COMMENCEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
PROTOCOL FOR COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE

This commencement exercise signals for all of us the culmination of your formal undergraduate education and training at Florida A&M University. This is a very happy, even joyous occasion. However, it is also a formal ceremony which evokes and exudes dignity, respect, pomp and circumstance. Therefore, it is requested, that you adhere to this list of “Do’s and Don’ts.”

**DO’s**

- Moderate your behavioral manifestations of joy – Applaud and laugh when appropriate.
- Act responsibly – Make your parents, administrators and faculty proud.
- Wear appropriate informal attire/footwear – See Dress Code below.
- Display respect for others – Keep quiet during speakers and performances, and applaud at the appropriate time. Program participants are guests at our University.
- Turn off all pagers, cell phones, iPods, iPads, tablets, video games, entertainment consoles and PDA devices prior to entering the Arena.
- Refrain from using cell phones and texting during the Commencement program. Ringing cell phones or alert signals are a distraction; even one ringing cell phone can be disruptive to the program.
- Use restrooms prior to the beginning of the commencement exercise.
- Arrange to have a pre-designated site and time to meet your family members and guests at the conclusion of the Commencement. It will facilitate finding your guests more quickly.

**DON’Ts**

- Don’t bring large bags, packages and other oversized articles into the Lawson Center. Bottles, alcoholic beverages of any kind are prohibited and will not be permitted inside Bragg Stadium or the Lawson Center.
- Don’t bring valuables the day of the event to the Lawson Center.
- Don’t dance (any type) on or off stage – No fraternity/sorority stomps or handshakes, or whistles. Greek paraphernalia is allowed unless the organization is on probation or suspension.
- Don’t wear sneakers/tennis shoes/sandals, etc.
✓ Don’t bring alcoholic beverages to the Center (NO INTOXICATION will be tolerated. VIOLATERS will be escorted from the arena floor).
✓ Don’t leave the arena floor during the commencement exercises unless absolutely necessary – Emergencies only.
✓ Don’t talk during the program.
✓ Don’t stand in the chairs.

**DRESS CODE FOR GRADUATES**

Please note that appropriate attire is mandatory. Graduates must be dressed in full regalia, including mortar board.

- **Females:** Black or dark dresses (no pants), closed-in black or dark pumps (no sandals, sneakers or beach shoes) and small earrings and skin tone or black hosiery.
- **Males:** Dark pants, white shirt and black/dark shoes (no sneakers, boots, sandals, etc.)
- **Candidates for Master, Ph.D or Law Degrees:** Same as above but all males must wear a black or dark jacket.

**PARKING FOR COMMENCEMENT**

Parking will be permitted at Bragg Stadium, the Parking Garage, as well as adjacent University parking lots. Reserved disabled parking is available in the Gaither Gym parking lot only for those drivers with appropriate DMV Disability Parking Placard on their vehicle.

Campus parking will be extremely limited, please make all necessary transportation arrangements to arrive at the Alfred Lawson Jr. Multipurpose Center and Teaching Gymnasium on time. Carpool when possible. Obey all parking restrictions; illegally parked cars will be subject to ticketing and/or towing.

Late arriving prospective graduates will not be allowed to “cut” or break into the Academic Processional once it has begun. They will be seated after the Academic Processional is completed on a space available basis; and it may not be possible for late arriving prospective graduates to be seated with their respective school or college. We strongly encourage all prospective graduates to arrive early.

Prospective graduates are asked to observe all instructions given by the University, Faculty, Staff and Marshals. Additional instruction and assistance will also be provided by ushers, event staff and volunteer personnel. It is very important that decorum be maintained at Bragg Stadium and in the Al Lawson Center during the Academic Processional assembly at all times.
In the unlikely event of an emergency, follow the direction of the FAMU Police Department, Event Staff, volunteers, ushers, and marshals. Always remember to “walk,” not run, to the nearest designated exit whether in the commencement area.

**LAST MINUTE REMINDERS TO GRADUATES**

1. Name cards -- must have one. Keep and give your name card to the Registrar or her assistant as you proceed on the stage. **Make sure you are properly robed. See volunteers for assistance.**

2. Cell phones must be turned off or placed on silent.

3. Remain courteous and attentive to the speakers at all times.

4. No dancing or shouting on or off stage. – Let’s respect each person right to have his/her moment in the spotlight with no distractions.

5. As you enter the arena and proceed to your seats – please maintain arm’s length distance from the person in front of and behind you. If you stretch your arms out and can touch that person’s back then you are walking to close. This will allow the Marshals sufficient time to align/place you with the proper row of seats.

6. **Undergraduates**, your tassels should be on the right side of your mortar board as you enter the arena; **Graduates (Masters and Ph.Ds.)** your tassels should stay and remain on the left side. Your hoods should be over your left arm.

7. All men should remove your mortar boards from your head during the playing of the Star Spangled Banner as well as the mediation and benediction. Immediately return mortar boards to your head after the benediction.