Frequently Asked Questions

USC Commencement website:
http://commencement.usc.edu/

For a map of campus showing line-up points, seating, etc.:
http://commencement.usc.edu/maps/

How do I know if my son/daughter is graduating?
Your son/daughter will need to check their status with their program administrator.

Do students have to sign up for Commencement?
The Price School does require registration for the satellite ceremonies and emails to students include this information and the links to register. The links are also included in the commencement information on the Price website: http://www.usc.edu/schools/price/students/graduation/

There is no sign-up process for participation in the main USC ceremony at 9 AM. As long as you’re on track to graduate in Fall 2012, Spring 2013 or Summer 2013, you can march in the main ceremony without any registration process.

While Fall 2013 students may walk in Spring 2013, their name will not appear in this year’s university commencement program.

I will be finishing my degree requirements next fall. Can I participate in this year’s graduation ceremony?
Students finishing their last requirements next fall (December 2013) are allowed to participate in this year’s main ceremony (May 2013). However, your name will not appear in the USC Commencement program distributed at the university ceremony; it will be printed in next year’s program.

For students walking early, your name will only appear in the program for the satellite ceremony if you register online with the Price School Commencement Coordinator, as directed in emails sent to all Price School students.

Undergraduate students who walk early will need to rent a cap and gown at the bookstore, but are not eligible to wear a university Honor Cord.

My son/daughter has received no information about commencement activities!
Information has gone out to all Price School students by email from the Price School Commencement Coordinator and a flyer has been mailed by the university to the permanent address listed in the university's student information system.

Since information is communicated through a student’s USC email account, it is important to keep the USC email account cleaned up. Sometimes students do not receive important information because their mailbox is full.

How do I rent regalia?
Students who came to Grad Fair and pre-paid for their cap and gown rental can pick their up a day before everyone else, from Monday, April 29 to Friday, May 3!
Graduates will be able rent academic regalia (caps, gowns and hoods) in the University Bookstore, 3rd floor from Monday, May 6 through Friday, May 17. The hours are:

Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 7:30 PM  
Saturday, 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM  
Sunday, 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM  
Friday, May 17, 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Bachelor’s degree (black cap and gown only): $49.99  
Master’s degree (black cap, gown and hood): $64.99  
Doctoral degree (cardinal cap, gown and hood): $74.99

Please do not wait until the day of graduation to obtain a cap and gown.

Each of the above rentals comes with a tassel for the cap that can be removed and kept as a souvenir. To speed up the rental process, it’s best to have your height and cap size ready. If you don’t know those, though, the staff will be happy to measure you.

**Out-of-State Orders**

Off-campus and out-of-state students may call in their cap and gown order (with a credit card) to have their regalia mailed to them for a $20 shipping charge. Please contact the USC Bookstore at (213) 740-8997. Online orders will be available from April 1 through May 6.

A Master’s or Doctoral student should be crystal clear when telling the staff what degree you are earning, to make sure you get the right color trim on your hood; a Doctorate is different from a Ph.D., and their hoods can be very different colors.

If you have any doubts about the color hood you should be receiving, please check the list posted here:

Cardinal hood with Dark Blue lining:

Ph.D. in any field

Cardinal hood with Crimson lining:

Doctor of Policy, Planning, and Development

Black hood with Crimson lining:

Master of Planning  
Master of Real Estate Development
Black hood with Peacock Blue lining:

Master of Health Administration
Master of International Public Policy and Management (IPPAM)
Master of Public Administration
Master of Public Policy
Executive Master of Health Administration
Executive Master of Leadership

How do I order a stole or sash?
While the majority of graduates rent (and do not purchase) their regalia, more and more are purchasing a stole (or sash) to wear on Commencement day. Stoles are available from the University Bookstore’s Supply Department on the 3rd floor. Stoles can be purchased with the USC logo or embroidered university seal, or they can be custom-designed. Custom stoles start at $75 and include 2-8 embroidered letters. There are additional costs for adding seals, logos, fraternity/sorority crests, etc. Please see the Supply Department on the 3rd floor of the Bookstore for more details.

How do I order announcements, class ring, and diploma frame?
Official class rings, diploma frames, and graduation announcements are all sold by Herff Jones, and may be ordered together as a package through their official website.

These items are also available at the USC Bookstore year-round. Representatives will also sell all of these products at the Grad Fair. The 2013 Grad Fair will be held in the ballroom of the Tutor Campus Center. Dates and hours are:

Tuesday, February 12, 10 AM - 4 PM
Wednesday, February 13, 10 AM - 4 PM
Thursday, February 14, 10 AM - 6 PM

Grad Fair is your one-stop way to get all the information you need about Commencement.

I qualify for honors. When will I receive my honors cords?
Eligible undergraduate students will receive honor cords from the school at the Price School Awards Ceremony. An invitation to the Awards Ceremony will be mailed to you.

It is university policy that honor cords are for undergraduate students only.

What happens on Commencement Day?
Guests should plan on arriving on campus by 7:00 AM to secure parking (which is free), and to find a seat in or around Alumni Park for the main USC Commencement Ceremony. There are no tickets and there is no registration required for students to march in the main ceremony, and guest seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please note that at the main ceremony each guest may only hold or reserve two additional seats. Ceremony programs will be available for guests at tented information booths on campus; programs will be pre-set on graduates' seats.

Students line up at their assembly points by 8:00 AM. Commencement begins at 8:30 AM as 8,000 degree candidates march into Alumni Park from its four corners. Students process with their school, behind cardinal and gold banners listing the name of the school, and heraldic flags depicting the school's
traditional academic icons.

