2023 WGU Commencement in New Orleans

Saturday, March 4, 2023
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CONGRATULATIONS, NIGHT OWL—YOU DID IT!

Welcome to the WGU Alumni Community! You’re part of a family of more than 300,000 Night Owls, with special benefits that last well beyond your graduation.

Being a graduate has its benefits.
As a WGU graduate, you understand that learning is a lifelong pursuit. So do we. That’s why we provide alumni like you with valuable benefits for continuing education. Enjoy access to premium services like LinkedIn Learning, Pluralsight, The Teaching Channel, Nurses on Boards Coalition, and more! Offered learning resources are subject to change.

Keep learning at wgu.edu/alumnilearn

Keep advancing your career
As your focus shifts specifically to career advancement, so does the support from WGU. Our Career & Professional Development team is here to help you thrive throughout your career.

Get started at wgu.edu/career-services

Join the Night Owl Network
This exclusive network is a great way to connect with other alumni, find or become an industry mentor, join professional interest groups, discover innovative ideas from other experts in your field, or even find new jobs!

Join today at wgu.edu/nightowlnetwork

And there’s more
Visit our website to find other resources and ways to stay involved. Look for military alumni resources, explore discounts, shop WGU merchandise, and keep an eye on other alumni events!

Join the community at wgu.edu/alumni
New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center

New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
900 Convention Center Blvd
Halls I & J
New Orleans, LA 70130

Schedule
Saturday, March 4, 2023

Master’s Ceremony 9:30 am CST
Bachelor’s Ceremony 1:30 pm CST

Tickets are not required for commencement. Event is open seating, first-come, first-served.

Guest Services
Commencement day, the MCCNO staff will be on hand to answer venue-related questions, assist with lost and found, and provide wheelchair escorts. If you need assistance during commencement, please visit the WGU Information Table located on the concourse near the main entrance or Guest Services Center located throughout the Convention Center lobby.

EMT/First Aid
EMT’s will be at the event. Guests needing medical assistance are encouraged to contact a nearby event staff or security staff member.

Guest Seating
Seating is first come, first served. Guests should be seated with their cell phones on silent before the ceremony begins. Guests should remain in their seats during the entire ceremony as a courtesy to graduates and other guests.

The commencement venue allows photos and videos at the ceremony; however, we ask you to take photos from your seat rather than from the aisles due to fire and safety regulations and as a courtesy to other guests. WGU has hired a professional photographer for this event. Images of each graduate and the ceremony will be available online for purchase.

Concessions
Please visit the lobby of the Convention Center for available concession options.

Infants and Young Children
For your child’s comfort and as a courtesy to graduates and other guests, we encourage you to bring toys, refreshments, or other items to keep your child quietly entertained during the ceremony. Please bring restless or crying infants and children to the lobby to avoid disrupting the ceremony. To promote safety in close quarters, no children will be allowed on stage or to sit with graduates. By observing these guidelines, we can have a safe, enjoyable, and memorable commencement.

Nursing Mothers Room (Wellness Room)
Accommodations can be made at the Medical Services Stations in Lobbies B, F & H.
Lost Guests/Children
Lost guests/children are immediately brought to the Guest Services Ambassadors. If you are looking for a lost guest/child or need assistance of any kind, please find the nearest Ambassador. They will be wearing a purple coat and are available to assist.

Lost & Found Items
Call 504-582-3040 to report a lost item and/or if you are seeking to find an item.

Bag Policy
All bags larger than 14” x 14” x 6” (backpacks, suitcases, duffel bags, etc.) are prohibited. Please plan accordingly to help facilitate a quick and efficient entry process. Please report suspicious bags to a OCCC security team member.

*Graduates, please do not bring any purses, hand bags, clutches, backpacks, or any other items that you will have to carry. You will not return to the Check-in Room following Commencement.

New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
Please visit https://mccno.com/visitors/services-amenities/ for more information about the venue.
Commencement Weekend is a memorable experience for graduates and their loved ones to celebrate their academic achievement. We want our graduates to experience a joyful ceremony that recognizes their hard work and the sacrifices they have made to reach this point. WGU believes mutually respectful participation by graduates and their guests is the best way to set the stage. In preparation for commencement, WGU has outlined the following protocols. You and your guests' adherence to the following protocol will ensure a positive experience for all.

