

SMU's 108th Commencement Weekend – May 12-13, 2023

FAQs

The following frequently asked questions are for members of the University community and their guests regarding the May 2023 Commencement program and associated events and activities.

Q. Where will SMU hold the main All-University Commencement ceremony?

A. SMU is returning the tradition of All-University Commencement to Moody Coliseum for 2023. The ceremony will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 13. More information is available [online](#).

Q. Why is the All-University Commencement not being held at Ford Stadium?

A. The venue of Moody Coliseum for the main Commencement ceremony is a long-standing and treasured tradition. The event was temporarily relocated to Ford Stadium for the past three years due primarily to the COVID-19 pandemic and the benefits of outdoor and distancing options.

As an indoor venue, Moody Coliseum offers graduates and their guests a more comfortable climate and shelter from the typical Texas weather fluctuations of heat, humidity, wind, rain or severe storms.

Q. How can I request guest tickets for the All-University Commencement, and how many guest tickets will be allotted to degree candidates for the ceremony?

A. Undergraduates and most graduate degree candidates may request **up to two (2) tickets for guests**. Doctoral degree candidates may request up to four (4) guest tickets due to the special hooding ceremony that occurs during the ceremony in recognition of this high academic achievement. Please visit [Request Weekend Tickets](#) for more information.

Q. Where will Baccalaureate and Rotunda Recessional be held?

A. Baccalaureate and Rotunda Recessional are additional favorites for this weekend of celebration. These ceremonies will take place in McFarlin Auditorium beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 12. More information is available [online](#).

Q. What are the Baccalaureate Service and Rotunda Recessional?

A. The Baccalaureate Service is a non-denominational religious ceremony held the Friday evening before May Commencement in McFarlin Auditorium. This small and intimate service features a special sermon for undergraduate candidates and their guests. The service lasts approximately one hour. Rotunda Recessional is a symbolic departure from campus and serves as a welcome to the newest members of the SMU alumni family.

Q. How can I request guest tickets for the Baccalaureate Service, and how many guest tickets will be available?

Seating in McFarlin Auditorium is limited; therefore, candidates may request **up to two guest tickets**. Extra tickets not requested for Baccalaureate are distributed on the stairs in front of McFarlin Auditorium at 4:00 p.m. Please visit [Request Weekend Tickets](#) for more information.

Q. What factors determine the number of available guest tickets?

A. We anticipate as many as 1,600 candidates will participate in activities over Commencement Weekend. The City of University Park fire code dictates how many guests can be permitted into Moody Coliseum and McFarlin Auditorium for staged events. This safety measure is the reason the number of guest tickets is capped per degree candidate.

Q. As a degree candidate, am I required to get a ticket to participate in the events?

A. **Yes. Degree candidates must register to attend the All-University Commencement and/or Baccalaureate and Rotunda Recessional ceremonies.** Each degree candidate will receive one ticket to each event. Instructions for how to register for these ceremonies will be emailed in April.

Q. I am a degree candidate. Where can I find information about applying for graduation and any other specific instructions?

A. Please review the [Candidate Instructions](#) website for information about how to apply for graduation and instructions for what is required for the All-University Commencement and individual college and school diploma ceremonies.

Academic regalia rentals are made through [Herff Jones](#). The deadline for ordering regalia is Wednesday, April 12. Your order will be sent to your home address. You must enter your current shipping address on the online order form.

Q. I am a guest. Where can I find general information about events during SMU's 108th Commencement Weekend?

A. SMU looks forward to celebrating graduates' accomplishments and welcoming guests to the Hilltop. Event details, parking and accessibility information, suggestions for dress, lodging, photography tips and more are available on the [Guest Information](#) website.

Additional information about security, prohibited and approved items, and parking is also [available online](#).

Q. I am a member of the SMU faculty. Where can I find information specific to faculty participating in the events?

A. Faculty planning to attend May Commencement are required to RSVP by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 14. All faculty must be registered for the event. Confirmations with important instructions about entry, security screening and prohibited items will be sent to faculty a few days before the ceremony. More information is available on the [Faculty Information](#) website.

Q. How does the All-University Commencement on Saturday morning differ from the individual school or departmental degree recognition ceremonies?

A. During the All-University Commencement in May, doctoral candidates are recognized individually by receiving their hood while crossing the stage. For graduate and undergraduate students, the President and their respective school dean recognize graduates by conferring degrees as a group. These students are then recognized individually at their departmental degree recognition ceremonies.

The school or departmental ceremony is an opportunity for each program to celebrate as a cohort group and honor each student as they walk across the stage. Unlike the All-University Commencement, the number of guest tickets for the individual ceremonies is not capped at two and additional family members and guests can attend and hear the student's name be called and watch them cross the stage. Some department ceremonies do have limited seating, however. More information about the degree recognition ceremonies and any ticket information is available [online](#).