The Day of the Ceremony

Out of courtesy to your fellow graduates, you are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire ceremony, which will last approximately 90 minutes.

There is no Commencement rehearsal. Therefore, the instructions listed below and the directions that will be given to you the day of the ceremony for line-up, marching and the awarding of degrees should be followed carefully.

Undergraduates must line up in the lower level (basement) of Sondheim Hall by 9 a.m. When you arrive at Sondheim Hall, follow signage to the area designated for the department your major is in. Undergraduates march in alphabetical order by department.

The procession begins promptly at 9:40 a.m., at which time the candidates will lead the faculty and staff and Platform Party processions into the arena. Commencement staff volunteers will direct students to their seats. When it is time to receive acknowledgement of the degrees, a commencement staff volunteer will escort each row of candidates to the stairs that will be used to walk onto the stage. You must bring your gold floor pass with you to the ceremony and keep it with you at all times. Floor passes will be provided to you when you pick up your regalia. No one will be allowed to participate in Commencement without a floor pass. Do not bring flags, signs or other visible distractions on the stage as these items will be confiscated.

When you reach the top of the stairs, hand your floor pass to the Commencement staff volunteer who will then hand the card to the reader. When your name is called, proceed toward center stage where President Hrabowski and Provost Hirshman will be standing with other guests to congratulate you with a handshake. You will then exit the stage via the center stairs and return to your seat on the arena floor.

Graduates requiring special seating arrangements due to wheelchair use or mobility limitations should contact Laura Arnwine at 410-455-3158 or graduation@umbc.edu for more information.

Important Note: Leave all valuables at home or with a friend or family member. There will be no secured area for personal belongings, such as coats, cameras, purses or book bags, and there is a good chance that after crossing the stage, you will sit in a different seat than the one you sat in before. No balloons are allowed in the RAC. Smoking is not permitted inside the RAC.

Academic Regalia

Each undergraduate student attending the Commencement ceremony MUST purchase the academic regalia that can only be ordered from the Bookstore Graduation Center. Candidates are prohibited from wearing a borrowed cap or gown from an alumnus/a or another student – no exceptions. The dates for ordering regalia at the Bookstore Graduation Center are Monday, October 4, and Tuesday, October 5, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Wednesday, October 6, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Regalia can also be purchased online at www.herff-jones.com/college through Monday, November 1. (The Web site will not operate after this date.) The cost of undergraduate regalia is $45.99. Beginning October 8, candidates who order regalia will be assessed a $20 late fee. All forms of payment usually accepted in the Bookstore are allowed.

Candidates for summa, magna and cum laude honors will be given a keepsake gold stole to be worn at Commencement. Stoles will be distributed with regalia by the Bookstore. If you have earned University Honors (at least 45 UMBC credits with a 3.50 or higher GPA) by the end of the Spring 2010 semester, you will receive a stole. Please contact the Office of the Registrar at 410-455-3158 or graduation@umbc.edu for more information.

The cap should be worn so that the mortarboard is level. It should not be tilted to the back or side of the head. The crown should be approximately one inch above the eyebrows. The front of the cap is indicated on the inside of the crown. Men remove their caps during the playing of the National Anthem. Tassels are worn on the right side, and then switched to the left after the degrees are conferred.

Tickets

For the undergraduate ceremony, guests are required to present general admission tickets for admittance into the RAC. When you pick up your regalia from the Bookstore, you will receive FOUR general admission tickets admitting your guests to the Commencement ceremony. Lost tickets will not be replaced.

If you have guests with special needs, such as hearing or mobility impairments, you will be able to exchange two general admission tickets for special accommodation seating tickets at this time (see “Special Accommodations Tickets” section for additional information).

Students who ordered their regalia before or on November 1 can pick up their regalia and tickets in the Bookstore Graduation Center on Monday, December 6, and Tuesday, December 7, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Wednesday, December 8, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Students who ordered their regalia after November 1 can pick up their regalia and tickets on Tuesday, December 7, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Wednesday, December 8, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. The Bookstore will not be responsible for unclaimed regalia or tickets after December 13, the last day of classes.

In addition to the ticketed seating in the RAC Arena, overflow seating will be available in Lecture Hall III, located in the Administration building, with a closed-circuit broadcast of the Commencement ceremony. Tickets will not be required at this location. When you pick up your tickets, please also indicate the number of additional guests (if any) that may need seating in this overflow area. We will use this information to plan for seating.

Special Accommodations Tickets

When you pick up your Commencement tickets from the Bookstore Graduation Center, you will be able to exchange up to two general admission tickets for special accommodations tickets. The second ticket will enable one family member or friend to sit with and assist the person requiring special accommodations. Special accommodations seating includes reserved seating for people with mobility or hearing impairments.
Guests
The front doors of the RAC Arena will open at 9 a.m. All guests entering the Arena must show their tickets. General admission tickets are for unassigned open seating on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Commencement procession begins at 9:40 a.m., at which time the doors to the RAC Arena will temporarily close. In observance of the National Anthem, guests will not be seated while the anthem is performed. When the doors reopen following the anthem, guests will be seated as space permits. Guests sitting in the overflow area should go to Lecture Hall III in the Administration building, where there will be a closed-circuit broadcast of the Commencement ceremony.

