

UNIVERSITY OF SAINT FRANCIS

COMMENCEMENT INFORMATION 2026

GENERAL INFO: SF holds one commencement annually, with commencement always held on the first Saturday of May.

- Commencement is a celebration of degree conferral for degree earners who complete their curriculum in the prior September through August of the same academic year as the ceremony. The ceremony celebrates degrees from associate to doctorate. Students earning certificates only do not participate in the commencement ceremony.
 - Academic programs or divisions may hold smaller ceremonies before commencement for special recognition and pinning. Often, special cords will be distributed at these ceremonies.
- Please refer to the Commencement website [online](#). After reviewing this entire document and the website, additional questions about the commencement ceremony may be directed to the Registrar's Office at 260-399-8061 or registrar@sf.edu.
- **The Graduation Application:** (Colleague Self-Service > Graduation Overview) should have been completed by February 27. A separate application is required for each degree being earned, so those earning two or three degrees need to fill out the application multiple times. The Graduation Application is the form that allows a student's courses to be audited by the Registrar's Office and then to confer the degree. The form is not registering attendance for the graduation ceremony. There is no registration needed to attend the Baccalaureate Mass or Commencement. Those who do not complete the Graduation Application by the February 27 deadline might not have their name printed in the commencement program but can still attend all graduation-related events. Questions about the Graduation Application can be directed to the Registrar's Office at 260-399-8061 or registrar@sf.edu.
- **Cap and Gown (Regalia) orders:** Orders have a deadline early in the spring semester (February 20), with pick-up available several weeks before graduation. Those who missed the ordering deadline or received incorrect items may contact the campus bookstore (260-399-8075). There is a regalia FAQ website available [online](#). A bookstore representative will be at the commencement ceremony check-in to solve last-minute issues.

BACCALAUREATE MASS BEFORE COMMENCEMENT: At Baccalaureate Mass, we begin our graduation celebrations by giving thanks to God and asking for His blessing upon the graduates. Graduates of any degree type and their families are welcome and encouraged to attend, regardless of faith tradition.

- The location will be the North Campus Auditorium, located on campus.
- Students should wear their graduation attire (caps, gowns, hoods, cords) and arrive at 4:30 p.m. EST, 30 minutes before the start of the 5 p.m. EST service. Registration is not required for students.
- Students will line up in the North Campus gym.
- The Mass will be immediately followed by an hors d'oeuvres reception where graduates and families are invited to celebrate their accomplishments with university administration, faculty, and staff.
- More information may be found [online](#) (Baccalaureate Mass details need to be added here.).
- There is no limit on the number of guests that can attend. Registration is not required for guests.

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY: Commencement is at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum (4000 Parnell Avenue, Fort Wayne, Indiana)

- **Arrival:** Students should arrive at the glass doors at the top of the escalators near the main entrance between 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. EST for check-in, paperwork, and line-up. No pre-registration is required to attend commencement.
- **Guest Arrival:** Arena doors open to guests at 12:30 p.m. EST. The ceremony begins at 2:00 p.m. EST. There is no limit to the number of guests that can attend. There is no registration requirement for guests.
- **Student Special Needs:** Students with specific needs (e.g., elevator use, escort/guide) should contact the Registrar's Office at 260-399-8061 or registrar@sf.edu at least two weeks in advance to coordinate assistance and preview maps of the Coliseum.
- **Guest Special Needs:** On commencement day, family members with specific needs (e.g., wheelchair seating, hearing assistance devices, or deaf interpreters) can be assisted by Coliseum ushers. Sign language interpreters will be stationed on the right side of the stage. No prior arrangements are needed.
- **Parking:** Coliseum parking is \$8 per standard vehicle for students and their guests. Only cash is accepted so please arrive prepared. The Coliseum parking lot is quite large, and it may be a long walk to the check-in destination. Please consider wearing sensible shoes. Graduates might want to pick up a pair of \$1 flipflops that can be comfortable and useful, then leave them behind once the procession begins.
- **Guest Seating:** Facing the stage, bachelor's degree candidates will sit on the left side of the arena. Doctoral, master's, and associate degree candidates will sit on the right side of the arena. Students will line up on the left side of the stage and cross the stage from left to right. Guests will need this information to determine on which side of the arena to sit.
- **Shoes:** Between line-up, the processional, the ceremony, and the recessional, students will be standing for about 2½ hours. Comfortable shoes are wise. Students could change into preferred footwear about 15 minutes before entering the arena. Temporary footwear should be disposable, as there is nowhere to safely store items.
- **Belongings:** There is nowhere to leave a purse or bag. If items do not fit under a graduation gown, please leave them at home. Flat crossbody bags and small fanny packs are great for graduation day.
- **Concessions:** Please eat before arriving at the Coliseum. Concessions will not be open. Bottled water will be available to students (but not guests).

