

BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

DIRECTORY OF POLICY STATEMENTS

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Date: May 2021

Subject: Commencement

Commencement is a ceremony to acknowledge and celebrate student degree completion. The intent of the following is to provide consistent and clear definitions and information for the Buffalo State College community regarding Commencement and to support students' successful progress toward graduation. This policy clarifies differences between Commencement and graduation and serves as a resource in developing and updating administrative policies and procedures that identify eligible candidates and support the planning and execution of the annual Commencement ceremonies.

Participation in the Commencement ceremony does not necessarily constitute graduation. Commencement is the public celebration of that accomplishment, but it is a ceremony, not the actual graduation itself.

A Commencement Committee, appointed by the college president, is responsible for advising the president, provost, and other appropriate college administrators on matters pertaining to Commencement. The Registrar's Office is responsible and maintains undergraduate and graduate student academic records (which are used to determine eligibility). Commencement procedures and protocol are outlined and executed by administrative offices including Academic Affairs, Events Management, Information Technology, the Graduate School, and the Registrar's Office.

Definitions:

- Graduation: Occurs when the Registrar's Office or the Graduate School completes a successful degree audit and awards the degree.
- Graduation Term: Refers to the academic semester of graduation or degree application for graduation: August (summer), December (fall), January (J-Term), or May (spring).
- Graduating Class: Includes recent graduates and current degree applicants who are eligible to participate in Commencement according to the Commencement Ceremony Eligibility Policy and academic standing.
- Commencement: The annual ceremony that honors the current graduating class.
- Level: Undergraduate or graduate student.

Eligibility

Undergraduate Commencement is for students who graduated in August or December of the previous calendar year or January of the current calendar year, as well as current May bachelor's degree candidates. Undergraduate students who have earned 101 credits will be invited and must accept the invitation in order to participate.

Undergraduate students who have not met the aforementioned eligibility requirements for Commencement but are interested in participating with the current graduating class may apply to participate for early Commencement if they have 90 earned credits by the spring

degree application deadline. When applying, the student should demonstrate a realistic and achievable plan for completing the remaining required credits for graduation by the end of the following summer session. A committee will review applications for early participation in Commencement and notify students of a decision.

The Graduate School Commencement is for graduate students who graduated in August or December of the previous calendar year or January of the current year, as well as current May and August candidates for master's degrees, certificates of advanced study, and graduate certificates. Graduate students will be eligible to participate in the current Commencement ceremony when they have achieved the aforementioned graduation or candidacy status.

The degrees recognized during Commencement are as follows:

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Fine Arts
- Bachelor of Music
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Science in Education
- Master of Arts
- Master of Music
- Master of Public Administration
- Master of Science
- Master of Science in Education
- Certificate of Advanced Study
- Graduate Certificate