

# TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

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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](mailto: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 and finding your seat for the ceremony. If you arrive early enough, you are welcome to do a final touch up on your regalia attire (cap and gown), meet and greet with fellow classmates and have pictures taken. Please reference your registration confirmation email for further check-in time details.

**Q:** What do I do once I arrive to the Arena?

**A:** Graduates should follow signs to proceed to check-in. Once checked in, you will make your way to the designated graduate seating areas. There will be commencement staff available to assist and answer any questions you may have. At any point, you can find anyone with a staff name badge for assistance.

**Q:** Will there be a rehearsal for the ceremony?

**A:** There is no rehearsal for the ceremony - just come and enjoy the day! There will be commencement staff available to direct you and answer any questions you may have.

**Q:** Will the ceremony be livestreamed?

**A:** The ceremony will be livestreamed for your family and friends to watch. The day of the ceremony, the live stream will be available at [gcu.edu/commencement](http://gcu.edu/commencement). After the ceremony, the video will be viewable on GCU's YouTube channel at [youtube.com/GCU](http://youtube.com/GCU). This is a live streaming of the ceremony where degrees are presented to graduates in attendance.

**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:** Resident students should remain in their designated parking areas and walk to the Arena. Detailed instructions on parking for commuter students and guests will be sent to registered graduates as the ceremony approaches.

**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 and when lining up to cross the stage.

**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 fourteen days prior to the event.  
Student Disability Services | 602-639-6342 | [disabilityoffice@gcu.edu](mailto: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 fourteen 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). 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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**Q:** Do I need to arrive wearing my regalia?

**A:** Yes, please arrive wearing your regalia. Commencement staff will be available to assist with any regalia details if needed.

**Q:** What if I did not purchase regalia?

**A:** Regalia is required to participate in the commencement ceremony. Representatives from GCU's preferred vendor will be on site the day of the ceremony. You can visit their table after checking in.

### Commencement Seating and Guest Tickets

**Q:** Could there be future changes to the commencement ceremony due to COVID-19?

**A:** Yes. Please understand we are still monitoring and following state and CDC guidelines regarding all COVID-19 activities. Ceremony dates, times, capacity and public involvement are subject to change.

**Q:** Is there assigned seating for graduates?

**A:** Graduates are seated in sections based on degree level and college. We strongly advise for you to arrive with friends and fellow classmates within your degree program/college if you would like to sit together.

**Q:** Can guests attend?

**A:** As of Friday, March 5, 2021, registered graduates can reserve up to two guest tickets.

**Q:** What will be the seating arrangements in the Arena for guests?

**A:** Guest tickets will be assigned seating, socially distant, in pairs throughout the Arena bowl. As we have restructured seating capacity in the Arena to allow each graduate to invite two guests, we ask for your understanding that no additional guests will be permitted on campus during the ceremony. Only those with a guest ticket should be on campus.

**Q:** Is there an age limit for tickets?

**A:** There is not an age limit for tickets. Every individual must be ticketed, regardless of age.

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

**A:** Each registered graduate will have the opportunity to reserve two guest tickets. There will be no exceptions made.

**Q:** When should my guests arrive?

**A:** Guest doors will open two 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.

### Ceremony Health Protocols

**Q:** What are the ceremony health protocols?

- A:**
- + Masks must be worn at all times by both graduates and guests.
  - + Graduates must complete the Health Pass via GCU Engage App on the day of the ceremony.
  - + Guests will be asked to sign a COVID-19 attestation prior to ceremony entry.

If you are experiencing the following symptoms, please stay home and watch the ceremony livestream:

- + A fever or a sense of having a fever
- + Muscle pain that you cannot attribute to another health condition or physical activity
- + Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- + Chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- + Loss of taste or smell that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- + Tested positive for COVID-19
- + Had close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19

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### Academic and Commencement Inquiries

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

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

**Q:** Do I have to complete the graduation application to register for the commencement ceremony?

**A:** Commencement registration and the graduation application are two separate links. Completing the graduation application does not register you for the commencement ceremony. Commencement participation is not required, nor does it determine completion of a program.

**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.

**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, wagons and car seats

**Q:** Can I bring food into the GCU Arena?

**A:** Outside food and beverages are not allowed in GCU Arena, unless medically necessary, with the exception of sealed bottled water. Bottled water will be available for graduates if needed.

**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:** 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) will be open the week of commencement.