STUDENT CHECK-IN/LINE-UP: At the check-in table, students will receive the cards they need as they walk across the stage.

- **Media Release:** Each student will be asked to complete a Media Release form upon check-in.
- **Gray Card:** Please verify that your contact information listed is correct. Please update the card as needed. This card is for professional photographers and will be collected before crossing the stage.
- **White Card:** There will be one **white card** per student showing all degrees being earned. Names and honors will be announced for each individual graduate. Majors, minors, and certificates are not announced during commencement.
 - **Honors:** The white card will identify honors. The cumulative GPA designations for *Cum Laude*, *Magna Cum Laude*, and *Summa Cum Laude* are for undergraduates only. These honors are for cumulative GPAs of over 3.5, 3.7, and 3.9, respectively.
 - **Pronunciation:** On the white cards, students may write a phonetic pronunciation of their name if it is difficult to say or often mispronounced.
 - **Career Information:** Career questions will be a part of the media release QR code to be completed before lining up. Paper copies of the form will also be available.

- **Undergraduate students:** Those with *Cum Laude*, *Magna Cum Laude*, and *Summa Cum Laude* designations should pick up their gold honor cords at the cord table, near the check-in table. This cord should be wrapped securely on the left arm (loop it through itself). During the ceremony, when their name is read on stage, the cord will be draped around the student's neck by the vice president.
 - All other earned cords (from clubs, societies, minors, governance, etc.) should already be around the neck during line-up and the entire ceremony. Stoles are not permitted.
 - Graduate students are not eligible for honor cords.
- **Graduate Students:** May view a tutorial [online](#) to learn how to wear a graduate hood (cowl). Fellow students and line-up staff can help before the ceremony begins to ensure hoods are correct. Doctoral students will be hooded on the stage. Master's students should be wearing hoods throughout the ceremony.
- **Tassels:** Should hang on the right side of the cap for undergraduate students. After all students have crossed the stage, there will be a "Turning of the Tassel" event. Technically, graduate students have already had a turning of the tassel event previously when earning their undergraduate degree, and therefore can begin commencement with their tassels already on the left and not participate in the Turning of the Tassel. Or they are welcome to join in the turning ceremony.
- **Line-up Area:** There will be a row of chairs for students circling the hallway surrounding the arena. Students are responsible for reviewing the easels placed throughout the hall that indicate where to sit to be in the proper order for the processional into the arena. These easels show degrees (and majors) for each cluster of seats as well as student names. Students will need to review the information on the easels to determine their individual line-up area.

THE CEREMONY: The commencement ceremony begins at 2:00 p.m. with the processional march through the entire length of the arena.

- Often, the arena is still on ice for hockey season, so the walking surface may be a **false floor** of painted plywood over the ice. Feet may feel cold due to the ice, so closed-toed shoes may be more comfortable, and shoes with socks even warmer.
- Students will have **two professional photographs** taken during commencement. Register before the day of commencement to receive a coupon code for 20% off your purchase of \$50 or more. See the [website](#) for details.

CONGRATULATIONS, and we look forward to seeing you on commencement day!!