PARENTS’ GUIDE TO
COMMENCEMENT

COMMENCEMENT WEEKEND
MAY 19 -21, 2017
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Congratulations on your son or daughter’s upcoming graduation from Providence College!

Your senior student may experience distractions in his/her final weeks at Providence College. During this exciting and busy time, students might be delayed in relaying important details about Providence College’s Commencement Weekend, which will be held May 19 – 21, 2017.

To that end, we are sending you this Commencement Guide so that you will have time to prepare for the weekend’s festivities. Included in this guide is a schedule of the Commencement Weekend activities, answers to frequently asked questions, and a list of phone numbers you may find helpful.

If we can be of any assistance to you as you prepare for this joyous celebration, please call College Events at 401.865.2344 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or feel free to email us at colevent@providence.edu.

Also be sure to visit the College’s website www.providence.edu/commencement for up-to-date notifications and information about Commencement.

Sincerely,

Deirdre A. Driscoll-Lemoine, MBA ’98, CMP
Director, College Events
Office of Institutional Advancement
Providence College
Schedule of Events

Friday, May 19, 2017

ROTC Commissioning
4:00 p.m.
War Memorial Grotto

Contact the Department of Military Science at 401.865.2471 for details.

Providence College: 100 years of Light – Featuring Waterfire Providence ®
Waterplace Park
1 Finance Way
Providence, RI
7:00-11:00 p.m.
Centennial Torch lighting Ceremony 8:30 p.m. (Waterplace Basin)
Skyline at Waterplace doors open at 7:00 p.m., cash bar & light bites
Steeple Street Waterfire Arts Festival Plaza open at 7:00 p.m., cash bar
Market Square reception tent open at 7:00 p.m., cash bar & light bites
Free admission
Valet Parking at Skyline $10

Join with classmates, your families, alums, college administration, and friends of the Friar Family for a celebration a century in the making. This once in a lifetime event, celebrating Providence College’s 100-year history is exclusive to this year’s Commencement celebration. The evening will include a 100-person procession and ring of fire lighting, musical performances, refreshments, gondola rides and camaraderie.

WaterFire ® is an award-winning sculpture installed on the three rivers of downtown Providence and is a powerful work of art and a moving symbol of Providence’s renaissance. WaterFire’s ® over eighty sparkling bonfires, fragrant scent of aromatic wood smoke, flickering firelight on the arched bridges, silhouettes of the firetenders passing by the flames, torch-lit vessels traveling down the river, engage all the senses and emotions of those who stroll the paths of Waterplace Park.

All graduates and their families are invited and encouraged to attend this free WaterFire ® and enjoy light bites at Skyline at Waterplace Park. Transportation for students will be provided to/from campus. If you would like to learn more about Waterfire ® please visit their website at: http://waterfire.org or call the Office of College Events at 401.865.2344.
Saturday, May 20, 2017

Academic Awards Ceremony
11:00 a.m.
Peterson Recreation Center
(enter via the Concannon Fitness Center)
Students receiving honors or awards are expected to attend. All graduates and their families are invited to attend; tickets are not required. Please plan to be in your seat by 10:45 a.m.; the procession begins at 10:55 a.m. The ceremony is approximately one and one-half hours in length.

Centennial Commencement Mass
4:00 p.m.
Peterson Recreation Center
(enter via the Concannon Fitness Center)
All graduates are invited and encouraged to attend; tickets are not required. Doors open at 3:00 p.m.; the procession begins at 3:40 p.m. Late arriving guests will not be seated until after the processional is completed. An elevator is located in the lobby area of Peterson Recreation Center for guests with special needs. After Mass, students will process back to Mullaney Gymnasium in Alumni Hall before joining families at the reception on Slavin Center Lawn. It’s best to designate a specific rendezvous site outdoors where your family can plan to meet after Mass.

Family Reception
5:30 to 6:30 p.m. (following the Mass)
Slavin Center Lawn
All guests attending the Commencement Mass are invited to attend this reception. No tickets are required. Refreshments and light snacks will be available.

Providence College Centennial Exhibit
Open daily
Harkins Hall, Second Floor Rotunda
All guests are invited to view PC’s newly installed Centennial exhibit. The exhibit will provide the viewer with a nostalgic sense of life at Providence College over the past 100 years. The history of the College, its institutional milestones, college social life, prominent members of the PC community, PC athletic champions, and the gradual and not so gradual changes to the campus landscape are just a few of the aspects of Providence College represented in photos and artifacts, designed to take the viewer back to the “good ole days” of a simpler time.

