

The Ultimate Commencement Day Guide

How to Make Commencement Day Less Stressful for Everyone





The Day of All Days

Commencement Day is a remarkable milestone in a student's academic journey. It's the culmination of late nights cramming for exams and an iconic symbol of accomplishment students have worked hard for.

Your graduating class deserves a memorable day to celebrate with loved ones and as one of the key stakeholders in organizing this day, it's important you prepare thoroughly. With your efforts to make Commencement Day run smoothly from start to finish, students and their families will look back on this core memory fondly.

We've got a couple of ideas to help you successfully plan an enjoyable, commotion-free day for everyone on campus. Read our guide and give your students the day they deserve.

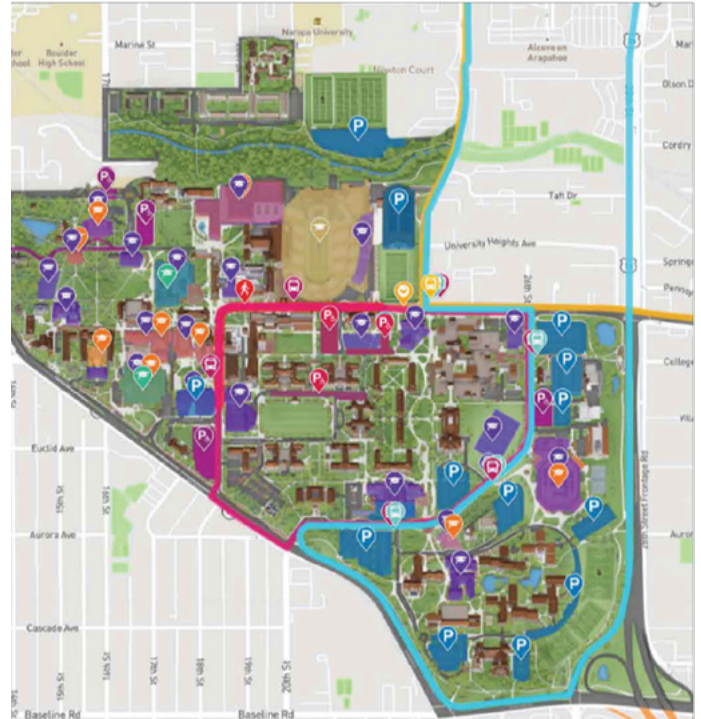
Planning for Commencement

A dynamic piece of media is an invaluable tool when planning for commencement. It can take several forms including the following:

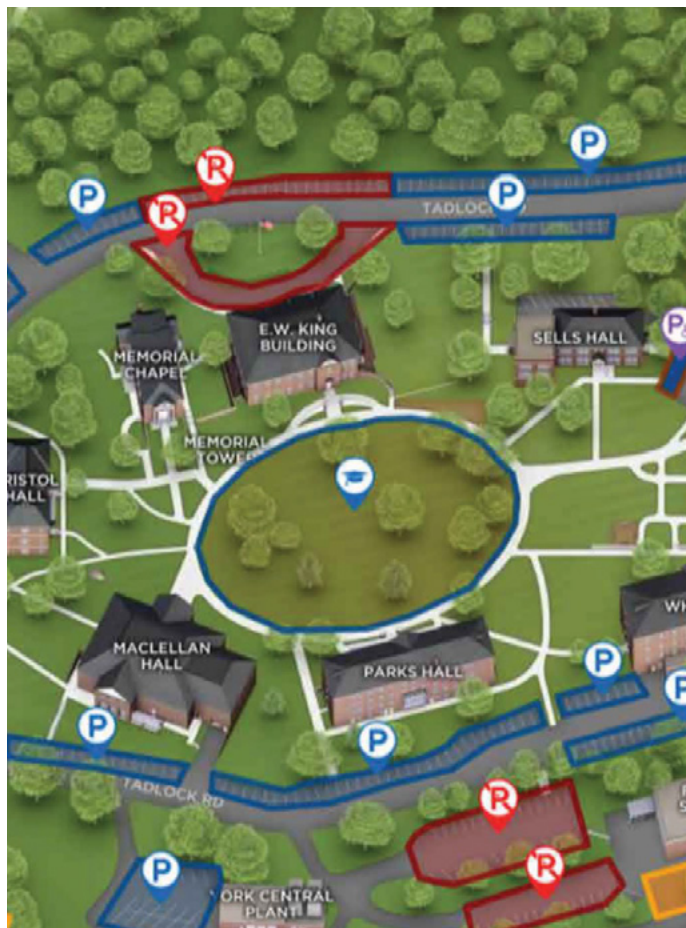
- A print map
- An interactive map
- Your website
- Your social media platforms

