



2017 Commencement Exercise and Hooding Ceremony Information Packet

Spring 2017 Graduates

MEMORANDUM
February 16, 2017

TO: SPRING 2017 GRADUATES

FROM: Claudine Beale
Assistant Director of Advancement & Alumni Affairs

RE: Commencement and Hooding Ceremonies

Congratulations to you as you draw near to the completion of your program requirements for the Juris Doctor degree!

The following information has been compiled in an effort to answer the most frequently asked questions concerning the plans for Spring 2017 Commencement Exercise, the Hooding Ceremony and other related matters. It is important that you read this information and keep this packet for future reference. Also, there are forms that you will need to complete and submit online to the Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs by the dates indicated.

If you have any additional questions about the ceremony, or about any other aspect of your graduation, please do not hesitate to contact me at claudine.beale@famu.edu or (407) 254-3266.

The first six items must be completed by all graduating students. The seventh item must be completed by all students who received federal financial aid during their program of law study. Please pay close attention to the dates indicated in order to meet the various deadlines. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. **Dean's Certification for the Florida Board of Bar Examiners.** The Registrar's Office will complete the Dean's Certification for the Florida Board of Bar Examiners for all graduates taking the Florida Bar Exam. If you are taking the bar exam in a state other than Florida, you will need to provide the Registrar's Office with the Dean's Certification form for that state **as soon as possible but no later than Monday, April 24, 2017.**
2. **Complete the NALP Employment Graduate Survey Form.** The College of Law is required to track and report information about the employment of our students after graduation. The collection of this information is extremely important as we seek to maintain full accreditation by the American Bar Association. Please complete the NALP employment survey by logging on to <https://law-famu-csm.symphlicity.com> **as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, April 7, 2017.**

Please e-mail Yhonsha Rue in the Office of Career Planning & Placement at yhonsha.rue@famu.edu if you have difficulty accessing your account.

Note: *Failure to complete this form could result in a hold on your graduation regalia.*

3. **Complete the Commencement Exercise/Hooding Ceremony Participation Form.** In order for us to plan appropriately, we need to have an accurate count of the number of students who intend to participate in either the Commencement Exercise or the Hooding Ceremony. Please complete and submit online **as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, April 7, 2017.**
4. **Complete the Graduating Student Name Form.** Please complete and submit the name form online **as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, April 7, 2017.** The form is designed to help you provide the phonetic spelling/pronunciation of your name so that it can be called correctly during the ceremonies.
5. **Complete the Graduate Contact Form.** Please complete and submit the address update form online **as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, April 7, 2017.**
6. **Complete the University's Exit Survey.** All graduating students must complete the University's Exit Survey as part of the graduation process. The window for the survey will tentatively open the first week in April for Spring 2017 graduates. The survey can be found at www.famu.edu/exitsurvey and will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. After you have completed the survey, the computer system will assign you a confirmation receipt. Please keep a copy for your files. You do not need to provide a copy to the Registrar's Office.
7. **Complete a Financial Aid Exit Counseling Session.** Federal regulations require that all students who borrowed either Subsidized or Unsubsidized Federal Student Loans while attending the College of Law complete an exit counseling session by accessing the following website: <https://studentloans.gov>. You must do this **as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, April 28, 2017.** Once the exit counseling is complete, you are advised to print a copy for your records.

What is the official Graduation date?

The official University Graduation date is Saturday, April 29, 2017. At any time that your OFFICIAL date of graduation is required, (e.g., for purposes of bar application, etc.) please note that April 29, 2017 is the date that will appear on your transcript as the date the degree was awarded.

While the University graduates students three times each year--in the Fall, Spring and Summer--the law school coordinates only one Hooding Ceremony, which is held each year at the end of the Spring Semester. As such, all graduates from the Fall 2016, Spring 2017 and Summer 2017 semesters are eligible to participate in the 2017 Hooding Ceremony.

Where will the Commencement be held?

The University's campus-wide Spring Commencement Exercise will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2017, at FAMU's Alfred Lawson, Jr., Multi-Purpose Center Teaching Gymnasium, 1800 Wahnish Way, on main campus in Tallahassee, FL. It is at this ceremony that degrees are officially conferred by the University's President. The College of Law will be included among the group of colleges for whom the ceremony will be held in the afternoon. The University's afternoon Commencement Exercise will begin at 2:00 p.m. and is expected to last approximately two hours.

If you will have completed all requirements for graduation by the end of the 2017 Spring Semester, you are eligible to participate in the University's Spring Commencement Exercise on April 29. While the University's Commencement will be held in the middle of the College of Law's exam period, students who wish to participate in the Commencement are strongly encouraged to do so.

How will students line-up at Commencement?

All graduating students who plan to participate in the University's Commencement must arrive at the Teaching Gymnasium by 12:30 p.m. University staff will be there to assist you with robe and lining up. You will begin to line up for the processional at 1:00 p.m. The processional will begin promptly at 1:40 p.m. The Ceremony will begin promptly at 2:00 p.m.

Will I get my diploma at the Commencement?

No, official graduation documents are not presented at the Commencement. However, empty diploma covers will be distributed to you as you walk across the stage at the Commencement.

Once it has been determined that a candidate has satisfactorily fulfilled all degree requirements and has been approved by the College of Law faculty, the University will have a diploma ordered and mailed to the law school approximately eight – ten weeks after the ceremony. Graduates will be notified when the diplomas are ready. You may elect to pick up the diploma in person or to have the diploma mailed to your permanent address on file in the Registrar's Office. Please note that all financial obligations must also be fulfilled in order to be eligible to receive a diploma.