Sunday, May 21, 2017

Centennial Commencement Exercises
11:00 a.m.
Procession begins at 10:30 a.m.
Dunkin’ Donuts Center
Downtown Providence
Helpful Commencement Information

Does each guest in my party need a ticket, and is there a limit to the number of guests?
Yes, every guest needs a ticket. Graduates will receive (5) guest tickets to Commencement. Tickets will be distributed to the graduates at Cap & Gown Day on April 12, 2017.

Why is there a limit to Commencement tickets?
The technological projection requirements necessary to execute this ceremony at the Dunkin’ Donuts Center result in a loss of approximately one-third of the arena seats. The screens ensure that all in the arena have an opportunity to get a close-up view of their graduate at the milestone moment when they approach the stage to receive their degree.

Will additional tickets be available?
Students who may require additional guest tickets are encouraged to check with classmates. Many families will not use all five guest tickets. If you do not require all five guest tickets, please return them to the College Events, Harkins Hall 412. A limited number of tickets will be available through a lottery system. Families who may need one or two additional tickets (the maximum allotment), may submit requests in writing to: alumni.providence.edu/commencementlottery2017. REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BETWEEN January 31 – February 14, 2017. Requests received after February 14 will not be considered. All winners will be notified by February 21 via email. Winning tickets will be distributed to the student at Cap & Gown Day on April 12, 2017.

December 2017 Graduation Candidates
Candidates for December 2017 graduation participate in the May 2017 graduation ceremonies. December candidates will be included in the official commencement program, where they will be recognized as December 2017 graduation candidates. All December 2017 candidates will have their names read at the ceremony and will be eligible to walk on stage with the other graduates.

Are there invitations or announcements to Commencement?
Your official invitation will be mailed to you in late March. Your student may pick up additional invitations and schedule cards at Cap & Gown Day on April 12, 2017. Personalized announcements for family and friends are available to be purchased from the College bookstore at 401.865.2181 or pcbook@providence.edu. Please note that announcements/invitations to Commencement will not serve as Commencement tickets. Failure to complete exit counseling by April 12 will also prevent students from receiving their cap and gown, as well as tickets.

Indebtedness to the College: What if there are unpaid bills?
Any student that has an unpaid balance as of April 12, 2017 will not be able to receive their cap and gown, or tickets to the Commencement exercises, until the balance is paid in full. Account balances may be viewed online using your Cyberfriar login or by calling the Student Accounts office at 401.865.2284. Any student that has received a Federal Student loan is required to complete exit counseling online. Information will be emailed to all students that this applies to in early March.
When do students order and receive their Commencement tickets and caps and gowns?
All seniors are required to order their cap and gown on the Web between February 1 – March 10, 2017. An email will be sent to seniors to direct them to the Website. Cap & Gown Day will be held on April 12, 2017 in Slavin Center, ’64 Hall from 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Seniors will pick up their pre-ordered cap, gown, and honors cord (if applicable), as well as additional invitations, tickets to the Commencement exercises, and schedule cards.

Dunkin’ Donuts Center General Information

Security at the Dunkin’ Donuts Center
All individuals will have to pass through metal detectors before entering the arena. Large bags of all kinds can be problematic, so we ask both graduates and guests alike to consider leaving bags at home or in your car. Bags that are larger than 13 5/8” x 15 ¼” will not be permitted through the security zone. Under some circumstances, security personnel will deem it necessary to search a bag before allowing its owner admittance to an event. This is true of events at both the Dunkin’ Donuts Center and Peterson Recreation Center on campus. We encourage individuals to take advantage of the doors opening at 9:00 a.m. to give yourself plenty of time to get to your seats.

All camera policies are event specific. Small, personal, digital point and shoot cameras are acceptable, however, cameras with professional lenses, or detachable flashes are prohibited from the Dunkin’ Donuts Center. Use of video cameras, audio recording devices and digital cameras in video mode are strictly prohibited in the arena. The use of any of these items will result in disciplinary action and possible ejection from the arena.

The Dunkin’ Donuts Center has a no-smoking policy, and smoking is limited to outdoor spaces on the Providence College campus.

Visitors are not allowed to bring food or beverages into the Dunkin’ Donuts Center.

Additional Helpful Commencement Information

Will student transportation be provided to and from the Dunkin’ Donuts Center?
While most graduates live off campus, there has been some inquiry regarding bus transport to the Dunkin’ Donuts Center. A limited number of buses will be available for student transportation. The buses will depart from Concannon Circle promptly at 8:45 a.m. on Sunday morning for graduates. Registration for the bus is required using the link alumni.providence.edu/commencementbus2017. Registration is available April 13 – May 10. Seating is limited and cannot be guaranteed unless you have received an email confirmation. Please present your email confirmation upon arrival as this will be your ‘ticket’ to board the bus to the Dunkin’ Donuts Center. The bus will be on the Sabin Street side of the Dunkin’ Donuts Center for return after the ceremony.

