

FRANKLIN PIERCE UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Class of 2021 Graduates and Families:

I want to begin by thanking our graduates for the patience they have shown as the Commencement Committee and the University continue to thoughtfully and carefully organize a plan regarding Commencement.

The members of the Class of 2021 are completing their degree and this chapter of their educational journey in unprecedented times, with a spirit of adaptability and resiliency.

While the health and safety of our community remains of utmost importance, our priorities in planning this celebratory event remain:

1. **Holding a safe experience for our graduates;**
2. **Recognizing the hard work and accomplishments of our students; and**
3. **Maintaining the important and long-standing Franklin Pierce traditions around commencement ceremonies.**

The Commencement Committee and the University are committed to providing an experience that will be held on the ground. The diligence our community has demonstrated and our shared response to the presence of COVID on our campus should allow us to safely hold a COVID-adapted on-ground, in-person celebration on Saturday, May 15, 2021. *However, there will be significant adaptations to the ceremony.*

We continue to review guidance from the CDC and the State of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS), and both continue to warn against travel, larger gatherings, and a loosening of current standards around masks and social distancing.

Accordingly, the following decisions have been made for the 2021 Commencement Ceremony:

- We will be holding an on-ground Commencement Ceremony for the graduates of the Class of 2021, but we will not be permitting any additional attendees, guests or family at the event. President Mooney and select University faculty and staff members will be onsite to facilitate the event.

As promised, we will invite graduates from the Class of 2020 to participate in this May's commencement exercises.

- The event will be live-streamed for family and friends to watch in real-time, and a recording will be available following the ceremony.
- Health and safety precautions, including masks and social distancing, will be built into the adapted on-ground event.
- Per the request of our Rindge campus graduates, we are relocating the ceremony from the DiGregorio Lot to a space that allows a clear view of Mount Monadnock, near the Fieldhouse and Bubble.
- To support the ability of family and friends to enjoy the livestream of the Commencement Ceremony, Residence Life will be allowing graduating residential students to move out by 2 p.m. on Sunday, May 16. Additionally, Student Affairs will be hosting Senior Sendoff activities on Saturday afternoon and evening.

Residential students will sign up for a move-out time for Saturday, May 15 or Sunday, May 16, noting how many helpers and vehicles they will have coming to campus. More details about activities and move-out sign up will be available in April.

- Additional details on the Doctor of Physical Therapy Hooding Ceremony, Honors Convocation and Baccalaureate Ceremony will be shared in the coming weeks.

We recognize that the necessary adjustments to preserve the health and safety of our community and our graduates may cause disappointment and even frustration. These difficult decisions have been made in an effort to preserve what is most important to our graduates, being able to cross the stage, in-person, in recognition of all they have accomplished. Please know, Franklin Pierce awaits the day we can return to celebrating in-person.

We look forward to honoring the accomplishments of our students this May. If you or your family members have questions or concerns, please contact me at [polloma@franklinperce.edu](mailto:polloma@franklinperce.edu).

We will also continue to update details on our [Commencement webpage](#).

Sincerely,

Andrew Pollom  
Dean of Student Affairs  
Convener, Commencement Committee

**Got News?**

Do you have an announcement you would like for us to send out? Maybe an idea for a good news story? Send it to [ravenflash@franklinperce.edu](mailto:ravenflash@franklinperce.edu).



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