



PROTOCOL FOR COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES
Friday, August 4, 2017

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Summer 2017 Commencement Exercises will be held on Friday, August 4, 2017 at 6 p.m. in the Alfred Lawson, Jr. Multipurpose Center and Teaching Gymnasium (Lawson Center), 1800 Wahnish Way, Tallahassee, FL 32307.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS

- James E. Nevels, Founder & Chairman, The Swathmore Group.

LINE-UP INFORMATION

All prospective graduates must arrive on the east side of the Bragg Memorial Stadium, dressed in academic regalia, **no later than 4:45 pm** for line-up. Students who arrive late may be unable to sit with their college/school degree program.

Please bring your completed name card with you to the line-up. If you misplace or lose your name card, the Registrar's Office staff will be available at the stadium with replacement cards.

GUESTS

- Prospective graduates are encouraged to have their family and guests arrive early for seating.
- All guests must enter through the front doors of the Lawson Center at Wahnish Way.
- **Enter ONLY** on the Concourse Level of the Lawson Center.
- The Lawson Center front entrances at Wahnish Way will open one (1) hour prior to the start of each ceremony.
- **DOORS TO THE LAWSON CENTER WILL BE CLOSED AND LOCKED 30 MINUTES AFTER THE START OF THE CEREMONY.**
- **AFTER THIS TIME, ALL GUESTS WILL BE DIRECTED TO THE OVERFLOW VIEWING AREA IN GAITHER GYMNASIUM.**
- The Processional of Graduates will **begin promptly at 15 minutes prior to the start of the Commencement Program at 6:00 pm.**
- **All guests should be seated at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the Processional.**
- No guests are permitted on Arena floor at any time.
- Seating for disabled guests is available on the Concourse Level **ONLY**; approach the Lawson Center front entrance on Wahnish Way.
- **GUESTS SHOULD NOT LEAVE UNTIL THE ENTIRE CEREMONY IS COMPLETED.** Leaving causes disruption and noise, which disturbs those families whose graduate has not yet been recognized.
- **IN ORDER TO PREVENT CONGESTION AND SAFETY HAZARDS, GUEST SHOULD STAY SEATED DURING THE CEREMONY.**

PARKING

- Parking will be permitted at Bragg Stadium, the Parking Garage, as well as adjacent University parking lots.
- Patrons with limited mobility may be dropped off at the front entrance of the Lawson Center on Wahnish Way.
- Reserved disabled parking is available in the Gaither Gym parking lot only for those drivers with

appropriate DMV Disability Parking Placards on their vehicle. In addition, there is a row of designated Disabled Parking spaces in the Bragg Stadium parking lot adjacent to the Lawson Center.

- Campus parking will be extremely limited. Please make all necessary transportation arrangements to arrive at the Lawson Center on time. Carpool when possible. Obey all parking restrictions. Illegally parked cars may be subject to ticketing and/or towing.

ACCESSIBILITY AND SPECIAL NEEDS

- Wheelchairs will not be available at the venue. For those requiring a wheelchair, we ask that you please bring your own or consider a private rental from a medical supply company.
- Wheelchair access and limited mobility seating is available on the concourse level only. Due to high demand, this area is strictly reserved for our patrons with disabilities and limited mobility plus one companion.
- Guests requiring additional information please contact Carrie Gavin or Terence Davis the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs at (850) 599-3076 prior to the event.
- A sign-language interpreter will be present at the ceremony.
- Accessibility is a top priority at Florida A&M University. If you or your party has any special needs, ushers stationed inside the Lawson Center will be happy to assist you.

EXITING THE CEREMONY

- Students will be led out of the facility by faculty and will exit the lower level of the Lawson Center. Be sure to take all of your belongings, as there is no re-entry into the building.
- LOITERING OUTSIDE THE LAWSON CENTER EXIT DOORS IS PROHIBITED.

COMMENCEMENT ATTIRE AND REGALIA

FULL ACADEMIC REGALIA IS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CEREMONY.

- Bachelor's Candidates: Wear tassel on right side of cap until degrees are conferred. Move tassel to the left after President confers degree.
- Master's Candidates: Students should carry hoods, UNBUTTONED, on your left arm. Wear your tassel on the left.
- Doctoral Candidates: Students should carry hoods, UNBUTTONED, on your left arm. Tassels on left of caps, as bachelor's degrees have already been awarded.
- During the ceremony, men should remove your mortarboards from your head during the playing of the Star Spangled Banner as well as the meditation and benediction.
- Women may wear their caps throughout commencement. Immediately return mortarboards to your head after the benediction.
- Suggested clothing to be worn under the gown:
 - **MEN-White shirt, dark tie, dark slacks, dark shoes, and dark socks. No sandals.**
 - **WOMEN-Dress of lightweight fabric, stockings, and dark shoes with low or medium heels. No sandals.**
- Graduates should carry nothing in their hands. A copy of the program will be placed in each graduate's chair.