The main USC ceremony begins at 9:00 AM. This ceremony includes addresses from the president, the valedictorian, and the commencement speaker; honorary degrees are bestowed, and students are officially recognized (en masse) as graduates of the university. Students are officially designated graduates of the university at this first, or main, ceremony, but they do not march across a stage, receive a diploma cover, and take a photo until they attend their school’s satellite ceremony. The ceremony concludes at approximately 10:10 AM and students march out of the park back to their assembly points.

**Price School Undergraduate Satellite Ceremony and Reception**

Immediately following the main ceremony, the Price School Undergraduate Satellite Ceremony begins at approximately 10:45 AM in a tent on Pardee Way, right next to Lewis Hall. Price undergraduate students are asked to line up next to Lewis Hall immediately following the USC ceremony, at approximately 10:15 AM. We will open the tent for guest seating at 9:30 AM. A Price School Undergraduate Satellite Reception follows the ceremony.

Visit [http://priceschool.usc.edu/files/2010/06/Commencement-Map-Undergraduate.pdf](http://priceschool.usc.edu/files/2010/06/Commencement-Map-Undergraduate.pdf) for full-size map of Undergraduate Ceremony and Reception location.

**Price School Graduate Satellite Ceremony and Reception**

The Price School Graduate Satellite Ceremony takes place at 3:00 PM at Lot 6 located on Downey Way near Kaprielian Hall and Irani Hall. Line up for students is at 2:30 PM next to Irani Hall and guests will be seated in the tent at Lot 6 beginning at 2:00 PM. A Price School Graduate Satellite Reception for
graduate students and their guests follows the ceremony at Argue Plaza, located directly in front of Lewis Hall on Childs Way.

Visit [http://priceschool.usc.edu/files/2010/06/Commencement-Map-Graduate.pdf](http://priceschool.usc.edu/files/2010/06/Commencement-Map-Graduate.pdf) for full-size map of Graduate Ceremony and Reception location.

**How much is parking? Where should I and/or my guests park?**

Parking is free on commencement day and on the day prior, Thursday, May 16, for those attending Commencement-related activities. Parking is extremely limited on campus, and due to the large crowd expected at commencement, parking facilities will fill up early. The University Parking Center, on the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Grand Avenue, is recommended for all degree candidates, their families and guests. Your parking permit does not guarantee you a space in your regular parking structure.

If you arrive late and all campus parking facilities are filled, you can park at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, accessible off of Exposition Boulevard or at the Parking Center, located east of the freeway.

**Does USC have any travel recommendations?**

STA Travel is the official travel agency for commencement and can be reached at (213) 743-4782. They have negotiated discounted rates with airlines, hotels and rental cars. We recommend that you contact them early to arrange for your travel needs.

**Guests with Disabilities - Drop Off**

If you would like to drop off guests with disabilities on campus, please enter campus through the old Gate #2, located on Figueroa Street near the corner of Figueroa and Exposition, and drop off in front of
the Alumni House. Vehicles will then be directed to park at PS1 on the corner of Figueroa Street and Exposition Boulevard (enter the structure off of Flower Street).

Disability Seating
At the main ceremony, there is a seating section reserved for guests with wheelchairs. Because space is limited, we can only allow one escort per disabled guest. This area, like all commencement guest seating, is first come, first served.

At the satellite ceremonies, there is an area for guests who will remain seated in wheelchairs during the ceremony. Since space is limited, we can only allow one escort per disabled guest. For those who will not remain in the wheelchair during the ceremony, a staff member will store the wheelchair during the ceremony.

Will wheelchairs be available for disabled guests?
A limited number of wheelchairs are available for checkout from 6:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on commencement day only. Checkout is located in front of the Alumni House. If you need a wheelchair on Thursday, or on Friday after 5:00 p.m., you should make arrangements to bring your own.

Stroller Parking
Due to strict fire regulations, strollers may not be taken into the tent for the satellite ceremonies. They will be stored by staff during the satellite ceremony.

DVD Orders
The Main Ceremony DVD is available for purchase online at www.uscbookstore.com (just search the site for "Commencement"). It makes a great gift for family members who could not attend the ceremony, or for anyone who wants to remember that special day. The price is $20.00 (plus $1.75 tax if shipping to California) plus shipping & handling.

Please note that this footage only includes the main ceremony. Price School will not have a DVD of the satellite ceremonies available for sale.

How will my name appear on my diploma?
The name on the diploma must match the name on the sealed academic record when the degree was posted. If your degree has not been posted, you can still request a name change through the Transcripts and Verifications department. If you wish to correct the name that is currently on record, DO THIS NOW. The way your name reads on your current record is the way it will appear on your diploma. Once your degree has posted it may not be changed.

When do I get my diploma? How can I get my diploma if I don’t attend the Commencement Ceremonies?
Diplomas are not distributed on commencement day, but are mailed later to the graduate’s permanent address of record (check your diploma details at the Degree Progress website). Once final grades are released a couple weeks after commencement, you will be sent a congratulatory e-mail. Your diploma should follow the mail four to six weeks later.

I am moving shortly after graduation. How can I make sure I get my diploma?
You can request that your diploma be held for pick-up by submitting a "Change of Information" card in Degree Progress (JHH-010). Be sure to leave mail forwarding instructions with the U.S. Postal Service to ensure that you get your notification when your diploma is ready to pick-up.

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