**Academic Attire for Graduates**
All graduating students wear approved academic attire that includes a cap, gown, and tassel. The official regalia color is navy.

We encourage all graduates to wear comfortable, yet professional, dress attire under your gown rather than casual clothing. Master's degree graduates will need a hood specific to their degree. WGU graduates affiliated with an academic honor society may wear society pins or honor cords on their gowns. With the exception of WGU Scholarship pins, leis and corsages, graduates should not wear other items or decoration on their academic regalia.

*Video: How to Wear Bachelor's Regalia*  
*Video: How to Wear Master's Regalia*

Graduates who indicate active duty military or veteran status on their ceremony RSVP form will receive military honor cords at graduate check-in.

**Commencement Etiquette**
To promote a respectful, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for graduates and their guests, all attendees are asked to observe the following guidelines.

- Place your cell phone on vibrate or silent during the ceremony.
- Do not leave until the entire ceremony has ended.
- Keep cheering respectful and avoid disruptive outbursts to allow the families and guests of other graduates to hear their graduates names when read.

**WGU Commencement Decorum Policy**
Please be advised any graduate or guest acting in a disruptive or disrespectful manner at WGU events, as determined by WGU in its sole discretion, may either not be allowed in the venue or may be escorted from the venue.

Take into consideration the following if decorating your cap for commencement: WGU does not allow content on caps that is considered, in WGU’s sole discretion, obscene, vulgar, defamatory, hateful, inappropriate, profane or that might disregard another’s copyright or third-party rights. All decorations must lie flat on the cap.
Wheelchairs
Guests in need of a wheelchair may request wheelchair assistance at the WGU Information Table, located inside the guest entrance. A limited number of wheelchairs are available for transporting guests to/from their seats. Wheelchairs cannot be left with the patron for the duration of the event. WGU Staff and ADA assistance teams will not be allowed to assist in transfers.

ASL
American Sign Language interpreting is available onsite for WGU Commencement. Please proceed to the WGU information table located on the main concourse, and you will be ushered to the reserved seating for ASL. The area is designated as reserved.

Restrooms
The venue has accessible restroom facilities throughout the facility.

Service Animals
Animals or pets of any kind are not permitted in the venue, except for trained service animals and service animals in training for guests with disabilities. Service animals are welcome inside the venue but must remain on a leash or in a harness always.

Accessible Parking
Parking for persons with disabilities is offered in surrounding lots and is available on the first-come, first-served basis. Spaces are marked accordingly, and the number of spaces fluctuates from event to event. Parking is $20 cash or card per vehicle. Please refer to this guidebook’s parking map.

Passenger Drop-Off Points
If arriving or departing the New Orleans Convention Center by taxi or rideshare, please use the designed Taxi/Rideshare Zone. Follow the Pedestrian Crossing across Calliope Street. When exiting the venue, this crossing can be found outside of Lobby G. If arriving to the New Orleans Convention Center, the crossing will bring you into Lobby G. To drop-off guests with wheelchairs or those who need mobility assistance, please look for the wheelchair drop-off/pick-up signs.
Parking And Entrance Map

Commencement will be held in Halls I & J

Commencement Entrance and Location

Guest Parking in Lots F & G
$20 Per Vehicle
Cash and Card Accepted
https://mccno.com/visitors/getting-here/
MASTER’S CEREMONY SCHEDULE

Saturday, March 4, 2023
8:30 am CST Graduate Check-in
Follow signs to Graduate Check-in

BEFORE ARRIVING FOR COMMENCEMENT
All graduates participating in the commencement ceremony must arrive wearing full academic attire: cap with tassel, hood, and gown. No changing rooms on site.

Video: How to Wear Master’s Regalia

8:30 am CST Graduate Check-in
Note: Only graduates are permitted in the Graduate Check-in Area.
Please pick up your name reader card, listing your name and degree. Also located in the graduate check-in room: philanthropy cords, military cords, scholarship pins, WGU employee pins, limited regalia, and name readers.

