Main Commencement Ceremony
Saturday, May 14, 2016 • 10:00 a.m.
William & Mary Hall

This is the only formal Commencement held by William & Mary each year. The university-wide ceremony includes the Commencement address, hooding of honorary degree recipients, and the presentation of prizes and awards. Commencement is in two parts – the main Commencement Ceremony and the Departmental Events/Ceremonies.

Degree candidates eligible to participate (degree candidates must meet all academic eligibility requirements in order to participate in the May Commencement):

Undergraduates: January 2016, May 2016, August 2016

Graduate level: August 2015 (MA, MS, PHD, EDD), January and May 2016
(All degrees) August 2015 (MBA, MAED in CI, JD, LLM only)

Degree candidates in the above categories will receive information by email about preparing for and participating in Commencement Weekend.

Main Commencement Ceremony

- Tickets are required for admittance to the ceremony.
- Doors to William & Mary Hall open at 8:00 a.m.
- The Academic Procession begins at 10:00 a.m.
- Graduating students do not receive diplomas at the main ceremony.
- Doctoral degrees are the only degree candidates called to the stage and individually recognized at this ceremony.
- All other degrees are conferred upon graduates in groups by major.
- Please do not bring balloons, signs, or other such items to the Hall.
- Concessions will be sold at the Hall prior to the start of the ceremony.
- William & Mary Hall can get quite chilly – we suggest you bring a sweater or jacket.
- Items prohibited in W&M Hall
- There is no rehearsal for the main ceremony.

The ceremony should conclude around 12:30 p.m.

SATURDAY Departmental Events

Graduate-level Programs:
Business, Education, and Marine Science will have diploma ceremonies.

Global Studies, International Relations & Public Policy:
Due to the large number of majors and faculty involved in Global Studies (GS), International Relations (IR), and Public Policy, special recognition events for these majors are on Saturday immediately following the main ceremony. (No diplomas are presented at Saturday events). On Sunday, there is no formal ceremony for GS, IR, or Public Policy. These graduates will pick up their diplomas at the Wren Building on Sunday morning.

Undergraduate Degree Candidates in Interdisciplinary Programs:
Students who major in Africana Studies, Environmental Science, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Literary and Cultural Studies, and Neuroscience may choose any department's ceremony to attend on Sunday to receive their diploma. Students must indicate their ceremony preference when they register in February.

SUNDAY Departmental Events

Most schools and departments will hold individual ceremonies. Graduating student's names are called and diplomas are presented at that time. Departmental events offer graduating students and guests the opportunity to celebrate with faculty and fellow students in their major. If the student is not in attendance, they will receive an email from the Registrar's office regarding their diploma sometime in the week following the ceremony. Typically, departmental ceremonies do not require tickets. You should, however, check with the individual department to find out if they have any seating limitations.

Undergraduate Degree Candidates with Double Majors:
Undergraduates who have two majors may choose only one departmental ceremony to attend on Sunday. Double-majors must indicate their ceremony preference when they register in February.

Commencement Weekend is an exciting time for everyone to celebrate the achievements of our graduating students and to experience William & Mary’s rich Commencement traditions.
Why is registration required?
Given the number of graduates and the seating capacity of the Hall, we must limit the number of guest tickets. Our registration process assists us in guaranteeing all of our graduates have an equal opportunity for a certain number of tickets, while adhering to the seating capacity of our venue. Graduating students are required to register to participate in and receive guest tickets to the main ceremony at William and Mary Hall. Registration takes place for one month during February-March. Only graduating students who have filed a Notice of Candidacy with the University Registrar are will be permitted to register and receive tickets.

Any degree candidate who does not register by the deadline and then requests tickets later - will be handled on a case-by-case basis — we cannot guarantee those who miss the registration deadline will receive the full allotment of tickets to the main ceremony.

Tips for the Main Ceremony

Tickets are required for admission to the W&M Hall ceremony.
We recognize that some students will not be able to secure enough tickets for everyone to attend the main ceremony. We recommend guests without tickets to the main ceremony tickets utilize one of the live streaming locations in the Sadler Center or the Mason School of Business.

Students may exchange tickets for free but the buying and selling of Commencement tickets is strictly prohibited by the College.

Distribution of Commencement Tickets:
Commencement tickets are handed out on campus in late April to graduating students who have completed the Commencement Registration on time. Only the student may pick-up their tickets and a photo ID is required. Graduate students and working students who are unable to pick-up their tickets on a weekday will have the opportunity to pick them up on a designated Saturday. Tickets are not automatically mailed to families.

