



March 2023 Commencement Notes

If your family needs hotel accommodation, I encourage you to go ahead and make reservations. There are other events in Dayton that weekend and hotel space will be booked.

Please pay special attention to the dress code portion of this letter.

COMMENCEMENT DAY SCHEDULE, Saturday, May 6, 2023 - Triangle Lawn on Bryan Hill

7:30 a.m.	Check In (BCO- 1st floor Mercer lobby, BCR- 2nd floor Mercer Lobby)
8:00 a.m.	Rehearsal on the Triangle, weather permitting.
8:45 a.m.	Robing (Details on exact classrooms to come later)
9:00 a.m.	Lineup - Procession line forms in the hallways of Mercer Hall
9:30 a.m.	Processional to Commencement Ceremony on the Triangle Lawn.

There will be a live stream of the ceremony on the Bryan website, www.bryan.edu.

DRESS: The following is required dress for all Commencement participants:

Men: Dark pants, tie, dress shirt, dark socks, dark shoes; no sports shoes or socks. A suit coat is not worn under academic regalia.

Women: Nice dress, “dressy” blouse and skirt, or dark slacks and blouse; dark shoes. Flowers, jewelry and other adornments are not worn on or over academic regalia.

Hats should be squared on top of head with tassels on the right for those who have not yet been awarded the degree. Those who receive their degrees will be asked to move their tassels to the left side after the President awards the degrees. In order to maintain the appropriate dignity of the occasion, **graduation caps are NOT to be decorated in any way.**

After everyone has processed to the assigned places, all should remain standing for the invocation. Men should remove their hats for the invocation. They may wear them again until it is time for the benediction, when they are removed again. Hats should be worn for the recessional.

PLAN for INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the live ceremony will be moved to Summers Gymnasium. This live ceremony will consist of graduates, faculty, and ticketed guests. All other guests may watch via live stream at various locations across campus.

Students will be emailed a link to get their guest tickets through EventBrite ONLY if there is a need to move the ceremony inside due to inclement weather.

LETTERS TO FAMILIES: Please forward this letter to your families as it contains important graduation information they will need to receive. Commencement information will also be on the Bryan College website at www.bryan.edu/academics/commencement.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Your out-of-town guests will need to make hotel reservations very early. Below are some of the options available in Dayton:

[Best Western](#) – 423.775.6560 (7835 Rhea County Hwy., Dayton, TN)

[Econo Lodge](#) - 423.664.0667 (8763 Rhea County Hwy., Dayton, TN)

[Holiday Inn Express](#) – 423.570.0080 (2650 Rhea County Hwy., Dayton, TN)

[Sleep Inn & Suites](#) – 423-693-0963 (4450 Rhea Co. Hwy., Dayton, TN 37321)

VESPERS

There will be a Vespers service on Friday, May 5th at 7:30 pm in Rudd Auditorium. This service has been planned by students. There will be a reception immediately following Vespers in the Latimer Dining Hall. Friends and family are invited to Vespers and the reception.

VESPERS.

by Michael Palmer, Associate Professor of Communication, Media, and Culture

Tradition matters. It coheres and teaches and creates well-being.

Vespers is a longstanding, valued, and meaningful college tradition. It is the last gathering of sorts before seniors officially graduate. It is a Friday evening service before the Saturday morning ceremony.

However, in recent years this has devolved into something understated, undervalued, and poorly attended. This is evidenced by thin numbers.... often in cargo shorts and sandals. A preponderance of seniors are now typically heard asking “What it is?” and “Is it required?”

What is it?

*Vespers is an ancient liturgy and a long tradition which broadly refers to an evening service which often includes singing, readings, meditation, prayer, and thanksgiving.

The Bryan version is facilitated by the college, but is done by the seniors and fellow students. It is a creative and collaborative ceremony composed of memories, music, words, humor, reflection, and thanksgiving. It concludes with the ‘cutting of the ribbon’ ritual by the president, to where each senior leaves with a symbol, a keepsake with the school colors.

It’s a voluntarily attended celebration of the seniors and their college story with their individual and college family. So, do come, enjoy and sustain the tradition, make it memorable, dress up, and connect once more before the graduation.

If you have any questions about the Commencement Ceremony or activities, please contact Carly McAuley in Stopher 220, cmcauley1337@bryan.edu, or 423-775-7210.