

Subject: 2021 Commencement Ceremony—Tonkawa

March 31, 2021

NOC Tonkawa Graduates:

On behalf of the NOC Board of Regents and President Cheryl Evans, we congratulate you for completing a degree at Northern Oklahoma College and invite you to participate in a celebration of your accomplishments in the 2021 Commencement Ceremony. Commencement is staged in full academic regalia with all of the pomp and circumstance honoring our graduates. While the pandemic of 2020 forced us to change our commencement ceremony, we plan to return to a more traditional celebration this year with some small modifications.

In order to prepare for the official ceremony, please be certain you complete the free graduation application located at <http://www.noc.edu/graduation> and return to kathy.riley@noc.edu in the Registrar's Office (regardless of whether you are planning to graduate in May or by the end of summer).

After you have verified your eligibility for graduation, you will need to register at www.noc.edu/graduation if you wish to participate in the May 1 commencement ceremony. Registration must be completed by the **priority deadline of April 15** if you would like access to guest tickets. Because of requirements for social distancing, each graduate is limited to two tickets for guests although the ceremony will be live-streamed at www.noc.edu/graduation so that others can join the celebration as well.

Also, **your virtual attendance is required at one of two commencement practice sessions, either on Wednesday, April 28, 2:00 p.m., or Thursday, April 29, at 3:00 p.m.** The meeting will last no more than one hour and will cover commencement logistics as well as provide information for new alumni. The link to this practice session will be emailed to all students who register for the commencement ceremony.

Commencement Procedures:

1. **Which Ceremony to Attend:** To ensure proper social distancing, we will host two commencement ceremonies in Tonkawa, one at 9 a.m. and one at 11 a.m. You are invited to attend one ceremony based on the degree major with which you are graduating.

9:00 a.m.

Art
Arts and Sciences-General Studies
Child Development
Communications
Criminal Justice
Digital Media Animation and Design
Elementary Education
English (including Creative Writing)
Music (including Music Theatre)
Social Science (including Behavioral Sci)

11:00 a.m.

Agricultural Sciences
Biological Sciences (including Pre-Med/Pre-Pharmacy)
Business Administration and Business Management
Computer Science
Engineering and Industrial Technology-Process Tech
HPER (including Athletic and Personal Training)
Math & Physical Science (Chem/Physics, Pre-Engineering)
Nursing-Pre-BSN
Nursing-RN*
Respiratory Care

For any other major not listed above, please attend the 9:00 ceremony.

*Nursing-RN majors (or dual Pre-BSN/RN majors) are encouraged to attend the Enid 2:00 commencement ceremony to participate in the pinning ceremony following.

2. When to Arrive:

For 9:00 ceremony

We will meet outside of the cafeteria on the Tonkawa Campus at **8:30 a.m., Saturday, May 1**. Our Commencement March begins at 8:50 a.m. so please robe prior to arriving to ensure there is enough time for everyone to line up. This allows ten minutes for the Grand March to arrive at the Foster-Piper Fieldhouse for the 9:00 a.m. start for Commencement. If it is raining, we will form lines in the old gym of the Foster-Piper Fieldhouse.

For 11:00 ceremony

We will meet outside of the cafeteria on the Tonkawa Campus at **10:30 a.m., Saturday, May 1**. Our Commencement March begins at 10:50 p.m. so please robe prior to arriving to ensure there is enough time for everyone to line up. This allows ten minutes for the Grand March to arrive at the Foster-Piper Fieldhouse for the 11:00 a.m. start for Commencement. If it is raining, we will form lines in the old gym of the Foster-Piper Fieldhouse.

3. **Safety Protocols:** All students and their guests, as well as all platform guests, will be required to wear a mask throughout the commencement ceremony. Masks are optional while outdoors if social distancing is maintained. Students may also lower their masks after they receive their diploma cover and are stopping on the stage for a photograph; masks should be raised again after the photo before returning to seats. Seating will be spread out to maintain social distancing and we will maintain distancing during the processional and recessional as well. As an additional safety protocol, we will not shake hands of graduates during the ceremony.
4. **Name Card:** As you arrive at the cafeteria you will need to have a 3" x 5" name card filled out and ready to give to the announcer. Print your name on the card showing your first name first and last name second. If your name is difficult to pronounce, quietly pronounce it for the announcer just before you cross the stage.
5. **The Processional:** Leaders for each group have been identified and will be holding signs indicating majors to be more easily found. The Grand March will begin from the clock tower outside of the Student Union and proceed across the campus in a formal order. As we enter the Foster-Piper Fieldhouse, you will remain standing until all candidates are in place. Our marshals will notify the front row to be seated and the remaining rows will follow. Men should remove caps for the invocation and benediction.
6. **Announcement of Graduates:** After the speaker's address, students will be asked to rise, and then the class as a whole will be presented to Dr. Evans, who will then confer the degrees. After Dr. Evans' statement, all candidates except the front row shall be seated. The front row moves to the right. As each row is vacated, the next row rises as a group and proceeds to the platform.
7. **Awarding the Diploma Covers:** Dr. Evans will greet each graduate on stage and hand him or her a diploma cover. Your official diploma will be mailed following the ceremony. Upon returning to your chair, you will be seated individually. A place on the other side of the stage will be marked for you to pause for a photograph.

8. **Turning of the Tassels:** Immediately following the issuing of the diplomas, President Evans will take the podium and ask graduates to rise and turn your tassels from the **right side of your Mortar Board to the left side**. Then we will enjoy a performance of the Alma Mater.
9. **The Recessional:** Following the Benediction, without introduction, the marshals will come to the front and motion for the class to rise. The Recessional will begin with the marshals leading, followed by the front row of graduates, then the rest of the rows of graduates (same order as Processional), followed by Dr. Evans, Regents, administration, and faculty (same order as the Processional). The front rows of graduates are not to stop marching until arriving well onto the lawn area to prevent major congestion in the entryway of the auditorium.

Special Notes:

1. Graduation announcements will be available in the NOC Bookstore beginning the week of April 5 and may be purchased at \$.50/each.
2. The Ceremony and the March
Appropriate Dress:
 - a. Caps and gowns may be picked up from the bookstore any time after April 19.
 - b. Wear your mortar board horizontally with the point directly in the front center.
 - c. Wear your tassel on the right side of the mortar board.
 - d. Shoes--It is recommended that only dress shoes be worn, no sandals, flip-flops, high platform shoes, nor running/tennis shoes.
 - e. Candidates need to lift gown slightly when going up and down the ramp.
3. If a graduate has a request for reasonable accommodations for the commencement exercises and/or needs special assistance entering the stage area, notify Dean Ryan Paul at 580-628-6240, prior to the ceremony.
4. Personal cameras may be used from your seat at any time during the ceremony, but to maintain safe distancing, we will be limiting stage photos to the professional photographer who has been hired by NOC. Each graduate will receive free access to his or her graduation photo to share with family and friends.
5. Please inform your two guests that seating will be limited and tickets will be verified at the door so they should arrive early to ensure they are able to be seated. Doors will open 30 minutes prior to the start of the event. For additional family and friends you would like to include in the celebration, NOC will provide live-streaming of commencement at the following link: www.noc.edu/graduation

Remember – You must attend one virtual commencement practice to be hosted on Wednesday, April 28, at 2 p.m., or Thursday, April 29, 3:00 pm. A link for this practice will be sent to you after you register to attend commencement.

Once again, congratulations on your achievement! We look forward to celebrating with you all on May 1.



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