Students participating in the ceremony do not need a ticket for themselves. Children ages two and under who can sit on an adult’s lap do not need tickets. Children aged three and over must have a ticket and sit in a seat.

Graduates who have already left campus may request to have their tickets mailed and will be notified of the process in the spring.

ADA Accommodations at the Main Ceremony

The main entrances to William & Mary Hall are located on the concourse level and have a significant number of steps to access the doors. Once inside the building, there can also be a number of steps to access general seating.

Special accommodations are as follows:

- Special tickets are required for these sections and are part of (not in addition to) a student's regular allotment of tickets and must be requested in advance. (A form to make your request will be available in February).
- One person may accompany the guest in the wheelchair and sit alongside them in this section –2 tickets out of the allotment of 4 will be issued for these sections. Other members of the party should use the main entrances and sit in general admission seating.
- To access this special seating you should request a Vehicle Access Pass (described below) for drop off at the back ramp at the Hall.

Wheelchair Seating — Floor level:
The College does not provide wheelchairs, but there is a list of available rental options on the Commencement website.

Limited-Mobility Seating — Lower level seating:
Please note this section requires the negotiation of approximately 3-10 small steps.

American Sign Language:
ASL interpretation is provided at the Baccalaureate Service and main ceremony. A section of seats is reserved for these guests. The ramp entrance offers the easiest access to the ASL section. Ushers at that entrance will direct guests to the appropriate seats.

Vehicle Access to Handicapped Ramp (Main Ceremony-Saturday only):
This pass allows you access to the handicapped ramp at the back of W&M Hall. The road around the Hall (Brooks Street) will be turned one-way. Only vehicles with this pass will be allowed to enter and drive to the ramp. After dropping off, the drivers should proceed to general parking, enter W&M Hall through the main entrances, and sit in general admission seating. A map showing the route around W&M Hall is available on the Commencement website. Please note: The Vehicle Access Pass does not authorize you to park in handicapped spaces. For that, you must have a state-issued handicapped decal, plate, etc.
Diplomas and Latin Honors

The University Registrar’s Office is responsible for the preparation of diplomas. They arrange for delivery to the departments for presentation. Diplomas indicate the degree a student is receiving (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, etc.), but not specific majors and minors. Diplomas are written in Latin.

A graduating student’s final GPA is not tabulated until all grades are certified. Due to the timing of final grades in May, most grades are not certified until just before Commencement. Because of this William & Mary does not issue Honor Cords. It is not possible to ensure the distribution of cords to all eligible students in time for the main ceremony.

Latin Honors are awarded to undergraduates on their overall grade point average (GPA) as follows:
- 3.50 - 3.64 -- cum laude
- 3.65 - 3.79 -- magna cum laude
- 3.80 or higher -- summa cum laude

Regalia (Caps, Gowns, etc.)

Graduates participating in Commencement must wear the College-approved regalia. Undergraduate and Master’s regalia consist of a robe, a cap, a tassel, and a hood with colors indicating the graduate’s degree.

**Doctoral degree candidates:** The William & Mary doctoral regalia consist of a green open-front robe, patterned after those used at Oxford University, and a black velvet tam. Hoods are not worn with Oxford-style robes. A white shirt/blouse with black slacks/skirt should be worn under the robe. The doctoral gown and tam are available for either rent or purchase.

**Undergraduate and Master’s:** Regalia are available for purchase only; there is no rental option. Undergraduate robes are black with a green strip on the sleeve. The robe style was changed in 2009 therefore; robes prior to that year may not be worn. Masters robes are black with a plain black sleeve.

The W&M Bookstore is the primary contact for regalia and other graduation-related items. They work with Jostens for W&M rings and official graduation announcements. No other company is authorized to use the College’s name and logo. Contact the Bookstore at 757-253-4900 x239 with questions.

**Regalia purchasing events at the WM Bookstore:**

**Undergraduates and Master’s Degree Candidates:**
- March 22 from 11-6
- March 23 from 10-4

**Law Degree Candidates:** Law School lobby on March 16 from 10 am to 4 pm

**Doctoral Degree Candidates:** call or visit the W&M Bookstore to place a rental or purchase order. Deadline for ordering doctoral regalia is typically in April. Late fees may apply.

