

Commencement FAQ's

What is the difference between graduation and commencement?

Graduation – when a student is awarded a degree or certificate once they have satisfied all requirements. Students do not officially graduate until all grades have been entered in their last attending semester.

Commencement/Walking – a ceremony that allows students, family, and friends to celebrate the student's academic accomplishments. Participation in the ceremony does not mean the student has graduated (final grades are not due until after the ceremony). Students do not receive their diploma at the ceremony.

Am I required to attend Commencement?

Attendance at Commencement is not mandatory. All graduates are strongly encouraged to attend so that Washington State Community College can recognize your achievements and your family and friends can share in your celebration.

Do my family/friends need tickets?

Yes, every person who will occupy a seat (including children) will need a ticket. Each graduate will be able to pick up tickets for their guests in the Records Office prior to Commencement. Please check your email for the ticket pick-up deadline. Seating is first come, first seated for ticketed guests. There will be an additional overflow room with a live stream of the ceremony for guests who do not have a ticket.

Is there a Commencement Ceremony rehearsal?

There is not a rehearsal for the Commencement Ceremony. Instructions for the processional will be given at the time of check-in.

What time do graduates need to arrive and check-in?

All students **MUST** check in in the Arts and Sciences building 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. Instructions for the processional will be given at the time of check-in.

Must I wear a cap and gown (regalia)?

Yes, participation in the Commencement ceremony requires the college's cap and gown regalia.

What do I wear under my cap and gown (regalia)?

Comfortable but appropriate attire, and comfortable shoes.

Where do I get my cap and gown regalia?

Caps, gowns, and announcements may be purchased through Barnes and Noble on campus. Honor and Veteran cords will be distributed to eligible students at check-in. Phi Theta Kappa cords will need picked up from Brad Merritt prior to the Commencement.

How long do the Commencement Ceremonies last?

Each ceremony lasts around one hour depending on the number of participants.

Where can I park for commencement?

Parking is designated according to the ceremony. Please check parking signs on the Washington State campus to determine best parking for your ceremony.

Are special accommodations provided for guests?

All guests and/or graduates with limited mobility or special needs should arrive early to the ceremony, we will do our best to accommodate your needs. There will be a limited number of wheelchairs available for guests to use. They are on a first come first served basis.

Will I have my photograph taken by an official, professional photographer at the ceremony?

No. Washington State will be taking photographs for their website, however there is no guarantee that each graduate will be photographed.

When do I receive my diploma?

You will receive notification that your diploma is available for pick-up at the Records Office. If your diploma is not picked up by the designated date, it will be sent via U.S. Post mail approximately 4-6 weeks after the end of the semester. You will need to update your mailing address with the Records Office, as this is the address where your diploma will be mailed.

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Are there any additional celebrations?

Yes! Graduates and guests are invited to the Main Building Commons for a free reception to celebrate your accomplishment.

How do I know which ceremony to attend?

Each program will participate in the following ceremony:

Arts & Sciences, Health & Wellness, and Public Services – 9:30 a.m.

- Associate of Individualized Study
- Biological Sciences Transfer
- Criminal Justice Technology
- Education Transfer
- Fine Arts Transfer
- General Sciences Transfer
- Health & Wellness
- Liberal Arts Transfer
- Police Officer Basic Academy (POBA)
- Social Services Technology
- Social Services Transfer

Business, Engineering, and Industrial Technologies – 11:30 a.m.

- Accounting Technology
- Accounting Certificate
- Associate of Technical Studies – Cyber Security
- Automotive Technology
- Automotive Certificate
- Business Administration Transfer
- Business Management
- Chemical Operator Certificate
- Diesel Truck Systems
- Digital Technology – Computer Support Technician
- Digital Technology – Computer Graphics
- Drafting Certificate
- Electrical Engineering Technology
- Geoscience Transfer
- Industrial Technology
- Industrial Technology – Design Drafting
- Industrial Technology – Petroleum
- Industrial Technology – Process Technician
- Mechanical Engineering
- Office Administrative Services
- Executive Office Support Certificate
- Medical Coding Certificate
- Welding Technology
- Welding Certificate

If you have any questions regarding graduation or commencement, please call the Records Office at (740) 568-1904 or email recordsoffice@wscc.edu.