This media doesn't need to be fancy — all it needs to do is give clear answers to multiple questions.

Consistency is key with communication, especially with an event as cornerstone as graduation. Establishing one source of truth for folks to reference for all Commencement Day information is a great best practice.



Knowing Your Audience



Your audience includes both your graduating seniors and their loved ones. Remember to customize your communications to the appropriate audience.

An easy-to-follow visual for the graduating seniors and their visitors will provide helpful information on what to expect and where to be throughout the day.

Creating the Visual Flow of General Commencement Traffic

When creating the flow, think about each location as a different step and label that step numerically. Each step should be able to tell the viewer the following information:



Where: Address

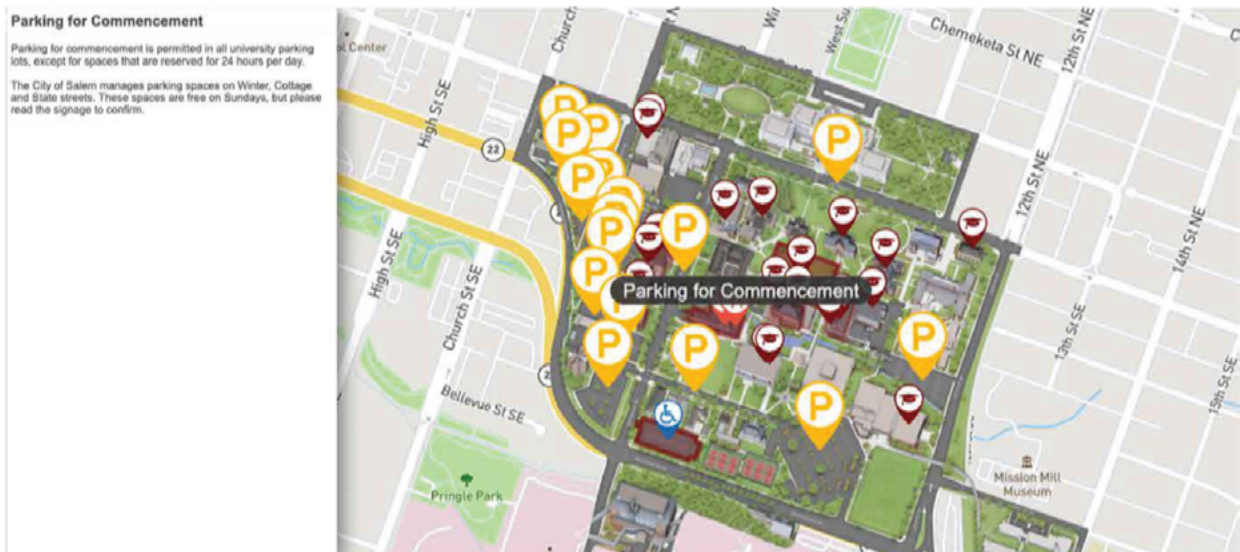
How: Routes and pathways to take

When: Arrival and departure times.