Dressing for the Weekend

We encourage you to dress comfortably for the weekend taking weather conditions into account. There are no formal expectations for what guests should wear during the weekend.

Type of dress for underneath the robe is up to the graduating student, although we suggest business or business-casual attire.

Other Major Weekend Events

**Baccalaureate Service:** this multi-faith service is planned by the Senior Class and Campus Ministers United (a group representing several major faith traditions). The service consists of music, readings, and prayers, as well as an address by an invited speaker. Graduates sit with their families for this service and no regalia are worn by degree candidates. (Friday)

**Candlelight Ceremony:** brief remarks are given by a student, professor, and administrator chosen by the Senior Class. **Families are welcome to attend, be advised there are no chairs for seating at this event.** The Candlelight Ceremony is an opportunity for the senior class to celebrate and reflect on their time at the College. (Friday)

**Walk Across Campus:** degree candidates gather in front of the Wren Building for a final walk across campus together. Degree candidates will gather at the Wren Building at 8:45 a.m. The walk concludes at William and Mary Hall. The route the students follow is available on the Commencement website. All guests attending the main ceremony in W&M Hall should be seated by 9:45 a.m. if you plan to watch any of the walk across campus please plan accordingly. (Saturday)

**New Graduate Reception, Alumni Induction Ceremony:** This ceremony formally welcomes students into the family of William & Mary alumni. New grads will receive alumni pins and sign the Class of 2016 banner. (Saturday)
Parking

Allow plenty of time for parking on Saturday. Starting on Friday, families and guests may park in any space on campus marked Faculty/Staff, Resident Student, or Day Student.

Parking NOT permitted in the following areas:
- Fire lanes
- No Parking zones
- Handicapped spaces (requires a state-issued permit)
- Reserved for spaces
- Official Vehicle spaces
- Service Vehicle spaces

These regulations are enforced 7 days/week, 24 hours/day. Visitors are expected to pay attention to all temporary signs related to parking restrictions on campus.

City of Williamsburg: the streets surrounding the campus are controlled by the City at all times. Parking in residential areas is enforced using color-coded decals. Do not park on streets that require a resident decal. Visitors should pay attention to all signs related to parking restrictions on city streets.

Handicapped plates and hangtags from any state are valid for the purpose of parking in handicapped-designated spaces on campus. Accessible parking can be found in various locations and is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Most lots on campus have some designated handicapped parking spaces.

The Walk Across Campus will block traffic on Ukrop Way beginning around 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. Plan to arrive early to avoid delays. Once the lots around W&M Hall are full, cars will be directed to the parking deck on Ukrop Way near Miller and Adair Halls (approximately a 10-minute walk from W&M Hall).

Miscellaneous

Dining on Campus: W&M Catering & Dining Services will offer pre-ordered lunches for families and guests on Commencement Saturday! Pre-ordered lunches will be available in the Commons Dining Hall immediately following the main ceremony until 2:00pm. Order form available in March.

Want to surprise your grad with flowers? Flowers are available through pre-order. There will be a vendor at on Commencement morning outside of W&M Hall (starting at 8 a.m.) Assorted bouquets will be available.

Hotel and Dining Reservations: Commencement takes place during the tourist season. We urge families to make and confirm reservations well ahead of time. If you plan to eat dinner in town, we strongly recommend that you make reservations in advance.

Suggestions for booking local accommodations:
- Williamsburg Hotel-Motel Association toll-free at 800-446-9244 or visiting www.gowilliamsburg.com
- Colonial Williamsburg Foundation toll-free 1-800-HISTORY, 757-229-2141 - or www.colonialwilliamsburg.com

Questions – Who to Contact

Graduation Requirements
Email wdurba@wm.edu Office of the Registrar at 757-221-2807

Commencement Events and General Information
Email commencement@wm.edu Office of Student Affairs 757-221-1236

Inclement Weather During Commencement Weekend
Call 757-221-3888 or check the Commencement website in case of inclement weather

Resources

Commencement Website: www.wm.edu/commencement
Commencement Schedule: Commencement 2016 Schedule
Campus Map: Map
Handicapped Parking: Handicapped Parking Map
Walk Across Campus: Walk Across Campus Route
Vehicle Access Route: Vehicle Access Route - W&M Hall
W&M Hall: W&M Hall Seating Chart

Available on the website in March - Forms:
Lunch on Campus • ADA Seating Accommodations • Flower Orders