What is the timing of the ceremony?

- All doors at the Dunkin’ Donuts Center open at 9:00 a.m.
- The procession begins at 10:30 a.m.
The ceremony begins at 11:00 a.m.
The sequence of the conferral of degrees is as follows: undergraduate B.A., B.S; School of Continuing Education; Graduate Studies Program; and Honorary Degrees.
The ceremony ends at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Commencement Seating
With the exception of a few reserved sections, seating is open and will be filled on a first come, first-served basis. Families should plan to arrive at the Dunkin’ Donuts Center by 9:15 a.m. to obtain the best possible seating. Candidates for B.A. and B.S. degrees sit on both sides of the Dunkin’ Donuts Center floor; you won’t know until the morning of graduation on which side your student will be seated. Large video screens on either side of the stage will broadcast the entire ceremony.

Are there special arrangements for persons with special needs?
Guests will special needs may access the lobby by using the ramp located on the Hilton Providence side of the building (left of the main entrance). Once inside the lobby, proceed to the main concourse area towards Sections 101, 106, 110, 120, and 124 which are reserved for persons with disabilities. Supplemental sections 104 and 126 have also been added. Members of the Friars Club (wearing white blazers and black slacks/skirts) will be posted at these sections to assist guests with special needs. Only one escort is permitted to remain with a special needs guest or guest seated in a wheelchair. Fire laws are strictly enforced and do not permit leaving wheelchairs in the aisles. A sign-language interpreter will sign the entire Commencement Exercise.

Where may I take photos during the ceremony?
Each graduate will be professionally photographed by GradImages. GradImages will send graduates a color digital image; orders may then be placed directly with GradImages. The first two rows of Section 109 will be available to photograph your graduate after he/she leaves the stage. Please be considerate of others waiting to access this area.

Where should we meet our graduate after the ceremony?
With almost 10,000 people exiting the arena, it is best to plan on joining your PC graduate outside the Dunkin’ Donuts Center at a predetermined meeting spot.

Will refreshments be available?
Light refreshments (coffee, juice, breakfast, pastries, soda) will be available for purchase in the Dunkin’ Donuts Center vending area prior to the ceremony. Please refrain from eating and/or drinking in the main arena during the ceremony.

Parking
Providence College Security will direct you to parking for all on-campus events. Event parking for the commencement ceremony is available at various privately owned lots around the city, as well as in the garage adjacent to the Dunkin’ Donuts Center. For a map of available parking locations, please visit: http://www.dunkindonutscenter.com/guest-services/directions-parking

Restaurant Reservations
We suggest Sunday dinner reservations after 2:30 p.m. to allow time to exit the Dunkin’ Donuts Center and the downtown city area. For more information, visit the Providence Warwick Convention and Visitor’s Bureau website at http://www.goprovvidence.com/
How do I get VERITAS, the yearbook?
The yearbook will be mailed to the graduate in the fall of 2017; no need to order. Questions regarding the VERITAS yearbook should be directed to 401.865.2605 or to the Student Activities Involvement Leadership (SAIL) Office at 401.865.2211.

What about senior week activities?
Questions should be directed to the SAIL Office, 401.865.2211.

What about hotel reservations?

Hotel information is available on either of these sites:
http://providence.edu/commencement
http://www.goprovidence.com/

Important Phone Numbers

Important phone numbers you may need for questions related to:

Commencement Weekend
College Events, Office of Institutional Advancement
401.865.2344 or colevent@providence.edu

Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
Harkins Hall 213
401.865.2495 or academicdean@providence.edu

Announcements & Bookstore Items
Barnes & Noble Bookstore, Providence College
401.865.2181 or pcbook@providence.edu

Dunkin’ Donuts Center
1 LaSalle Square, Providence, RI 02903
401.331.0700 or www.dunkindonutscenter.com

Financial Obligations
Office of Student Accounts, 401.865.2284

Highway Construction
R.I. Department of Transportation
401.222.2450 or www.dot.ri.gov

On-Campus Housing
Office of Residence Life, 401.865.2392

Photography – Commencement Day
GradImages
1.800.261.2576 or www.gradimages.com

Safety and Security at Providence College
The Office of Safety and Security, 401.865.2391
Senior Week Activities
Student Activities (SAIL), 401.865.2211

Veritas Yearbook
401.865.2605

FOR UPDATES AND CURRENT INFORMATION ON PROVIDENCE COLLEGE’S 2017 COMMENCEMENT WEEKEND, CHECK THE WEBSITE: WWW.PROVIDENCE.EDU/COMMENCEMENT