CEREMONY ETIQUETTE

This commencement exercise signals for all of us the culmination of your formal undergraduate education and training at Florida A&M University. This is a very happy, even joyous occasion. However, it is also a formal ceremony, which evokes dignity, respect, pomp and circumstance. Therefore, it is requested that you adhere to this list of "Do's and Don'ts."

DO

- ✓ Moderate your expressions of joy – Applaud and laugh when appropriate.
- ✓ Act responsibly – Make your parents, administrators, and faculty proud.
- ✓ Wear appropriate informal attire/footwear – See Dress Code above.
- ✓ Display respect for others – Keep quiet during speakers and performances, and applaud at the appropriate time. Program participants are guests at our University.
- ✓ Turn off all pagers, cell phones, iPods, iPads, and tablets prior to entering the arena.
- ✓ Refrain from using cell phones and texting during the Commencement program. Ringing cell phones or alert signals are a distraction; even one ringing cell phone can be disruptive to the program.
- ✓ Use restrooms prior to the beginning of the commencement exercise. Restrooms are available at the stadium assembly location.
- ✓ Arrange to have a pre-designated site and time to meet your family members and guests at the conclusion of the commencement ceremony. It will facilitate finding your guests more quickly.

DON'T

- ✓ Don't bring large bags, packages, and other oversized articles into the Lawson Center. There are no facilities for securing personal items during the ceremony.
- ✓ Don't bring food or drinks. Outside food or beverages of any kind are prohibited and will not be permitted inside Bragg Stadium or the Lawson Center.
- ✓ Don't bring any BULLHORNS, HORNS, and WHISTLES, OR OTHER NOISE-MAKERS.
- ✓ Don't bring large signs or banners.
- ✓ Don't bring strollers. They will not be allowed entry into the Lawson Center.
- ✓ Don't bring balloons. They will not be allowed inside the Lawson Center.
- ✓ Don't bring valuables the day of the event to the Lawson Center.
- ✓ Don't dance on or off the stage – There should be no fraternity/sorority strolls, hand symbols, or calls.
- ✓ **Note:** Greek paraphernalia is allowed unless the organization is on cease and desist or suspension. At this time, the Elite Dance Group and the FAMU Chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., are on cease and desist. Members are prohibited from wearing paraphernalia during the FAMU commencement exercises, including the processional. Please comply accordingly.
- ✓ Don't wear sneakers/tennis shoes/flip flops
- ✓ Don't bring alcoholic beverages to the Center (**NO INTOXICATION** will be tolerated. **VIOLATORS** will be escorted from the arena floor).
- ✓ Don't leave the arena floor during the commencement exercises.
- ✓ Don't talk during the program.

OTHER COMMENCEMENT INFO

- Name cards – you must have one. Keep and give your name card to the Registrar or their designee as you proceed on the stage. Make sure you are properly robed. See volunteers for assistance.
- Late arriving prospective graduates will not be allowed to “cut” or break into the academic processional once it has begun. Please arrive early.
- Prospective graduates are asked to observe all instructions given by the University, faculty, staff and marshals. Ushers, event staff and volunteer personnel will also provide additional instructions and assistance. It is very important that decorum be maintained at Bragg Stadium and in the Lawson Center during the academic processional assembly at all times.
- In the unlikely event of an emergency, follow the direction of the FAMU Police Department and event usher staff. Always remember to “walk, not run” to the nearest designated exit whether in the arena area or in the audience area.

- No other photographers will be permitted on the arena floor or in back of the stage area except contracted **Grad Images Photographers**.
- All graduates, when you shake the President's hand, please pause for a second or two in order to allow the photographer from Grad Images Photography to take your photo shaking the President's hand. Place the diploma cover in your left hand and shake hands with your right hand. As you exit the stage, **Grad Images Photography** will also take your picture by the flag at the base of the stage. Then proceed quickly to your seat.
- Children will not be allowed to sit or march with graduates.
- **Stay hydrated and take a bathroom break while you are in line-up.** Once you are on the floor, water and bathroom access will be limited. There will be water bottles available at Bragg Stadium in the line-up, but water bottles will not be allowed on the arena floor.
- If you encounter any problems or difficulties during the ceremony, contact a marshal who will then alert appropriate personnel to handle the problem.

CONGRATULATIONS -- HAVE FUN AND ENJOY!!!