

Checklist for Graduation

CHRISI KINCAID: Well, hello everyone and thank you so much for joining us this evening. We're going to be going over the logistics of graduation and commencement and just going to be doing an overview to help give you information that you need to get ready for both. So my name is Christi Kincaid and I am an academic advisor with the WSU Global Campus.

And if you have questions that we don't answer tonight or you think of something later, you can always contact me at my email address listed here at ckindaid@wsu.edu. Or if you wanted to schedule some time to talk about anything, you can always schedule an appointment with me by calling 1-800-222-4978, if you end up having any further questions. So welcome everyone.

So the first thing I want to talk about tonight is basically the difference between graduation and commencement because sometimes folks get the two of them confused. So graduation occurs when students pay the \$50 graduation fee to apply to graduate and when students complete all of the university department and major requirements. And commencement actually refers to the ceremony. So that's your opportunity to, maybe, participate in one of the commencement ceremonies on one of the WSU campuses to celebrate with your peers, and your family, and friends. It's just a great time to celebrate what you've accomplished.

So I'm first going to go over what the instructions are for graduation. So there's just some basics that you need to do to graduate. So the first thing is you need to apply to graduate and then you need to complete all the academic requirements for your degree. If you've had a name change or if you've had a name change since you've graduated, you need to be sure that you're going to update your name and address so that your diploma has the appropriate name printed on it and also is mailed to the correct address. And last, but not least, you're going to want to settle any financial obligations that you have with the university.

So let's dive a little deeper into each one of these things right now. So applying to graduate. So once you get to 90 credits, and you have those 90 credits posted in myWSU, and I'm talking about like for an undergraduate student, you are eligible to apply for graduation. Now if you're only taking two classes at a time, it doesn't really make sense to apply when you have 90 credits. So what you'll want to do is be working with your advisor to determine when you're about two semesters out and that is the perfect time to apply for graduation.

So let's say you're planning on graduating this next December. I would say that a great time to apply for graduation is later this spring or early in the summer. You just want to make sure that you have at least a semester in advance so that your advisor will kind of catch you on list, and we can be sure to be checking your graduation requirements, and including you in the upcoming class.

The next thing that you would want to do is apply online in myWSU in your student center. So you can apply online to graduate and there is a \$50 fee to do so. Now, that \$50 fee is just the

normal fee. If for some reason, let's say, you were hoping to graduate this May and we get into a situation where you didn't apply until April 1, there would be additional fees of like \$75 or \$150 for applying late. So again, it's a good idea to apply early and make sure you have your application in at least a couple of semesters ahead of time.

So the next thing we want to talk about is completing all of your academic requirements. Oh, Holly, so I see that you have a question about what's the purpose of the graduate fee? So the graduation fee is actually just for the processing of your paperwork and also to pay for the printing of your diploma. So that's what the graduation fee is for.

So, too, when you're looking at completing all of your academic requirements, you're going to want to review your academic requirements in myWSU. The academic requirement report in myWSU is the official record that's going to be used to clear you for graduation. And so in that requirements report, all requirements must show as complete in order for you to graduate. So if you're working off of some of your checklist, you know, that's fine for choosing classes, but all students need to know how to read the academic requirements report. And if you haven't talked about that with your advisor just because you haven't reached 90 credits yet, or you just haven't had that opportunity, you can certainly schedule an appointment with your advisor if you need some assistance on learning how to read that.

It is a little different than other check sheets that are used on campus. And so it is important that you know how to read it to make sure that you want it to look like everything in it is collapsed, showing that your courses and requirements are either complete or in-progress during your last semester. So again, if you have any questions about that, or you need trouble finding it, or learning how to read it, make sure that you do contact your advisor to schedule an appointment.

Another thing you want to do is go into myWSU and double check to see that your name is listed as you want it printed on your diploma. So if, for instance, if you've recently been married or your name has changed, then you'll definitely want to get that updated so that the correct name will appear. Now if you do have to do a name change, you can submit that name change to payroll services and I've kind of given the link here.

You can also look that up on any WSU web site, payroll services. If you have any questions about changing your name in the WSU system, you can certainly contact the folks in payroll services and they'll let you know what documents would be necessary for you to have your name changed in the system. If you've recently been married, as I mentioned, sometimes they'll require a marriage certificate or something like that, or maybe an updated piece of identification for you to do that.

And then the other thing would be to inform the WSU Office of the Registrar if you change your name after you've applied for graduation. So let's say, you applied recently, and then for whatever reason, your name is changed, you definitely want to get in touch with the Office of the Registrar to make sure that that change is made. And you'll also want to double-check your

address. The address that's listed in my WSU is the one that your diploma will be sent to, so it's very important that you make sure that it is the correct address or your diploma is going to go somewhere else. And that would not be good.

I see, Holly, that you had a question too that says, if you had changed your name post-graduation, are you able to get an updated degree? And I guess I'm assuming that you probably mean an updated diploma. And that is a really good question and one that I have not had before. So that's something-- I'm just going to take a quick note here-- and it is something that I can get back to you on.