8:30 am – 9:30 am CST Graduate Pre-Seating
After checking in, graduates will be guided directly to the arena floor where they will be sat with their colleges. Please follow the direction of the college marshals.

9:30 am CST Commencement Ceremony
The ceremony will begin promptly at 9:30 am. Please be in your seat and ready at this time. We look forward to celebrating you!

Conferral of Degree Order
Graduates are called to stage by college and not in alphabetical order.
College of Business
Leavitt School of Health
College of Information Technology
School of Education

After the Ceremony
Families and guests: please plan to meet graduates outside at the main entrance.
BACHELOR’S CEREMONY SCHEDULE

Saturday, March 4, 2023
12:30 pm CST Graduate Check-in
Follow signs to Graduate Check-in

BEFORE ARRIVING FOR COMMENCEMENT
All graduates participating in the commencement ceremony must arrive wearing full academic attire: cap with tassel, hood, and gown. No changing rooms on site.

Video: How to Wear Bachelor’s Regalia

12:30 pm CST Graduate Check-in

Note: Only graduates are permitted in the Graduate Check-in Area.
Please pick up your name reader card, listing your name and degree. Also located in the graduate check-in room: philanthropy cords, military cords, scholarship pins, WGU employee pins, limited regalia, and name readers.

1 pm CST Graduate Pre-Seating
After checking in, graduates will be guided directly to the arena floor where they will be sat with their colleges. Please follow the direction of the college marshals.

1:30 pm CST Commencement Processional March
The stage participants and WGU faculty will enter first. College marshals will lead graduates into the arena.

Conferral of Degree Order
Graduates are called to stage by college and not in alphabetical order.
College of Business
Leavitt School of Health
College of Information Technology
School of Education

After the Ceremony
Families and guests: please plan to meet graduates outside at the main entrance.
CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!
DONATE TO THE WGU FELLOW NIGHT OWL SCHOLARSHIP FUND AND RECEIVE A PHILANTHROPY CORD

You can help current WGU students cross the finish line to graduation by purchasing a philanthropy cord to wear with your cap and gown. All proceeds support the WGU Fellow Night Owl Scholarship Fund.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!
Scan the QR Code or visit wgu.edu/philanthropycords to give now.

Visit the WGU Advancement table at the Alumni Celebration or Commencement Check-in to pick up your philanthropy cord. Have a question? Email advancement@wgu.edu.
REFER YOUR FRIENDS TO WGU!

When you send your Refer-a-Friend link to your friends and family, and they fill out the form to learn more about WGU, you earn a $30 gift card to the WGU Store!

Scan the QR Code or visit www.wgu.edu/RAFalumni to share WGU with your friends and family.
CELEBRATE YOUR GRADUATE’S ACCOMPLISHMENT WITH FLOWERS!

Pre-order online at the link below, or purchase bouquets onsite. Pre-ordered flowers will be available for pickup at the commencement flowers kiosk the day of commencement.

A percentage of each sale will be donated to the WGU Scholarship Fund.

https://www.thecommencementgroup.com/wgumain/
Webcast
Family and guests who are unable to attend in person may view the ceremony online. To watch the ceremony live, please visit the following link on Saturday, March 4.

9:30 am CST Master’s Ceremony
1:30 pm CST Bachelor’s Ceremony
Click here to watch the ceremony online on commencement day.

Photography
During the WGU Commencement, The Grad Team Photography will be taking candid photos, speaker photos, and graduate portrait shots. There is no obligation to purchase.

How to access your commencement photos:
A week after commencement, Grad Team will post commencement photos online. Visit thegradteam.com/events/wgu to view commencement photos.

Special Note:
A graduate’s appearance and participation is recorded at commencement. This may include but not be limited to broadcast video, online web video, and photos in print materials. WGU may use some of these images for educational and informational purposes.

Contact
During commencement week, the most efficient way to reach the WGU Commencement Office is by sending an email to commencement@wgu.edu. You may also call 385-428-2085. Visit the Commencement website.