The Charles and Louise Travers Department of Political Science is pleased that you are able to attend the graduation ceremony of your son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandson, granddaughter, coworker, or friend. Below you will find answers to some frequently asked questions. For additional information, please go to polisci.berkeley.edu and click on “Political Science at Cal” - “Commencement”.

Q: **When and where is the Political Science Commencement Ceremony?**

A: The Political Science Commencement Ceremony will be held on Monday, May 18th, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the [Hearst Greek Theatre](https://hearstgreektheatre.org). Gates will open at 6:00 pm. Graduates must enter from the South Gate and be backstage by 6:30 pm. All guests must enter from the [North Gate of the Greek Theatre](https://hearstgreektheatre.org) (across from East Gate/Latimer Hall).

Q: **How long is the ceremony?**

A: The ceremony lasts approximately 2 hours.

Q: **What time should I arrive at the Greek Theatre?**

A: 6:00 pm. There is no comfortable place to sit out of the sun (or rain) so with that in mind, we recommend that you arrive no earlier than 6:00 pm.

Q: **Will we need tickets for Commencement?**

A: Yes. All guests must have a ticket to enter the Greek Theatre.

Q: **How can I get tickets?**

A: Tickets are required for everyone except graduates. Each graduating student who signed up to be in the Commencement Program may pick up his/her three (3) free tickets during certain hours in the Political Science Main Office in 210 Barrows. Graduating students must bring their student ID. Tickets will be available from Monday, April 27th through Thursday, May 14th, 2020 from 9 to 11:30am and from 1 to 3:30pm. No free tickets will be available on Commencement Day.

[Additional tickets](https://hearstgreektheatre.org) may be purchased through Cal Performances beginning Tuesday, April 28th in person at the Zellerbach Hall Ticket Office or by phone/online using a credit card. Seating is general admission. Tickets are $15. Additional charges apply if tickets are purchased by phone or online. There is no limit to the number of tickets you may purchase. On the day of the event, tickets are available at the North Gate of the Greek Theatre – cash only.
Q: Do children need tickets?

A: Yes. Due to campus and Greek Theatre safety regulations, it is required that all guests have tickets to gain admittance into the graduation ceremony. Only graduating students in cap & gown will not need a ticket to enter.

Children age 2 and younger are free but MUST HAVE a ticket. Complimentary tickets for children age 2 and younger will be available for pick-up in advance of the ceremony at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall and on the day of the event at the Box Office at the Greek Theatre.

Q: What if I forget my ticket?

A: You can always buy another one at the event. Ticket will be available for purchase at the North Gate of the Greek Theatre starting at 6:00pm. Cash ONLY! Please do not forget your tickets!

Q: Where is the best place to park?

A: For detailed commencement parking information, please go to: https://pt.berkeley.edu/special-events/campuswide-commencement

Q: Is special seating available for disabled/hearing impaired guests?

A: If you or any of your guests have a hearing loss that will require a Sign Language Interpreter or Real Time Captioner, please contact Erin Blanton at least a month in advance at eblanton@berkeley.edu to make the necessary arrangements. If any of your guests require wheelchair-accessible seating, please also contact Erin at least two weeks in advance. Advance notice is required to ensure the best possible arrangements.

Q: Is accessible parking available for disabled guests?

A: For accessible parking areas, please go to: https://pt.berkeley.edu/special-events/campuswide-commencement

Q: Where can I get information about dining and lodging?

A: For restaurants & hotels in the area, check out UC Berkeley's Visitor Services Website.

Q: I want to give my student flowers. Where can I get some?

A: There are flower vendors close to campus and often near the Greek Theatre.

Q: Will there be a photographer?

A: Yes. A professional photographer will take pictures of each graduate. Information about the photographer will be e-mailed to students, and will also be available at the event venue. Additional information can be found on-line at Grad Images Photo, http://gradimages.com.
Q: How do students sign up so that the department knows they want to participate?

A: Students must sign up online (link on the department website). This ensures that the names of the participating students will appear on the printed commencement program.

Q: Are the graduating students' names called at the PolSci Commencement ceremony?

A: Yes. All graduates will be individually recognized by name on stage.

Q: Our family name is hard to pronounce. What can we do?

A: Students are asked to spell their names phonetically on their name cards.

Q: What happens if it rains?

A: Commencement proceeds as planned, rain or shine! Please come dressed appropriately for the weather on that day. Unfortunately, the Greek Theatre does not allow large umbrellas. Only small personal umbrellas are allowed.

Q: My child wrote an honors thesis in Political Science. Will that be recognized at the ceremony?

A: Yes. Departmental honors will be noted on the Commencement Program. However, the level of honors achieved – Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors – will be noted on the final transcripts and diplomas, a few months after graduation. Students completing their honors thesis are also invited to an Honors Reception and are entitled to wear gold Honors Cords. Cords will be conferred at the reception (students will be notified of the exact day and time via e-mail). The reception is open to those undergraduates who participated in the 2019/2020 Political Science Honors Program, their families, department faculty and staff.

Q: Can my child graduate with honors another way?

A: Yes. The College of Letters & Science awards Distinction, High Distinction, and Highest Distinction in General Scholarship (comparable to Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Summa Cum Laude) based on the final overall GPA. Distinction will be noted on transcripts and diplomas. However, distinctions are not noted on the Commencement program due to the fact that final grades for Spring 2020 are unavailable by the time of graduation.

Q: Are diplomas given out at the ceremony?

A: No. Attending a commencement ceremony does not mean that a student actually graduated. Some students attend the May ceremony though they will not finish all degree requirements until the end of summer session or the following fall semester. The ceremony takes place before final grades for the spring semester are filed. The ceremony is strictly a celebratory ritual.
Q: How does my son or daughter get a diploma?

A: Diplomas will automatically be mailed free of charge approximately 3.5 months after the end of the term to the diploma address supplied by the student on CalCentral. For additional details, please visit: https://registrar.berkeley.edu/academic-records/transcripts-diplomas

Q: What’s the difference between the campus-wide and department graduation?

A: The campus-wide graduation is for all graduating seniors from all majors and their families. This event includes the Chancellor’s address and most of the traditional pomp and circumstance. Department graduations are specific to graduating students in a specific major (i.e., Political Science) and their families with each graduate walking across stage, getting his/her picture taken, and receiving a commemorative certificate (scroll).

Q: Where and when is the campus-wide graduation?

A: The campus-wide graduation is scheduled for Saturday, May 16th, 2020. All graduating students are welcome to attend this event. This is a ticketed event. For more information, please refer to http://commencement.berkeley.edu.