

Exemption Request to Participate in Commencement | Master's Degrees

Master's degree candidates who will complete their degree requirements by July 2025 or August of 2025 *may* be permitted to participate in the May 2025 ceremony only if they can demonstrate the following:

1. Economic or physical hardship prohibiting their participation in the September 2025 Virtual Ceremony or the May 2026 In-Person Ceremony, and
2. The support of their degree program chair / director.

Before submitting an [Exemption Request to Participate](#), please note:

- Travel uncertainties, financial uncertainties, location/living uncertainties, and relocation to another region/part of the country do not qualify as hardships;
- Support from a candidate's program director does not have to be in writing; applicants will attest to verbal support from their director;
- The burden of proof of economic or physical hardship falls on the Masters candidate submitting the Petition. Supporting documentation *can* improve the likelihood of approval. Supporting documentation can include, but is not limited to:
 - Student visa paperwork (or confirmation of this from the Center for Global Education);
 - Proof of military deployment;
 - Documentation of a medical condition that would prohibit participation in a September virtual ceremony or a May on-ground ceremony.

Master's candidates may submit an [Exemption Request to Participate](#) that outlines:

- The anticipated date of degree completion;
- The actions the student will take to successfully complete their degree requirements;
- The nature of the hardship prohibiting them from participating in the September 2025 virtual or May 2026 (in-person) Commencement ceremonies;
- The support (verbal or written) of their program director.

July or August 2025 Master's degree candidates requesting to participate in the May 2025 Commencement ceremony must submit an [Exemption Request to Participate](#) by March 3, 2025. Petitions received after March 3 will not be considered. Students will be notified by March 14, 2025 if their request has been granted.

July and August Master's degree candidates who are approved to participate in the May 2025 Commencement ceremony will adhere to the policy below:

- Degree candidates will not receive a diploma until all degree requirements are satisfied, including credits;
- Degree candidates will have a notation next to their names in the May 2025 Commencement program, indicating that their studies are not yet complete;
- Degree candidates will be held responsible for communicating with the Office of the Registrar and their program chair/director before June 30 about the completion of their degree. In addition, degree candidates are responsible for verifying that they are included on the July or August graduation list.

PLEASE NOTE: Doctoral degree candidates are not eligible to submit an Exemption Request to Participate in Commencement. Doctoral candidates who complete all degree requirements (including successful defense of a dissertation/other doctoral project and its formal acceptance by their Program) in August, October, and January will be invited to participate in the **NEXT May** Commencement ceremony that follows their degree completion.

Students finishing their degree requirements in May 2025 **SHOULD NOT** submit the Petition to Participate form! Students finishing by May will automatically be invited to Commencement and will receive a RSVP invitation survey with details about Commencement via email in April.