So let me just jot that down, Holly. So you're wondering if you can get an additional diploma with your name change. And there may, of course, be a fee for that. I'm not sure if it's possible, but I will double-check. Yes, I think my maiden name is on my original diploma too.

OK. So the next thing that we're going to be talking about is settling all of your financial obligations with the university. So you want to go into Student Accounts, in myWSU, and review any charges that you might have. If you do have a charge, you'll want to get that charge paid before you hope to graduate. If you have a zero account, the other thing you will want to do is, within 30 days of graduating, you'll want to check that to see if you've had any kind of late charges for anything.

So any kind of a hold that you have on your account is going to prevent your diploma from being sent to you. So please be sure to check for any outstanding charges. And then, like I said, within 20 to 30 days after you've completed your last class, you want to check it again just to see if you have any late charges.

If you've been using financial aid, you should check in with the financial aid folks to see if you have to do any kind of student loan exit counseling and they can let you know if that's required. They're very helpful in the financial aid office and want to make sure that everything is done so that you can graduate. So if you have questions about financial aid and any scholarships that you've used, you can have your financial aids questions answered by calling the number here on the screen, 509-335-9711, or you can also reach them at the email address or their website here.

If you have scholarship questions, again, here's the number for scholarship questions and the email address, as well as the website. So please feel free to reach out to folks if you have any questions about, you know, any perceived missed financial aid. You know, if you didn't feel like a scholarship was awarded in time or you have outstanding balances that you thought might have been paid, please reach out to financial aid or scholarships.

So Holly, you asked, does the financial aid office contact you when it's time for exit counseling or is that something the student's expected to be proactive about? So usually, when you look at your myWSU account, when you go into your student center, there are various sections for

academics, and financial aid, and things like that. And if there's any kind of a hold or a notice, you'll be able to find those things in your student center.

And if you do have any questions or you are concerned about exit counseling, I would feel free to contact them now and ask those questions now. Sometimes it depends on what kind of financial aid you've been getting, whether you've been getting loans, or whether you've been getting grants, or whether you've been getting accommodations. So it doesn't hurt to reach out to them early and they'll help answer those questions.

So once you've completed all those steps to graduation, we always encourage students to walk in any of the scheduled commencement ceremonies on the various WSU campuses. Like I said before, it is a time to celebrate your accomplishments. You've worked hard for this degree, so I think it's great if you can celebrate at one of the campuses and walk in commencement. And then we also encourage students to become members of the WSU Alumni Association. So that's kind of a synopsis of graduation and what it takes to get to graduation.

And now I want to talk about commencement, the celebration. So for commencement, if you decide that you want to participate, you'll need to choose a WSU campus to walk in commencement, and I'll talk a little bit about the commencement bulletins for the campuses. You'll also need to order a cap and gown to participate because they won't let you walk in commencement without the regalia, and that's what they're referring to as the cap and gown when you see people talking about regalia. And then, we'll talk a little bit about commencement logistics, how to order announcements and class rings, commencement events, and then lodging.

So Carly, you had a good question. Carly's asking, are there only commencement ceremonies in May and December? She's slated to finish her credits over the summer session. And so there are only commencement ceremonies in May and December. That is correct. And I'll kind of go over that here shortly, while we're talking about walking in commencement and we can talk a little bit more about that.

So commencement ceremonies are held at the end of the spring and the fall semesters, in May and December. And so all students who have filed a graduation application, and they are considered a candidate for graduation, can attend either ceremony, May or December. So the way it works is that students who complete their degrees in May or August of the current year, and December of the previous year, can attend the May commencement ceremony.

So for instance, if you're planning on attending this May commencement in Pullman, if you graduated last December, or you're a candidate to graduate in May or August, you can walk in commencement in May. OK? And so similarly, students that complete degrees in August or December of the current year, and May of the next year, can attend the fall or December ceremony. And then both August and December graduates will be listed in the WSU commencement bulletin in December.

So like I said, we strongly encourage students to make plans to visit a campus to join in the festivities. Primarily, our students attend and participate in commencement on the Pullman campus, but you can participate on other campuses. And so let me talk just a little bit about that. Pullman commencement ceremony this May is going to be Saturday, May 5, and that's held in the Beasley Coliseum on the Pullman campus.

And there aren't any tickets required for your family or your friends. You can bring as many people as you want. And as long as the areas in the Coliseum are not blocked off for graduates to sit, your family really can sit anywhere. And so it's, as I said, it is free.

So there are three ceremonies on the 5th of May. The College of Arts and Sciences is going to line up at 8:00 in the morning, and actually you'll be lining up at 7:30. It's usually a half an hour ahead of time. The Carson College of Business and the Communications Colleges are going to be holding their commencement ceremony at 11:30, also in Beasley Colosseum. And then Agriculture and Vet Med are going to be having their commencement ceremony at 3:00. And Holly, you mentioned that it's nice that it's a free event for families and it really is. It's great and it's wonderful to have your family come and watch.

So to register for the Pullman ceremony, you can do that on the commencement ceremonies website. And that website is commencement, just like it sounds, commencement.wsu.edu. And on that site, there's lots of good information about regalia, about the schedules for spring and fall, and that's where you're going to go and look for anything commencement.

