



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Thursday, May 22, 2025 • 4:30 p.m.

Total Mortgage Arena

600 Main St., Bridgeport, CT 06604

SouthernCT.edu/commencement/

<p>What is the difference between Commencement and Graduation?</p>	<p>Graduation is the successful completion of all degree requirements and the awarding of your degree/certificate. See the "Diplomas" section for details about receiving your diploma.</p> <p>Commencement is a ceremony to celebrate and recognize recent and upcoming graduates in the current academic year. Participation in commencement does not confirm graduation from your program, and diplomas are not issued at the event.</p>
<p>Who is eligible to participate in the Graduate Commencement ceremony?</p>	<p>Students who completed their degree, diploma, post-master's certificate, or graduate certificate requirements at the end of the Fall 2024 semester or will complete their requirements in May 2025 or August 2025.</p> <p>Students declared eligible to graduate by the Registrar.</p> <p>Students completing their comprehensive exams in the spring or summer should still register to attend, even if results are pending.</p>
<p>Do I need to participate in a ceremony to graduate?</p>	<p>No. If students choose not to participate in a ceremony and meet all university academic requirements, they will receive their diplomas by mail.</p>
<p>Do I need to register to participate in commencement?</p>	<p>Yes. Registration is required to receive tickets for your guests.</p> <p>Registration Deadline: April 4, 2025</p> <p>Use the link sent to your SCSU email to register.</p> <p>Note: No participation requests will be accepted after March 31, 2025—no exceptions.</p>

<p><i>Are there assigned seats?</i></p>	<p>Audience seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.</p> <p>Graduate seating is assigned by procession number, provided upon check-in.</p>
<p><i>Do all guests need a ticket?</i></p>	<p>Yes, all guests must have a ticket for entry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduates will receive eight (8) guest e-tickets via Tassel. • Tickets can be emailed or printed to share with guests.
<p><i>Do I need a ticket for my child?</i></p>	<p>Children three years old and under do not need a ticket but must sit on an attendee's lap.</p> <p>If a car seat/carrier is brought, the child will need a ticket as it occupies a seat.</p> <p>Be advised that strollers brought into the arena cannot be taken into the seating area.</p>
<p><i>When can I pick up my cap and gown?</i></p>	<p>All graduates must wear appropriate academic regalia.</p> <p>Master and Doctoral, Open Stock: Open Stock Regalia (non-custom) can be purchased online or in-store. Graduates can pre-order regalia here beginning 2/7/2025: Pre-Order Your Regalia Here! (Master's)</p> <p>Any pre-orders will ship in early April or be available for pickup in-store. Students have the option of picking their order up in-store or having it shipped to their home for a \$15.95 fee. After 4/25, the only option will be shopping in-store.</p> <p>Cap & gown will also be available for same-day purchase in-store beginning April 1.</p> <p>We encourage students to purchase early to ensure the correct size is available for them.</p> <p>The closer we get to the commencement ceremony, the more likely they are to have sold through the available sizing.</p> <p>Doctoral, Custom:</p> <p>This option is best for students that plan on using their regalia many times over their career. Students should make their fabric choices and take their measurements and then contact the Bookstore (203-392-5270, or in person) to submit their order.</p> <p>Please have payment ready at time of ordering. Please note that custom regalia orders must be submitted by February 7th, 2025 to allow time for them to be made and shipped by graduation. The Bookstore has requested Oak Hall have all custom doctoral orders delivered to the student by May 1.</p>