Where will the Hooding Ceremony be held?

The College of Law will have a Hooding Ceremony in Orlando on Saturday, May 20, 2017. The Hooding Ceremony will be held at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, 445 S. Magnolia Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801.

The speaker for the Hooding Ceremony is TBA.

The Hooding Ceremony will begin at 10:00 a.m. and should last approximately 1 ½ hours. You will be expected to arrive by 8:30 a.m. for check-in.

If you will have completed all requirements for graduation by the end of the 2016 Fall Semester, or the end of 2017 Spring Semester, or the end of the 2017 Summer Session, you are eligible to participate in the College of Law's Hooding Ceremony on May 20. While attendance is not required, it is strongly encouraged.

Is there a hotel available for my family to reserve rooms at discounted rate?

The FAMU College of Law has an annual room rate agreement with the DoubleTree by Hilton Orlando Downtown, 60 South Ivanhoe Blvd., Orlando, FL 32804. The negotiated rate is \$114.00 and based on availability.

Reservations can be made by contacting the property directly at (407) 425-4455 or the DoubleTree's in-house reservation team: Erika Winslow: erika.winslow@hilton.com. In order to receive the rate all callers must identify themselves with **Florida A&M University**.

How do I register to participate in the Commencement Exercise or Hooding Ceremony?

You will need to complete the Commencement/Hooding Ceremony Participation form.

Must I wear a cap and gown?

Yes, all degree candidates who wish to participate in the Commencement Exercise and/or Hooding Ceremony are required to wear the official academic regalia (cap, gown and doctoral hood).

Orders for the rental attire can be placed online at www.herffjones.com/college/famu. Regalia can only be ordered by selecting the ***School of Law-JD only Commencement*** option on the website. The deadline for placing regalia orders is **Friday, March 10, 2017 at 11:59 p.m.**

The rental attire should be delivered to the law school the week of April 17, 2017. After the rental attire has been received, you will be notified of the dates and times designated for your pick-up. If you are unable to pick up your attire at the designated times, you may make arrangements for someone else to pick it up for you. Valid ID will be required.

Rentals must be returned on Monday, May 22, 2017, to the College of Law Bookstore. The Bookstore will be open from 10:00 am – 7:00 pm. All rental regalia not turned in on that date will be charged a late fee of \$10 per day (maximum amount not to exceed the original rental fee).

Are there any recommendations for ceremony attire?

Academic attire is required for all ceremony participants. While we recommend that you wear cool and comfortable clothing under your graduation gown, that clothing should be professional attire in both color and appearance. No cell phones or pagers should be in use during the ceremony.

How do I wear the academic attire?

For Commencement: For the processional, wear your cap and gown only and carry your hood draped over your right arm. When it is time for the College of Law graduates to be recognized, you will be directed to place the hoods on one another before you proceed to the stage to be individually recognized.

For the Hooding Ceremony: When it is time for the graduates to be recognized, you will proceed onto the stage with your hood draped over your right arm. After your name is called, you will extend your arm to hand your hood to the faculty hooder who will formally place the hood on you. Once you have received your hood, you will walk across the stage to shake hands with the Dean and the guest speaker and will then proceed off the stage.

How many guests may I invite to the Commencement or Hooding Ceremony?

You may invite a reasonable number of guests. At this time, there is no limit to the number of guests you may invite to either the University Commencement Exercise or the College of Law Hooding Ceremony.

Where can I order announcements for Commencement and/or Hooding?

Announcements for Commencement can be ordered online at www.herffjones.com/college/famu. Announcements for Commencement can be ordered by selecting the **School of Law-JD only Commencement** option on the website. Announcements for Hooding can be ordered by selecting **Law Hooding Ceremony** option on the website. The deadline for placing announcement orders is **Friday, March 10, 2017 at 11:59 p.m.**

Where do my guests park for the Hooding Ceremony?

Your primary parking location for weeknight and weekend events at the Dr. Phillips Center is the City Commons Garage, 460 Boone Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801. The garage has three entrances and two exits convenient for I-4 and FL-408 and thousands of parking spaces. Once you park, you can access a covered Sky Bridge on the third level of the garage, walk through the CNL Tower 1, and arrive at Orange Avenue and the Seneff Arts Plaza.

It is recommended that guests with disabilities be dropped off directly at the front doors of the Dr. Phillips Center prior to parking in the City Commons Garage.

The cost of parking is \$10.00.

Are the facilities accessible to handicapped guests?

Yes. If you will have guests with special needs, please contact Gary Harrington, Director of Student Affairs, at (407) 254-3280 to make the necessary arrangements for special assistance.

Requests for special assistance seating must be made **as soon as possible, but no later than Monday, May 8, 2017.**

Will photographs be taken at the Commencement and Hooding Ceremonies?

Arrangements have been made with GradImages to have professional photographs taken of each graduate at the ceremonies. While GradImages will mail complimentary color proofs to each graduate, there is no obligation for you to order your graduation photographs.

Can my family take photographs during the Commencement Exercise and Hooding Ceremonies?

Unfortunately, we do not permit guests to approach the stage to take photographs. It is important for guests to remain seated throughout both ceremonies. We are relying on you to convey this message to your guests.

If you have any questions about either of the ceremonies that are not addressed in these materials, please let me know. Again, congratulations and best wishes to you for a successful and rewarding career!