Parking
Please allow sufficient time to drive to campus, park and walk to the RAC Arena. Remember that rush hour traffic in the Baltimore area may be heavy, as the ceremony is being held on a weekday morning. Participants and guests are strongly encouraged to share rides to alleviate parking difficulties. Signs posted on campus will assist you in locating appropriate parking lots. General parking for graduates and their guests will be available along Hilltop Circle and in any non-gated parking lot, including The Commons Garage. You will not need to pay any metered parking on campus if you elect to park at a metered parking space during the Commencement ceremony. Parking is not permitted by fire hydrants or in fire lanes. The top deck of the Administration Drive Garage will be reserved for handicapped parking. Cars must display handicapped hang tags or license plates. Permits are required for other handicapped parking spaces on campus as well. There will be a designated drop-off area in front of the RAC on Administration Drive for those family members and guests who may not be able to walk long distances.

Inclement Weather
Please check the Commencement Web site for information regarding an inclement weather plan for the December 22 ceremony.

For the most reliable information during inclement weather, consult UMBC's homepage (www.umbc.edu) under the "Announcements" section or call the Hot line telephone number at 410-455-6789. Students may also look for information on myUMBC. Although the University distributes closing information to regional news outlets, do not depend on the news media for complete, accurate and up-to-date information. Be sure to consult UMBC’s homepage.

Office of the Registrar
The Office of the Registrar coordinates the undergraduate graduation application and review process. The application deadline has passed. The following timeline outlines the review process:

December 2010 Graduation Application Deadline
General Education and Major Department Review Notification of Graduation Status September 15 October 1–31 November 1–30

For questions regarding the graduation review process, contact the Office of the Registrar at 410-455-3158 or graduation@umbc.edu.

Change of Address
Please note that all graduation-related correspondence and diplomas will be mailed to the permanent address available in your student record. You may log into your myUMBC account and under “Profile” verify/update your address. For questions regarding updating your address, send an e-mail through the “Request Help” function of your myUMBC account or call 410-455-3158.

Diplomas
Undergraduate diplomas are not distributed at the ceremony. Instead, they will be mailed the week of February 15, 2011 to the permanent address available in your student record. If you have questions regarding your diploma, contact the Office of the Registrar at 410-455-3158 or graduation@umbc.edu.

Photos
Your friends and guests are welcome to bring cameras to the ceremony, however, the use of tripods for video and camera equipment is not permitted. Guests must stay in their seats to take photos. A professional photographer from Graduation Images will photograph each graduate during the ceremony. You will receive color proofs by mail within approximately two weeks after Commencement. If you wish to purchase prints, you may do so, but there is no obligation. Graduation Images’ contact information is 800-424-3686 or www.gradimages.com.

On Monday, December 6 through Wednesday, December 8, a professional photographer from Graduation Images will be available in the Bookstore Graduation Center to take formal portraits of graduation candidates in their regalia. There is no obligation to purchase the photographs.

Commemorative DVD
This is the day you’ve dreamed of, worked toward and eagerly anticipated. Now, you can revisit the memories of your 2010 commencement anytime you’d like and share the memories with those closest to you. To purchase a DVD copy of the graduation ceremony, please visit https://www.immediatweb.com/vpssecure/umbc/umbcwinter2010/default.aspx (after November 1) to order online from VPC, Inc. The deadline to order a copy of the ceremony will be January 31, 2011. If you have questions, contact VPC, Inc. at 410-526-9100, ext. 307. Order forms are available at the Bookstore and will be available at Commencement.

Alumni Association
As a graduate of UMBC, you are automatically a member of the Alumni Association. There are no dues or fees. We hope you will stay connected with your alumni friends, classmates and University associates through the many events, programs and services offered, especially through C-YA, our Chapter of Young Alumni. Stay informed of alumni activities and news by reading our monthly e-mail newsletter or by visiting Retrieved Net, our alumni online community, at www.umbc.edu/alumni. Once online, you may update your mailing address and check all the special alumni advantages you’re eligible for – from great rates on consumer services to short-term health care coverage. Congratulations on graduating, and welcome to the Alumni Association!

Career Services Center
The Career Services Center collects information on what UMBC students do with their degrees via the annual Graduating Student Report. Graduating students are asked to complete the short survey via e-mail or at cap and gown pick-up. Information collected allows the campus to compile relevant and recent data about employment offers, graduate/professional school acceptances, and salary averages to share with faculty, employers and perhaps most importantly, current and future UMBC students.

Check out www.careers.umbc.edu for a comprehensive view of programs, events and opportunities to find employment or to assist with the graduate school application process. For more information, e-mail careers@umbc.edu or call 410-455-2216.

For More Information
For general information, please visit the Commencement website at www.umbc.edu/commencement.

If you have specific questions regarding the Undergraduate Commencement ceremony, contact Laura Arnwine in the Office of Institutional Advancement at 410-455-5897 or lmarnwine@umbc.edu.

Alumni House: 410-455-ALUM
Bookstore: 410-455-3807 or dupree@umbc.edu
Office of the Registrar: 410-455-3158 or graduation@umbc.edu