

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING THE 2021 MORRIS COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE

As you are aware, our community as well as the society as a whole is in the midst a public health crisis due to the COVID-19 virus. While many colleges and universities carried out virtual graduations or cancelled the event entirely, President Staggers and the Morris College faculty/staff have taken great effort to provide the Class of 2021 a live, in-person commencement ceremony.

In order that we conduct the Commencement event as safely as possible, we ask your cooperation as the following rules will apply for the May 1, 2021 program:

1. Attendance at the Saturday May 1, 2021 Commencement ceremony is limited to the graduates, a maximum of three guests per graduate (must have tickets for admission) and other officials participating in the ceremony. No other persons will be admitted. The ceremony will be carried via Live Stream on the Morris College Official Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/MorrisCollege/>) for those who will not be able to attend in person.
2. If you will not be participating in the commencement exercise, please contact the Office of Enrollment Management and Records (1-866-853-1345 or alittle@morris.edu) to indicate where your diploma should be mailed. Otherwise, the college will use the last mailing address listed in your academic records.
3. Graduates will be able to pick up their caps and gowns from the college's Business Office in the Pinson Building starting Monday April 26, 2021 between the morning hours of 10 a.m. to Noon and in the afternoons from 2 pm. To 4:30 p.m. Please contact the Office of Enrollment Management and Records if you have questions on this matter.
4. The ceremony will begin at 10 o'clock a.m. Graduates and their three ticketed guests will be allowed to begin entering the campus at 8:45 a.m. **Please note that any additional persons accompanying the graduate and the two guests with tickets WILL NOT be allowed to enter the campus.**
5. All persons will have their body temperatures digitally checked at the entrance of the campus. Any persons recording a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be allowed to enter the campus. This includes any of the graduates who may record a temperature of 100 degrees or above.
6. All persons allowed entry onto the campus will be required to wear face masks. While disposable face masks will be available at the entrance of the campus, we encourage each graduate and their guests to bring their own facial covering. **In the interest of safety, any person refusing to wear a facial mask will not be permitted to enter the campus.**
7. Upon entry onto the campus, graduates and their ticketed guests will be directed to a specific area to park their vehicle. All buildings and facilities on campus will be closed on the day of the Commencement ceremony, and therefore will not be available for persons to enter or visit. Restroom facilities will be available for use only on the first floor in the Solomon Jackson Administration (in front of where the ceremony will take place).

8. Graduates should either come to the campus attired in their caps and gowns or put on their academic attire in the designated area where they and their ticketed guests have been directed to park after they arrive.
9. After putting on their academic attire, graduates will be directed to the staging area where the ceremony will take place and to a designated seat where members of the graduating class will be seated. Graduates should then take their assigned seats for the start of the program. Limited seating will be available for authorized guests.
10. Because practices or rehearsals for the ceremony are not possible under current conditions, graduates will be instructed from the podium during the program with regard to standing, approaching/exiting the podium during the awarding of degrees portion of the ceremony and picking up their diplomas and transcripts at the conclusion of the ceremony.

A professional photographer will be provided to take pictures of individual graduates as they leave the podium after receiving their diploma. (Graduates wishing to have studio portraits in their academic attire should make their own arrangements with a professional photographer.)

11. For public safety reasons, graduates and guests are strongly encouraged not to congregate in large groups either before or after the ceremony. At the conclusion of the program, ushers and security personnel will be on-site to direct graduates and their guests back to their vehicles and off the campus as quickly as possible. Thus, some traditional after program activities like singing, chanting/stepping and group photos will be discouraged.

The entire Morris College family congratulates each member of the Class of 2021 on this milestone life achievement, and we wish you the very best in your future endeavors. As you move on to your future lives and careers, we look forward to your continued support as a proud member of the Hornet Nation.

Dr. Jacob E. Butler, Interim Academic Dean