	<p>All custom regalia must be prepaid in full by February 7th. Due to the nature of the product, custom regalia is non-returnable.</p> <p>There is a \$19.95 domestic/\$60.00 international shipping and handling charge, and the regalia will be shipped directly to your home.</p> <p>NOTE: Academic regalia must be purchased prior to the date of Commencement. Regalia will not be available for purchase the day of Commencement.</p>
<i>What do I wear vs. carry during the ceremony?</i>	<p>Master's and Doctoral Candidates: Wear caps, tassels, and gowns; carry hoods over the right arm.</p> <p>Sixth Year Diploma Candidates: Wear caps, tassels, gowns, and hoods; carry stoles over the right arm.</p> <p>Post-Master's/Graduate Certificate Candidates: Wear caps, tassels, and gowns; carry cords over the right arm.</p>
<i>When can I pick up my honors cords?</i>	<p>There are no honors cords in the Graduate Commencement. However, your department may have their own ceremonies, so inquire accordingly.</p>
<i>What accommodations will you provide for students/guests with disabilities?</i>	<p>The Total Mortgage Arena is wheelchair-accessible and will provide services for guests with disabilities. These services, available on a first-come, first-served basis, include handicapped parking, wheelchair locations with companion seating, sign language interpreting, and programs in large-print and alternative formats.</p>
<i>Parking info</i>	<p>There is plenty of parking at the Total Mortgage Arena. There are two large outdoor lots and one parking garage. Parking is free for all commencement graduates and guests. Bridgeport Police will be stationed at the entrance and various arena locations to direct traffic and instruct visitors.</p> <p>Expect traffic delays, so plan extra travel time. To alleviate traffic congestion, students and families are encouraged to travel together or carpool. Persons with state-issued handicapped parking permits may park in the handicapped parking areas of the garage or as directed by traffic personnel. For Directions & Parking Maps, please visit Total Mortgage Arena – Directions & Parking.</p>
<i>What time do I need to arrive? Where do I go?</i>	<p><u>All graduates are asked to arrive at the first level of the arena parking garage no later than 2:30 PM to check in and receive a name card.</u> Look for the banner with your school name and proceed to that area to check in. Be sure to bring your reader card and tassel with your regalia, to the Arena.</p> <p>Please note that personal items such as handbags and cameras should be left with your guests and may not be brought to the assembly area.</p>

	All students must be in line no later than 4:00 PM, so that the academic procession can begin promptly. Wear comfortable shoes, as you will be standing for an extended period of time. The ceremony will begin at 4:30 p.m.
<i>When should my guests arrive?</i>	Ticketed guests will enter the arena through the front entrance. Guests are asked not to visit the graduate assembly area. Seating will begin at 3:00 PM.
<i>What time does the ceremony begin and how long will it last?</i>	The ceremony will begin at 4:30 p.m. and will last approximately 2.5 hrs.
<i>Will there be a livestream of the ceremony?</i>	The ceremony will be livestreamed at SouthernCT.edu/commencement .
<i>How will I receive my diploma?</i>	<p>Diploma jackets will be handed out at the ceremony.</p> <p>The Registrar's Office automatically processes diplomas and certificates once a student has successfully completed all program requirements. Once the degree has been awarded, students are notified in their Southern email within 1-2 weeks with instructions on how to access their official e-diploma to share with family, friends, and employers.</p> <p>Actual diplomas will be issued to the mailing address on file within 4-6 weeks. Students who have student account obligations or additional academic requirements to complete will not receive their diplomas until such obligations or requirements have been met. Please check the Self-Service Center to confirm that you do not have any "holds."</p>
<i>How much will my diploma cost?</i>	There is no fee charged for the original diploma/certificate.
<i>What if I need to change my mailing address or diploma name or have other questions regarding my diploma?</i>	For any other questions regarding your diploma, please reach out to the Registrar at registrar@southernct.edu .
<i>Will there be professional photos taken of graduating students?</i>	GradImages will take official graduation photos at your upcoming ceremony, including on-stage and graduation portraits. Proofs will be emailed to you as soon as 48 hours after the ceremony, or you can search for your proofs on their website. While there is never any obligation to purchase, if you pre-register you will automatically receive a coupon code for 20% off your purchase of \$50 or more. Visit www.gradimages.com or call (800) 261-2576 for more information.
<i>Is there anything else I need to know?</i>	<p>Please have respect for the other graduates and their guests. Do not leave the Commencement ceremony early.</p> <p>To preserve the dignity of the ceremony and the safety of those in attendance, air horns, beach balls, and other inflatable items are prohibited and will be confiscated by</p>

the arena security.

All bags brought into the venue are subject to search.

Alcoholic beverages are not allowed at the ceremony. Arena Security will confiscate any alcoholic beverages brought into the arena.

Please silence all phones during the ceremony. The use of cellular phones is disruptive to both participants and guests.

For additional FAQ's visit: <https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/degree-audit-faq>