graduate candidates that may help you prepare for your day. If you have a question that is not addressed below, contact commencement@gcu.edu.

Commencement Ceremony Details

Q: What time do I need to arrive?

A: We ask that you to arrive one to two hours prior to the start of the ceremony to allow time for checking in, dressing in your regalia and mingling with fellow classmates and faculty. Please reference your registration confirmation email for further check-in time details.

Q: What do I do once I arrive to the campus?

A: As the graduate, you will need to enter through your designated entrance and proceed to check-in. Once checked in, you will dress in your regalia and then make your way to the GCU Arena bowl floor to be seated. Guests may enter GCU Arena when doors open.

Q: How should I dress?

A: Business casual is preferred. Wear comfortable shoes.

Q: How long will the ceremony last?

A: Approximately two hours.

Q: Where do I park when I arrive?

A: There are two parking garages that will be available for guest and graduate parking. More details will be available closer to the commencement ceremony date on our website at gcu.edu/Commencement. Graduate candidates registered for the ceremony will also be sent an email closer to the ceremony date with detailed parking instructions. For GCU's campus map, [click here](#).

Q: How much time should I allow to arrive at the campus?

A: Travel time varies based on your location in the Valley. Remember to allow time to park on campus and entrance into the GCU Arena. The following are estimated commute times to the campus, not including parking time:

- Coming from East Valley (Mesa, Gilbert, Chandler) - 45 minutes to an hour.
- Coming from NE Valley (Scottsdale, Peoria) - 30 to 45 minutes.
- Coming from West Valley - 20 minutes.

It's recommended to check traffic and construction information at az511.gov or by calling 888-411-ROAD (7623). You can also follow [@ArizonaDOT](https://twitter.com/ArizonaDOT) on Twitter for ADOT traffic information. Please allow time for parking and entrance into the GCU Arena.

Q: Are cameras and/or video cameras allowed?

A: Yes, as long as you do not block views of others.

Q: Will I be standing for a while at any point during the ceremony?

A: You will be standing during the check-in process, but that should be no more than five to 10 minutes at a time. There will be plenty of seating for you to sit and rest if needed.

Q: What should I do if I need assistance during the commencement ceremony?

A: Contact Student Disability Services. All requests for assistance must be made at least seven days prior to the event.

Student Disability Services | 602-639-6342 | disabilityoffice@gcu.edu

Q: What if a friend or family member needs assistance during the commencement ceremony?

A: Contact Student Disability Services, and submit all requests at least seven days prior to the event.

Q: What do I need to bring to my commencement ceremony?

A: Remember to bring your regalia (cap and gown). If you did not purchase regalia prior to the deadline and wish to do so, reps from GCU's preferred vendor will be on site the day of the ceremony. Please note that GCU is not responsible for any items brought to the ceremony. Storage for personal belongings is not available.

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COMMENCEMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do I need to arrive wearing my regalia?

A: No, there will be time for you to change into your regalia after you check in.

Q: Is there assigned seating for graduates?

A: Graduates are seated on the GCU Arena bowl floor based on degree level and college. If you would like to sit with classmates within the same degree program, you should all enter the bowl floor together.

Commencement Seating and Guest Tickets

Q: When will I receive my requested tickets for the commencement ceremony?

A: Guest tickets will NOT be mailed out. Instead, they will be available for pick up at the GCU Arena Box Office. Tickets will be available for pick-up the week of Monday, October 15. The box office will be open for ticket pick-up Monday – Thursday 10 am - 6 pm and/or on the day of your ceremony prior to your check-in time. Please note, ground traditional student classes will be in session during this time. Traffic to and on campus may be exceptionally busy. Please plan accordingly.

Q: What if I would like to have someone pick up the tickets for me?

A: Your representative may pick them up; to do so, they will need proper identification and your name, ceremony date, ceremony time and degree program.

Q: As a graduate candidate, do I need a ticket?

A: No, you will not need a ticket. Tickets are for guests attending the ceremony. Guests will not be permitted into the Arena without a ticket.

Q: Is there an age limit for tickets?

A: Guests three years-old and younger do not need a ticket; however, they will not be counted as a seated “ticket,” as we request them to be seated on a ticketed guest’s lap.

