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Subject: UAlbany campus update: Commencement is coming (May 15-21)!

Hello, Campus Neighbors!

We made it! Yesterday was the last day of classes, and that means Commencement is rapidly approaching.

This year's Commencement will honor both our 2020 and 2021 graduates and will be a combination of virtual and in-person events. As you can imagine, the in-person portions will be very different from past years, which is why I'm writing to you.

As campus neighbors, here is what you need to know:

The major change is that we will not have one big gathering on the lawn of the Entry Plaza. Instead, Commencement will take place at Casey Stadium over seven (yes, you read that right – seven!) days starting this coming Saturday, May 15 through May 21. You can read all the details [here](#), but here's the upshot: We will have a moving Commencement in which graduates walk through the open-air stadium concourse at assigned times in 15-minute windows with up to four guests. The experience will last about 20 minutes, and graduates will have an opportunity to cross the stage while their loved ones cheer. Then repeat hundreds and hundreds of times.

While this plan will allow us to keep everyone safely distanced, it also will take a while – which means there will be a steady flow of traffic on and off campus and in the area of Casey Stadium for much of next week. There also may be noise associated with the activity at the stadium.

We appreciate your patience as we try to give our students and their families this special moment in a safe way.

Lastly, I want to share this because I think it's worth noting: While the numbers are not final yet, we appear poised to end the spring semester having performed nearly **100,000** campus surveillance tests since late January, resulting in a COVID-19 positivity rate about **half** of what we saw during the fall semester. That's despite the challenges posed by virus variants, higher community transmission rates, winter in Albany and the fact that most of our students were not eligible for vaccination until later in the semester. Our students worked incredibly hard this spring to keep themselves and everyone else healthy, and I want to thank all of you who played a part in that.

As always, please reach out directly if you have any questions.

Best,

Jordan

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