

The Ultimate Commencement Day Guide

How to Make Commencement Day Less Stressful for Everyone





The Day of All Days

Commencement Day is one of the most important days of any student's academic experience. It's the light at the end of the tunnel of all those nights cramming for final exams; it's the beacon in the distance through all the 8am classes; it's the hallowed day they've waited for their entire college career.

And because of that, it's also incredibly important for you as the organizer of commencement -no pressure. With your efforts to make it run smoothly before, during, and after the event, students and their families will look back fondly on their memories of this Day of All Days.

So how do you successfully plan an enjoyable and hassle-free Commencement Day? How do you get started? We've got a couple of ideas.

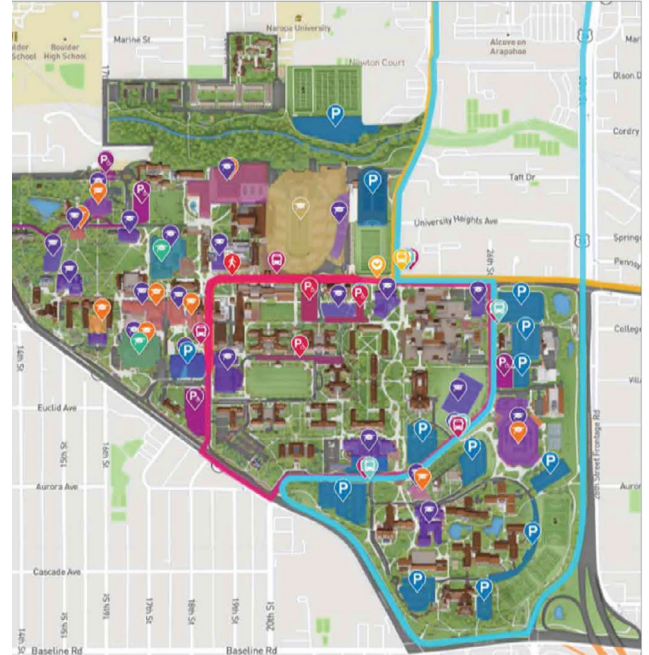
Planning for Commencement

When planning for commencement, your biggest ally is a **dynamic piece of media**. It can be several things, 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 such as graduation. That's why setting up a single go-to place strictly for Commencement Day communication is so important.



Knowing Your Audience

Your audience doesn't just encompass the students getting ready to graduate. You are speaking to two separate crowds: the students and their families



An easy-to-follow visual guide for the graduating seniors and their visitors will give them confidence in what to expect on that day. Keep in mind, the directions will likely be different between the two groups. Make sure to clearly label the different routes between the families and students.

When families can find their way around campus confidently and graduating seniors know exactly where they need to be, the Day of All Days can be one to remember.

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. Keep in mind that each step must be able to answer the following questions:



Where is it?

How do I get there?

When am I supposed to be there?

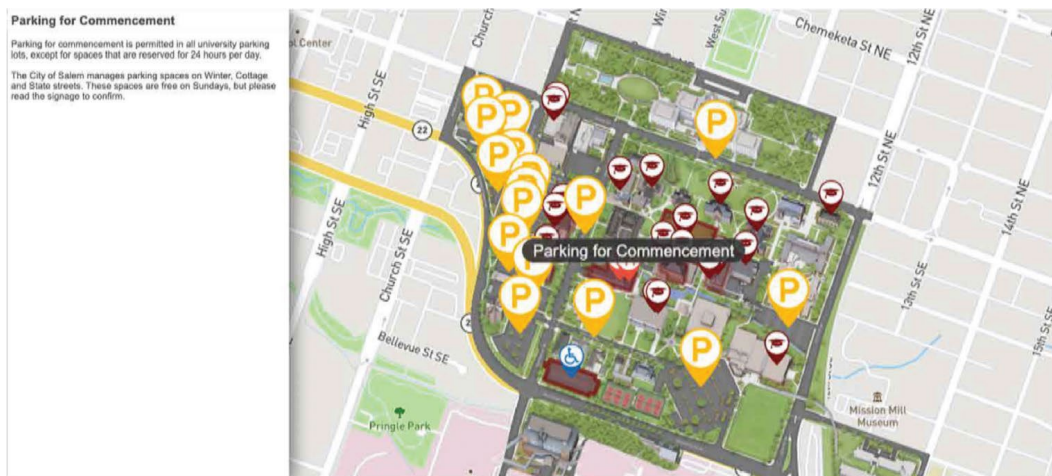
When am I supposed to leave?

What happens if it's too busy?

Keep in mind, it's easy to fill in the gaps in your head because you are an expert in your own commencement. When you are thinking about the event, try to put yourself in the shoes of someone who has absolutely no knowledge of what will happen. How will they be able to digest the information you give them?

3 main things to think of: before, after, and during the ceremony. This includes parking, meeting areas, and post-event organization.

There are several ways to create a flow.



3 main things to think of: before, after, and during the ceremony. This includes parking, meeting areas, and post-event organization.

There are several ways to create a flow.