As the expert for this event, it's easy to skip over information that may seem obvious or unnecessary. However, when putting together resources for students and visitors try to put yourself in their shoes and assume there's no background knowledge of what to expect.

Make the information easy to digest, engaging, and clear.

The flow of the day includes 3 main blocks: before, during, and after the ceremony. Below are 3 main components to think about and include in your communications in alignment with these blocks.



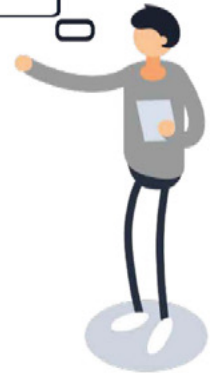
1. Parking

Always keep accessible parking in mind and make sure you adhere to accessibility laws.

Total Number of Parking Spaces Provided in Parking Facility (per facility)	(Column A) Minimum Number of Accessible Parking Spaces (car and van)	Minimum Number of Van-Accessible Parking Spaces (1 of six accessible spaces)
1 to 25	1	1
26 to 50	2	1
51 to 75	3	1
76 to 100	4	1
101 to 150	5	1
151 to 200	6	1
201 to 300	7	2
301 to 400	8	2
401 to 500	9	2
500 to 1000	2% of total parking provided in each lot or structure	1/6 of Column A*
1001 and over	20 plus 1 for each 100 over 1000	1/6 of Column A*