Q: What if I would like to receive more than the allotted number of guest tickets?

A: You can request up to six guest tickets during registration. There will be no exceptions made to this rule, as we have capacity limitations based on those who register to participate. If you want additional tickets, there will be an extra ticket lottery you can participate in beginning September 18. The extra ticket lottery will only be in effect if there are unreserved tickets available. Please refer to your registration confirmation email to obtain the extra ticket lottery link.

Q: What if I want more than six guests to attend the ceremony?

A: GCU provides a maximum of six guest tickets. Please see the above information on possibly obtaining additional tickets. If the Arena reaches guest seating capacity, overflow provisions have been made. There will be a reserved area for guests without tickets to watch a live stream of the ceremony.

Q: What if I do not need all the tickets I have requested after all?

A: Please return tickets you will not use to GCU Arena Box Office prior to your ceremony.

Q: When should my guests arrive?

A: Guest doors will open 2 hours prior to the start of the ceremony. We ask that all ticketed guests arrive and be seated at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.

Academic and Commencement Inquiries

Q: Will I receive my diploma at the commencement ceremony?

A: No, you will receive your diploma after you have filled out your graduation application with your student services counselor.

Q: When will I receive my diploma?

A: Your diploma and one official transcript will be mailed to the address on file approximately 4-6 weeks after you have met all degree requirements, completed your Graduation Application and fulfilled all outstanding financial obligations with the University. Contact your student services counselor for further details.

Q: I would like a name change on my diploma.

A: Contact your student services counselor to make the correction.

Q: Will my degree list any honor statuses?

A: Contact your student services counselor for further details.

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Q: Will I be receiving an honor cord?

A: First-degree undergraduate students meeting necessary requirements will receive an honor cord at the ceremony. Contact your student services counselor for further details.

Miscellaneous Questions

Q: Is GCU Arena air conditioned?

A: Yes, GCU Arena is air conditioned.

Q: What should I expect when entering the Arena?

A: Metal detectors/bag checks will be in use. Please note, the following items are prohibited for Arena entry:

- + Weapons of any kind, including but not limited to firearms, knives, pepper/OC spray, stun guns or brass knuckles
- + Illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia
- + Noise makers
- + Alcohol
- + Glass bottles
- + Balloons
- + Flags or banners
- + Wrapped packages or gifts
- + Pets (Service dogs only)
- + Strollers and wagons

Q: Can I bring food into the GCU Arena?

A: Outside food and beverages are not allowed in the GCU Arena, unless medically necessary, with the exception of sealed bottled water. Bottled water will be available for all graduating students in the regalia changing area of the GCU Arena, and concessions will be open for guest purchases.

Q: Can I decorate my cap?

A: Yes, cap decorations are permitted. Decorations must be appropriate, not offensive and not block the view of those who will be sitting around you.

Q: Will there be a place to buy flowers on campus for the ceremony?

A: GCU has partnered with Pacific2You Flowers to bring you an assortment of flower bouquets and leis that will be available for purchase at commencement. The flower booth will be located near the GCU Arena, and will accept cash and all major debit and credit cards. If you would like to pre-order please e-mail: sales@pacific2you.com

Q: Are there any travel discounts available to students and family members?

A: Yes! Visit gcu.edu/Travel for airport parking, car rental and hotel accommodation discounts.

Q: Is the ceremony streamed live?

A: Yes, the ceremonies will be streamed live.* The day of the ceremony the live stream will be available at gcu.edu/Commencement. After the ceremony, the video will be viewable on GCU's YouTube channel at youtube.com/GCU *This is a live streaming of the ceremony where degrees are presented to graduates in attendance.

Q: Can I meet with my instructors?

A: Faculty members are invited to participate in commencement ceremonies. Contact your instructor directly to find if they will be attending, and visit them in the regalia changing area.

Q: Can I meet with any of my GCU graduation team?

A: Commencement is a busy time at GCU. We recommend that you arrange a date and time outside of your ceremony to meet with your GCU graduation team.

Q: Will I be able to shop for GCU gear?

A: Yes, the Lope Shop (located in Building 24) and the Lope Team Shop (located in the GCU Arena) will be open the week of commencement.