Frequently Asked Questions

CAP & GOWN INFORMATION

Q: I am unable to come to campus. How do I order my cap and gown?
A: Off-campus and out-of-state students may place their cap and gown order online and have their regalia mailed to them for a $20 shipping charge – available until April 29th. Please contact the USC Bookstore at (213) 740-8997 for additional information or follow the steps at https://www.uscbookstore.com/t8-caps_gowns.aspx

Due to space limitations, the Bookstore is unable to place orders on reserve for in-store pick up.

For cap and gown pricing, please see https://www.uscbookstore.com/t8-caps_gowns.aspx

The bookstore will be open on Friday, May 13, 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. if you are unable to pick up a cap and gown before then. Please note sizes and hoods may be limited so get your regalia early.

Q: How do I get my hood?
A: Your hood is included with your regalia order by indicating which degree you’re receiving. Remember, the Viterbi hood is orange.

Q: Can I rent or purchase my hood by itself?
A: Yes, for additional information contact the USC Bookstore at 213.740.8998.

Q: How do we manage our hoods and gowns before and during the ceremony?
A: It’s recommended to hang your gown to avoid wrinkling. This short video has a tutorial on how to wear your gown, hood, and cap.

Q: What color is my hood?
A: M.S. = Orange

Q: Who is eligible for honor cords?
A: Undergraduate students only.

Q: How do I return my cap and gown?
A: Return it at the Bookstore or in one of the regalia bins throughout campus on Commencement day after your satellite ceremony.
**COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES**

Q: What’s the difference between Main Commencement Ceremony, the Viterbi Master’s Satellite Ceremony, the Viterbi Undergraduate Satellite Ceremony and the Viterbi Ph.D. Hooding Ceremony?

A: At the main ceremony, graduates from the entire University participate. At the Viterbi Ph.D. Hooding ceremony only Ph.D. candidates from Viterbi attend. They are hooded by their chair. The Viterbi Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony is only for engineering undergraduates.

Viterbi hosts two Master’s Ceremonies for engineering M.S. and Graduate Certificate students. Please see below for your department's ceremony:

**Friday, May 13, 3:00pm @ the Galen Center:**
- Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering
- Astronautical Engineering
- Biomedical Engineering
- Mork Family Department of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science
- Sonny Astani Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Computer Science
- Ming Hsieh Department of Electrical Engineering
- Green Technologies Program
- Daniel J. Epstein Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering
- Systems Architecting & Engineering Program

**Saturday, May 14, 6:30pm @ the Galen Center:**
- Computer Science
- Informatics Program

Q: How long does the ceremony last?
A: The Viterbi Master’s Ceremony usually lasts about two hours. **We kindly ask all graduates and guests to leave the Center promptly following the ceremony.**

Q: What is the timeline for Commencement?
A: For the Main Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 13th, candidates are to assemble promptly at 7:45 a.m. and all guests are requested to be in their seats by 8:15 a.m. Procession begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. and the ceremony concludes at 10:00 a.m.

For the **Friday, May 13th Ceremony** graduates are to assemble at the Galen Center at 2:00 p.m. Procession begins promptly at 2:30 p.m.

For the **Saturday May 14th Ceremony** graduates are to assemble at the Galen Center at 5:30 p.m. Procession begins promptly at 6:00 p.m.
**Q:** Do I have to register for Commencement?
**A:** There is no universal registration for Main Commencement. Any student with an anticipated graduation semester of Fall 2015, Spring 2016, or Summer 2016 is welcome to participate.

The Viterbi Master’s Commencement Ceremony, however, requires students participating in the ceremony to register. After eligible students file for graduation with their department advisor, they should receive an email with registration instructions. If you have filed for graduation but have not received this, contact us at Masters@gapp.usc.edu (include your student ID number). **Only students graduating Fall 2015, Spring 2016, or Summer 2016 are eligible to participate in the Viterbi Master’s Commencement Ceremony.**

**Q:** How will my name be announced at Commencement?
**A:** For the Main Commencement Ceremony, names of candidates will not be announced. For the Viterbi Master’s Commencement Ceremony, candidates will be provided a card to write their name and address. This will be used to announce the name as candidates walk across the stage to receive their diploma. It is also used by the photographer to send proofs.

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**DIPLOMAS**

**Q:** When do I receive my diploma?
**A:** Diplomas for May graduates will be mailed by July 2016. At your satellite ceremony, you will be given an empty diploma cover with additional information.

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**COMMENCEMENT BOOK**

Students who graduated in Fall 2015 or who have an expected graduation date of Spring 2016 or Summer 2016 will be listed in the Commencement program. If you would like to check your expected graduation date, please check your STARS report on OASIS.

**Q:** What information does the Commencement Book include?
**A:** The Commencement Book includes the graduate’s name and previously earned degrees. The format is as follows: graduate name, current degree program, and previously earned degree.

**Q:** Can you add/delete students’ names from the Commencement Book?
**A:** Students are added or removed from the Commencement Book based on whether or not they have finished their requirements in the specified time frame.

**Q:** If I have more than one major, will I be listed in only one section or in all sections?
**A:** Your name will be listed in all sections.
Q: What should I do if I legally changed my name and want it to appear in the Commencement Book?
A: If you’ve legally changed your name and want it to appear in the USC Commencement Book, you will need to contact the Office of Academic Records and Registrar in the Verifications Department at (213) 740-9230. You can either do this in person or by mail. For verification purposes, you must submit a legal document that includes your complete name: driver’s license, birth certificate, or passport.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

Q: How many times a year does commencement take place?
A: It occurs the spring of each academic year.

Q: How much time will it take to exit campus after Commencement?
A: Allow approximately an hour to get off campus.

Q: Are there any fees or costs associated with Commencement?
A: There are no fees for participating in commencement. You only need to rent your regalia. Class ring, announcements, etc. are optional.

Q: Is parking complimentary for guests?
A: Parking for all official commencement events is complimentary.

Q: What if it rains?
A: There is no rain-date for Commencement. Fortunately, Southern California tends to be dry in May, though we recommend that you bring an umbrella if rain is forecasted.

Q: Where do I order announcements?
A: Announcements are ordered at the Bookstore. For more information, visit www.uscbookstore.com under the Graduation link.

Q: If one of my guests is in a wheelchair, will his/her seating be any different?
A: We have a section for wheelchairs. One additional guest will be able to sit with him/her in this section.

Q: Will wheelchairs be available for the main and Viterbi commencement? Will handicapped parking be available?
A: Wheelchairs are available for checkout from 6:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on May 13th only. Checkout is located in front of the Alumni House. If you need a wheelchair on Thursday, Friday after 5:00 p.m., or Saturday, you will need to bring your own. More information can be found at https://commencement.usc.edu/guests/disability-info/
For more Commencement related questions, please visit the following:

**USC Main Commencement website:**
https://commencement.usc.edu/

**Viterbi Master’s Commencement Ceremony website:**
https://gapp.usc.edu/students/current/commencement/masters-ceremony