UNDERSTANDING COMMENCEMENT

An Overview of Brown Commencement & Reunion Weekend

249TH COMMENCEMENT
SUNDAY, MAY 28, 2017
Helpful Hints

• Reserve your hotel rooms now.
• Arrive early and plan for a long day.
• Check the Brown Commencement website early and often.
• Figure out your driving and parking plan.
• Plan for elderly attendees and other accommodations.
• Pack snacks, water, umbrellas, hats, etc.
• Understand there will be large chunks of time when you do not see your student.
• Your student will be part of at least 3 ceremonies and 1 procession on Sunday. Encourage them to rest up!
• Make your dinner reservations after 4:00pm on Sunday.
End of the Semester

- May 9: Last Day of Classes & Reading Period
- May 10-19: Final Exams
- May 26-28: Commencement & Reunion Weekend
  - Friday, May 26: Campus Dance
  - Saturday, May 27: Forums & Baccalaureate
  - Sunday, May 28: Procession & Ceremonies
- May 29: Seniors Move Out of Dorms by Noon
Campus Dance

Friday, May 26 from 9pm-1am

Sponsored by the Brown Alumni Association (BAA)

A tradition that dates back from 1868

A celebration that brings together Seniors, Reunion Classes & members of the Brown community

The Main Green is strung with the iconic white paper lanterns of the Brown Campus Dance
Thousands of alumni, students and guests attended Friday night’s Campus Dance, an annual extravaganza in which the College Green is transformed by strings of paper lanterns into a garden party with a swing band, dance floor and more.
Commencement Forums

Saturday, May 27

9:00am-9:50am
11:00am-11:50am
12:30pm-1:20pm

List of speakers, topics & locations will be announced in late April

A variety of topics presented in buildings across campus

No tickets required. Arrive early. All seating is first come/first served

Guests enjoy lectures from Brown faculty, alumni & Honorary Degree candidates
Baccalaureate Ceremony

Saturday, May 27

1:30pm Seniors Line-up
1:45pm Procession
2:30pm-4pm Ceremony

A multi-faith ceremony held in the First Baptist Meeting House

Baccalaureate includes:
Procession through the Main Green, Dancing, Music, Readings & Keynote Address

Only Seniors attend the ceremony, guests may view on the Main Green

Simulcast available in Salomon & Sayles Halls

Brown Lion Dancers lead the Baccalaureate Procession down to First Baptist Meeting House
Commencement Day Schedule*

- 9:45am Procession steps off from Faunce Arch
- 10:15am Graduate School Ceremony
- 10:15am Medical School Ceremony
- 11:55am College Ceremony at First Baptist Church
- 12:45pm University Ceremony on Main Green
- 2:00pm Diploma Ceremonies & Receptions

*all times are approximate
Procession

Sunday, May 28

9:30am Line-up
9:45am Step Off

All participants line up at the Faunce Arch.

The Chief Marshall, a member of the 50th reunion class, leads.

Gates open 2 times a year, once inward at Convocation & outward at Commencement

Procession Route (Part 1) – Through the Main Green, the Van Wickle Gates & down College Hill
The College Ceremony
11:55pm – 12:05pm (approximate times)

Held on the grounds of the First Baptist Meeting House

Official Conferral of Undergraduate Degrees

Seniors ONLY

Families & Guests watch simulcast from the Main Green

The Rev. Janet Cooper Nelson addresses the graduates at the College Ceremony.
Procession (continued)

Procession resumes immediately following the College Ceremony

Seniors split and process in 2 groups back to Main Green

All guests should be seated on the Main Green at this time.

Proccession Route (Part 2) – Return to Campus from the College Ceremony
The University Ceremony

12:45pm - 1:50pm (approximate times)

Takes place on the Main Green

Seniors, Graduate & Medical School Students all celebrate their accomplishments

Senior Orators speak

Presentation of Honorary Degrees

Presentation of Symbolic Degrees

The view from the University Ceremony stage.
Diploma Ceremonies

Begin immediately following the University Ceremony (approximately 2:00pm)

At various locations across campus – make sure all guests know senior’s concentration

Diplomas are awarded to graduates.

