251st Commencement Weekend
May 24-26, 2019

UNDERSTANDING COMMENCEMENT
An Overview of Commencement and Reunion Weekend
Dates and Resources

Dates:
- May 24: Campus Dance
- May 25: Forums and Baccalaureate Service
- May 26: Commencement Day: Procession and Ceremonies

Resources:
- [Commencement Website](#)
- [Commencement Guidebook App](#)
- Welcome Kiosk on College Green on Saturday & Sunday. Stop by for information.
Campus Dance

Friday, May 24
9:00 pm – 1:00 am

Families and guests are welcome to attend.

Tickets are required and go on sale beginning in mid-April. For more information:

One of Brown’s best-loved Commencement and Reunion traditions, Campus Dance brings together more than 11,000 people to dance on the College Green under hundreds of paper lanterns.
Forums

Saturday, May 25

9:00 – 9:50 am
11:00 – 11:50 am
12:30 – 1:20 pm
3:30 – 4:20 pm

No tickets required. Open seating is first come, first seated.

Arrive early for best availability of seats.

Each Commencement, Brown presents a wide range of forums led by faculty, alumni, and Honorary Degree candidates. Speakers, topics and locations are announced in late April.
Baccalaureate Service

Saturday, May 25

1:30 pm Seniors line up
1:45 pm Procession begins
2:30 pm Ceremony begins
4:00 pm Ceremony ends

The service is for Seniors only, guests watch a simulcast from the College Green.

Features student performers and a keynote address.

The Baccalaureate Service is a multi-faith ceremony that incorporates the many spiritual and cultural traditions of the Brown community. Seniors process to the First Baptist Church from the College Green.
Commencement Day Schedule*

**Sunday, May 26**

9:45 am   Procession begins
10:15 am  Graduate School Doctoral Ceremony
10:15 am  Medical School Ceremony
10:30 am  Graduate School Master’s Ceremony
12:15 pm  College Ceremony at First Baptist Church
1:15 pm   University Ceremony on the College Green
2:30 pm   Diploma Ceremonies

*all times are approximate
Commencement Day for Graduates

- Caps and gowns can be rented or purchased from the Brown Bookstore and are required for students participating in Baccalaureate and Commencement.

- The Procession lasts from roughly 9:30 am. – 1:00 pm; pack a water bottle and snack.

- Find your diploma ceremony location and coordinate a meeting place with your guests in advance.

- Dress comfortably and for the weather. Ceremonies will be outdoors, rain or shine, and you will be walking a lot.

- Stay together, keep moving along the Procession route.
Commencement Day for Families and Guests

- Sunday is a long day.
- Arrive early for best availability of seats.
- Surrounding streets are closed to traffic during the morning for the Procession, making the campus difficult to reach by car after 9:00 am.
- For the best viewing of the Procession and College Ceremony, watch the simulcast from the College Green rather than trying to view from the street.
- Consider only attending the Diploma Ceremony if you have concerns about the length of the day or about navigating the campus on foot. Seniors receive their degrees individually at these ceremonies.
College Green Seating

Enter from George Street to avoid the congested procession lineup areas on Waterman & Brown Streets.

The center seating section is reserved for graduates.

You must be present and seated to hold seats for other guests.

All seats have a view of the simulcast.
Procession

Sunday, May 26

9:30 am Seniors line up
9:45 am Procession begins

Seniors line up on Waterman Street before marching through Faunce Arch and the College Green to the Van Wickle Gates.

Seniors process down to the First Baptist Church for the College Ceremony.

Guests watch a simulcast from the College Green.

Graduates march through the Van Wickle Gates, which are opened only twice each year. Alumni who have returned for Reunion march with their classes. Once the last person is through the Van Wickle Gates, the procession inverts and continues down College Street, with each participant passing by the others, to mutual applaud.
College Ceremony

12:15 – 12:35 pm (approximate times)

The ceremony is for Seniors only, guests watch a simulcast from the College Green.

Seniors assemble on the lawn of the First Baptist Church for the College Ceremony where the undergraduate degrees are conferred.
After the College Ceremony at the First Baptist Church, seniors return to the College Green for the University Ceremony.

Procession (continued)

Procession resumes immediately following the College Ceremony.

Seniors split and process in two groups up the hill to the College Green.
The University Ceremony

1:15 pm - 2:15 pm
(approximate times)

Seniors, Graduate and Medical School Students all celebrate their accomplishments.

Senior Orators speak.

Presentation of Honorary Degrees.

Presentation of Symbolic Degrees.

What a view it is from the stage podium, where President Paxson addresses all gathered for the University Ceremony on the College Green.
Diploma Ceremonies

Immediately follow the University Ceremony (approx. 2:30pm)

Diplomas are awarded at various ceremonies across campus.

Make sure you know senior’s concentration.

Refreshments and food are served at most ceremonies.

No tickets required.

Families and guests are invited to attend the Diploma Ceremonies. See the map of ceremony locations at back of the Commencement program.
Commencement Day Storm Plan

Implemented ONLY in SEVERE weather conditions

• Announcement will be made on the home page of Brown.edu.

• Procession will be cancelled.

• University Ceremony held in Pizzitola Sports Center, for Seniors only.

• Guests can live stream the ceremony, or view a simulcast in Salomon Center, Sayles Hall, or Meehan Auditorium.
FYI: Photos & Viewing

Diploma ceremonies are the best opportunity for photos.

Live streamed events:
• Baccalaureate
• Procession
• College Ceremony
• University Ceremony

View simulcasts on the College Green.

DVD sales are available from Collegiate Video.

Please refrain from taking photos that impede the flow of the Procession. The Van Wickle Gates will remain open through Monday evening for more photo opportunities.
Housing & Dining

Most local hotels require a two-night minimum during this weekend.

Resident Hall rooms can be booked through the Office of Residential Life beginning in March.

Make dinner reservations in advance, after 4:00 pm on Commencement Day.

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

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

Parking and driving around campus is challenging. Expect traffic and roadblocks.

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

Consider a “drop off pass” for guests.

During the weekend streets surrounding the campus are blocked off to traffic or prohibit parking. Learn about your options:

- [Accessibility accommodations](#)
- [Parking and shuttles](#)
- [Other FAQs](#)
Enjoy your day!