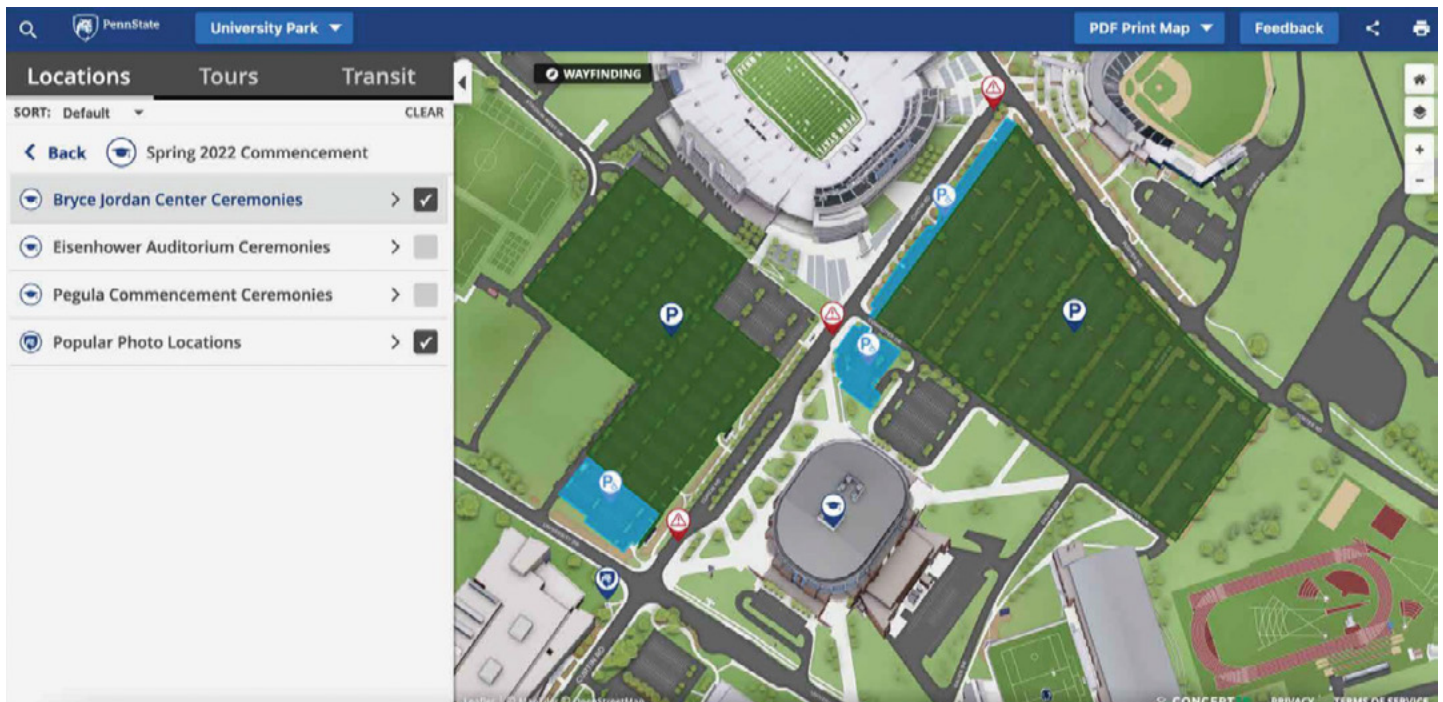
*one out of every 6 accessible spaces

Make sure you have enough accessible parking!



If you think that you might need overflow parking, plan for it and label it clearly.

Hyperlink a Google Maps destination for each of your parking lots so people can find and share the information easily. If you are a Concept3D client, you can create a commencement category, like Penn State did on their interactive map.



2. Meeting Areas

Graduating Seniors Meeting Area

Choose a waiting area for the seniors to gather before commencement begins. Hyperlink and share the location so everyone knows where to go and clearly state the expected arrival time (with a buffer).

If you are assigning seats, this would be the time to communicate seating arrangements.



Visitors Meeting Area

Choose a designated area for visitors to congregate before and after the ceremony. This will help students and families find each other after the ceremony concludes and minimize chaos. Hyperlinking a map location and sharing it out in advance is a good best practice for visitors not familiar with campus. Communicate arrival and departure times, including how to get to their seats and if there are assigned areas to follow.

Enlist student ushers to support escorting people to their seats and help wrangle any late arrivals.



3. Post-Ceremony

Recent grads and their guests will want to take pictures after graduation. Make sure ideal photo spots across campus are highlighted on an interactive map. Pick campus landmarks, distinguished buildings, or surrounding pretty outdoor locations.

Hot tip: Set up a university-branded photo backdrop by leveraging empty classrooms or meeting rooms for additional photo opportunities.

Celebrations are best complimented by food. Provide students and their guests a short-list of local restaurants that accept reservations to make planning simple. You can also partner with restaurants as a fundraising opportunity and advertise places that offer commencement discounts.

Good Luck!

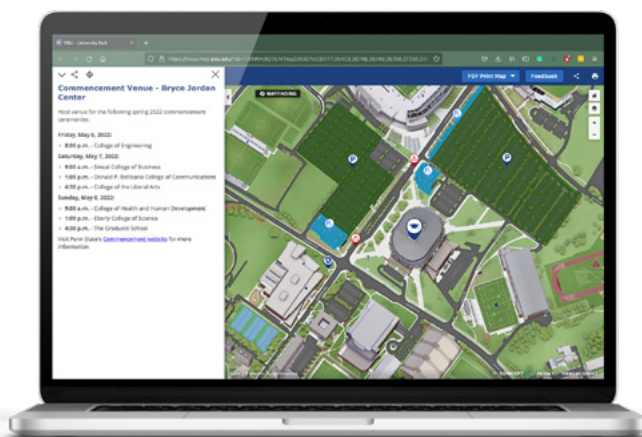
With the right tools and preparations in place, Commencement Day is bound to be a success.

Concept3D hosts an amazing suite of products that have supported university professionals delivering hundreds of commencement ceremonies. Get in touch by emailing inquiries@Concept3D.com with your commencement day questions - we are happy to help!

Check out Penn State's Interactive Map for Commencement

See how Penn State uses Concept3D's Interactive Maps to communicate commencement, show off their campus, and more!

See it in Action



**Interested in how you can make
Commencement Day the best it can
possibly be?**

Let's Chat