1. Parking

Wayss keep accessible parking in mind and make sure you follow appropriate and relevant 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*

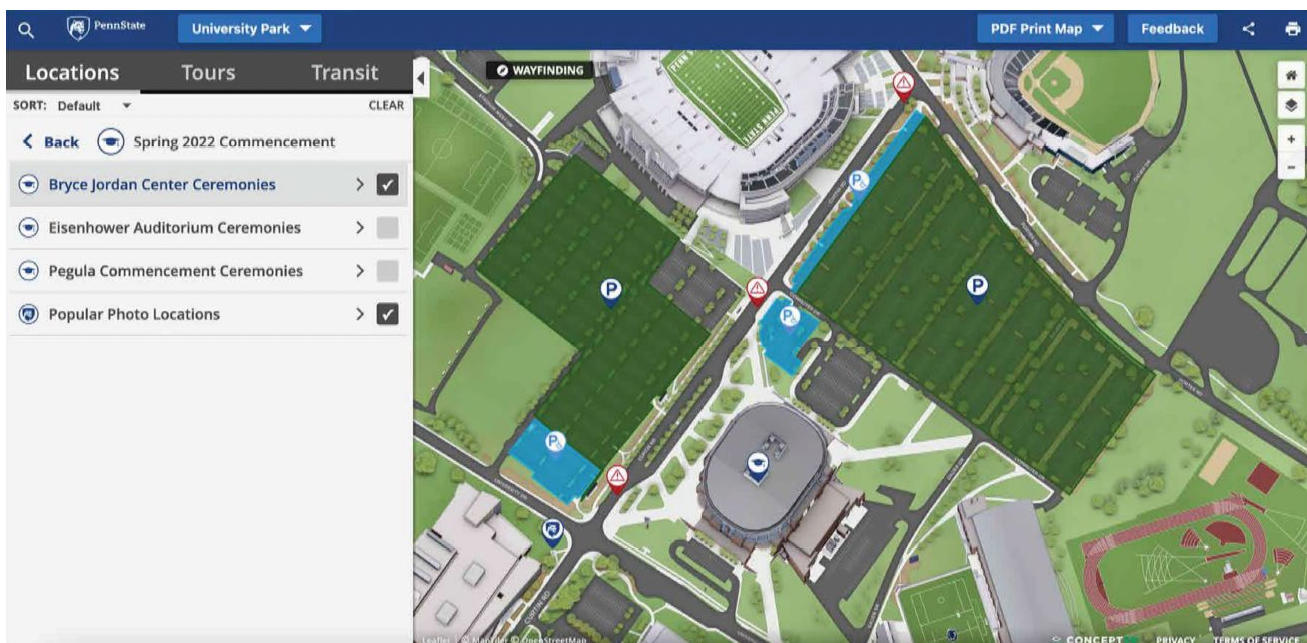
*one out of every 6 accessible spaces

Make sure you have enough accessible parking!



You may need to add more accessible parking spaces if you are changing the parking lot you use. If you think that you might need overflow parking, plan for it and label it clearly. Give clear information on when you think they should park and leave for their next location.

Hyperlink a Google Maps destination for each of your parking lots so people can find it just as easily as they can share it. 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 before the commencement begins.

Hyperlink the location so they know where to go and clearly state the time you expect them to be there.

If you are assigning seats, this would be the time to organize seating arrangements. Let them know that now is the time you expect them to be in their cap and gown if they aren't already.



Visitors Meeting Area

Visitors will congregate wherever they want if you don't clearly give them directions. If you want an organized commencement, clearly state where they need to be and hyperlink the map location so they can find it easily.

Let them know when they should arrive and give them a general time idea on how long it will take to get to their seats. Just as there will be visitors that arrive early to their seats, there are going to be some stragglers who show up a little later.

Pick a time to send out ushers to collect anyone that might be moving on their own time to ensure minimal late comers!



3. Post-Ceremony

How do you avoid a blockage of graduates and their guests stopping right outside of the building? By offering several locations to meet after commencement.

Recent grads and their guests will want to take pictures after graduation, so you should leverage the meeting spaces as a great photo opportunity.

Pick campus landmarks or surrounding pretty locations, hyperlink their location, and add photos!

Good Luck!

With the right tools and preparations in place, your graduation is going to be great!

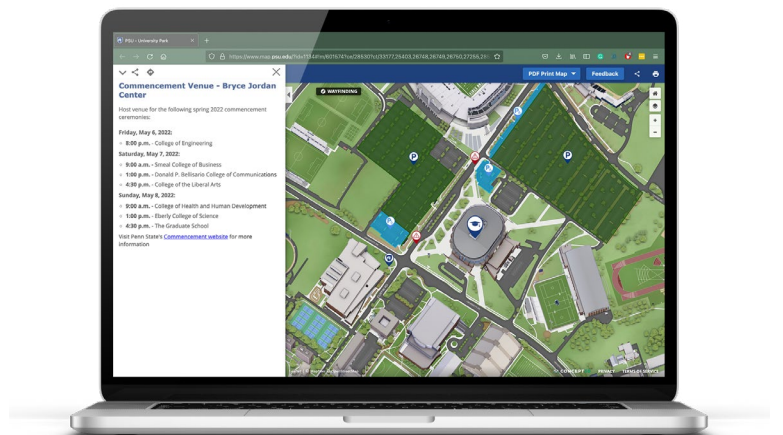
We have seen and helped plan hundreds of commencement ceremonies. Send us your commencement website if you want us to take a look. We are happy to help!

Have any success stories or horror stories about Commencement Day? Send them over for a chance to be featured in our newsletter. You can reach us through email at inquiries@Concept3D.com.

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 we can help you can make Commencement Day less stressful?

Let's chat

