

June 10, 2024

Dear soon-to-be graduates, families, friends and DU community members,

Graduation Weekend 2024 is nearly here, and commencement is always a treasured event for the University of Denver community. This spring's celebration, however, holds an extra special meaning for many in the class of 2024 who were not able to experience either their in-person high school graduations or baccalaureate degree ceremonies due to the pandemic.

Graduation is a momentous occasion and wonderful opportunity to honor each of our undergraduate and graduate students, and we are excited to celebrate their tremendous accomplishments. We also gather to honor and show deep appreciation for those who have supported their students' journeys, including family, friends, faculty, staff and the generous donors who provided many otherwise unattainable opportunities.

While we have been saddened to witness similar celebrations disrupted and even canceled at other universities this spring, we have also learned from those experiences. As a result, DU is implementing a robust operations and security plan to address any potential issues and help ensure the focus remains where it should - celebrating our amazing graduates and all they have accomplished.

Please review the following updates and information regarding DU's graduation ceremonies.

Ticketing and Security

- Tickets are required for all family and guests to attend all DU commencement ceremonies. Graduating students do not need a ticket.
- All graduating students, guests and attendees will enter through security stations with magnetometers.
- Graduates' robes must be unzipped while proceeding through security.
- To maximize security efficiency and safety, we strongly encourage guests to use 1) clear bags and/or 2) wristlets, clutches or wallets measuring no larger than 4.5 x 6.5 inches. Please limit belongings to only items needed during the ceremony. All bags are subject to search.
- Prohibited items include: **artificial noise makers** including instruments, air horns, cow bells, whistles, vuvuzelas, etc.; animals (excluding service animals); balloons; balls; **banners**; bottles and cans; candles or open flames; confetti; coolers; derogatory/defamatory clothing; firearms or weapons of any kind; fireworks; **flags**; flyers and handouts; frisbees or other projectiles; glitter; laser pens or laser products of any type; outside food and beverage of any kind; poles and sticks; projectiles; selfie sticks; **signs**; ski or non-medical masks (medical masks are permitted); tents; umbrellas; and anything else that would interfere with other guests' ability to see, hear and enjoy the ceremony.

The Ritchie Center and Events Staff reserves the right to determine other items as unacceptable upon entry. Further, the Ritchie Center cannot store any prohibited items for guests. Guests will be asked to dispose of

prohibited items before entering or return those items to their vehicles. Security may deny access to any individual who does not comply.

Academic Regalia and Accessories

- Degree candidates must wear proper and complete academic regalia.
- Degree candidates are permitted to wear accessories including cords, pins, sashes, stoles, and/or tassels that have been awarded by their academic unit or student organization. These accessories designate achievement, leadership, membership, or service.
- Degree candidates are not permitted to carry or display flags.
- Degree candidates are not permitted to carry or display signs.
- Degree candidates are permitted to decorate their mortarboards.

Free Expression and Disruption

The University of Denver strongly supports freedom of expression and civil discourse. Graduation ceremonies honoring students and their families, however, are neither the time nor place for disruptive or disrespectful demonstrations. The University has designated a free speech area outside of the Ritchie Center and encourages anyone who wishes to engage in expressive activity to do so there. Any such activity inside the Ritchie Center may not disrupt the ceremony or prevent others from enjoying it.

- Community members who do not adhere to University policies are subject to disciplinary actions, and anyone who disrupts the ceremony could be asked to leave.
- All students, including those graduating, remain subject to the Student Honor Code; violations of the Code can result in disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion. Degrees would be held pending the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings.

A Time for Celebration

To ensure graduating students, and their families and friends, can experience the celebration they so deeply deserve, the University is preparing to address any disruptions. However, we fully expect a wonderful day honoring our extraordinary graduates.

For those who cannot join in person, live streams will be available on the [commencement website](#), where you can also find answers to many graduation weekend questions.

Commencement is the culmination of graduates' time at the University of Denver – a time to reflect on the knowledge and experiences gained and to look ahead to exciting new opportunities fueled by a DU education. We look forward to celebrating the Class of 2024, all they have accomplished and all they have yet to achieve.