Refreshments & Food

All families and guests are invited
FAQ: Seating & Tickets

Tickets *are* required for Campus Dance

NO tickets needed for major ceremonies

NO tickets needed for Commencement seating

Seating is first come, first served on the Main Green

Plan a meeting place for family & student in advance (away from the Main Green is best)

Seniors seated on the Main Green to watch the University Ceremony.
Seating on the Main Green

Center section is reserved for students.

Seats can only be held by someone who is sitting in the seats.

All seats have a view of the jumbotron next to the stage.

The best place to enter the main green is away from Waterman. (Where the Procession lines up)
The Van Wickle Gates remain open through Monday evening for more photo opportunities.

FAQ: Photos & Viewing

Diploma Ceremonies are the best opportunity for photos of students

Live streamed events:

- Baccalaureate (Saturday Afternoon)
- Procession (Sunday Morning)
- College Ceremony (Sunday Morning)
- University Ceremony (Sunday Afternoon)

Simulcasts can be viewed on Main Green

DVD sales are available from Collegiate Video, information will be sent to home address on file.
FAQ: Storm Plans

- Dress for the weather! Be comfortable & safe
- Storm Plans will go into effect only in the case of SEVERE weather conditions
- Storm Plan Details
  - Announcement will be made on the home page of Brown.edu
  - Procession will be cancelled
  - University Ceremony in Pizzatola Sports Center for Seniors only
  - Guests can view ceremonies from Salomon Hall, Sayles Hall & Meehan Auditorium
  - Light Rain = You will be wet & no storm plan
FAQ: Housing & Dining

Most local hotels require a 2 night minimum during Commencement Weekend.

Resident Hall rooms can be booked through the Office of Residential Life website.

Reservations for dorm rooms can be made in March through early May.

Make dinner reservations in advance, after 4pm on Commencement Day.

Several “grab & go” retail food locations are open throughout campus.

Commencement Day is long – make sure to stay well fed, hydrated and take care of your guests!

Providence Waterfire traditionally takes place Saturday evening of Commencement Weekend.
FAQ: Parking

Parking & driving around campus are challenging, plan for roadblocks and traffic

All University lots open at 5:00pm on Friday and remain open all weekend

Several streets closed on Saturday & Sunday

Consider a “drop off pass” for guests.

Many streets surrounding the campus are blocked off to traffic for the Procession.
FAQ: Guests with Special Needs

- Handicapped Parking is available via online registration, starting in March
- Registration in advance is required
- Handicapped parking spaces are observed
- The University does not rent wheelchairs
- Most of campus is accessible, but consider your guests and the amount of travel during the day
- The Office of Student & Employee Accessibility Services (SEAS) offers shuttles and other assistance
FAQ: Academic Regalia

- Caps & Gowns can be rented or purchased from the Brown Bookstore
  - Orders begin in March, pre-orders are not needed.
  - Made from 100% recycled material
- Rings, personalized announcements, diploma frames and regalia sashes are also available for purchase
- Regalia is required for students participating in the Baccalaureate & Commencement ceremonies
FAQ: Tips for the Graduates

Bring your phone/camera, but please turn it off during the ceremonies

Eat in the morning...it is a very long day!

Plan for your guests now, it is never too early to start

Help your guests locate parking lots

Establish a meeting place in advance

Find out your diploma ceremony location and advise your guests – listed in early spring on the Commencement website

Enjoy your Day!
FAQ: More Information

- General Commencement Information:
  - www.brown.edu/commencement
- Campus Dance Information:
  - http://alumni.brown.edu/news_events/campus_dance
- Most communication is sent to directly to SENIORS.
- For more information, contact the Office of University Event & Conference Services (UECS) at 401-863-3100 or universityevents@brown.edu
Any Questions?