This year, for the spring, you can order caps and gowns on the Jostens website. So Jostens is the company that we order our caps and gowns from, and you can order your caps and gowns between March 23 and April 13. So you can keep the cap and the tassel, but you do have to return your gowns, so that's important to note. And those gowns have to be returned to the student bookstore here on the WSU campus by 7:00 pm, on Monday, May 7.

Now, if you're planning on walking at one of the other campuses, let's talk a little bit about that. You can still order your cap and gown at the Jostens website, but you will want to check in with the other campuses to see when you have to have your gown returned by, because that 7:00 on Monday, May 7, is only the-- that's only the deadline for the Pullman campus. Now, Brittany, you had a good question about what's the typical cost associated with regalia? And that is a really good question that I am not sure of. So I will have to-- I'm just going to take your name down here, Brittany-- and I'm just noting that you had a question about regalia so I can get back to you.

So for commencement ceremonies on other campuses, you know, if you can't make it to Pullman, there are commencement ceremonies elsewhere and the ASWSU, as Kaitlin just mentioned, ASWSU Global is going to be holding an informal celebration on Sunday, May 6, at the Museum of Flight in Seattle. Now, during that celebration, there will not be a walk and you will not need a cap and gown. So that's more of just an informal celebration if you'd like to attend.

For the other campus ceremonies, there is a ceremony on the WSU Vancouver campus, on Saturday, May 5, at 1:00 in the afternoon. And so, Heather, you wondered if you could return your cap and gown Saturday, May 5, after the ceremony, and that's absolutely a big yes. It's just fine to return it then. I think they just wanted to give folks a deadline and that's why they've extended it out to Monday, May 7. But, yes, you can absolutely return them after the ceremony.

And Britney, you asked if you can attend the informal ceremony and the official walk or do you have to choose? I think it would be fine for you to attend both, if you'd like. You know, if you're planning on walking in Pullman, the ceremony is Saturday, the fifth, and then the informal celebration is Sunday, May 6. But if you're planning on walking in another campus and the commencement walk is on another day, that may be easier for you to attend both.

So if you want to attend on the Vancouver campus, you would send a note to van.registrar-- so that's van.registrar@wsu.edu-- before February 16. And the reason for the deadline is that you want to apply early and also let folks at the various campuses know that you're planning on attending because otherwise your name will not appear in the program. And they also just want to plan for students that are attending, and they may also, if you're a Global Campus student, want to give you some extra information. So do make sure that, if you're wanting to attend in Vancouver, you send an email to van.registrar@wsu.edu.

There is a ceremony, as well, in the WSU Tri-Cities, and that is going to be at 1:00 pm also on Saturday, May 5. And you can go to the Tri-Cities website and fill out the RSVP form before March 2. Again, you could look under Tri-Cities commencement. For WSU Everett, their commencement ceremony is going to be Saturday, May 12, at 2:00 pm. And if you want to attend at Everett, again, you can go to the Everett website, complete the Everett RSVP form by March 2.

So it is important, as I've mentioned about all of these campuses, to make sure that you RSVP before these deadlines. So again, Vancouver, the deadline is February 16, and for Everett and the Tri-Cities, the deadline is March 2, just to be sure that your name would appear in the program, and that they can help you with any questions you might have, tell you where you need to drop off your regalia, et cetera.

So let's see, we've had a question about cords or any other special regalia for students with a high GPA. So we just want to let you all know that we do go through and review students GPAs for this semester before they plan on walking. So for instance, if you're planning on walking in May, we use the-- because we won't have a final GPA for you by the time you would walk in commencement, what we do is we use the GPA that's available for you in December to calculate whether or not you qualify for honors. And then we send out honors cords to qualified students about a month in advance so that you will have them and you can bring them with you to walk in commencement. So I hope that answers your question about that.

Heather, you had a question. I'll just take a break here and answer a few of these questions. You had a question about numerous e-mails regarding honor society, but you weren't sure if they were legitimate or not. So for those honor societies, that's not how you're going to get your honors cord to walk in commencement. If they've said something about, hey, if you pay \$50, you can be a part of this honor society and get a cord. I mean, it would be up to you as to whether you want to do that.

I would always follow up and do some Google searching on some of these honor societies, because honestly, some of them pretty much just print students names in a book, and I don't know how much that's going to help job. So there's lots of different honor societies out there. Some of them are very legitimate. And some of them, I feel like you should use caution before joining them just because they may take your money just to have your name listed in a book. So just be careful and look into that.

Holly, you had a question that if you're not walking, do you still get the honors cord and the answer is yes. So if you have qualified to have an honors cord, we send those out to you, regardless of whether you are planning on walking in a ceremony or not, so that you can have it.

Melanie, you had a question about the high GPA number. And what I can do, Melanie, since you and I talk a lot anyway, is I can send you the list of the GPA breakdowns. So basically, it's like, you know, there's like a 3.4 to a, I think, it's like a 3.6. We have cum laude, and then we have magna cum laude, and we have summa cum laude. So if you have questions about that, you can certainly contact your advisor and they can let you know where you're at.

If you're planning on graduating in May, they can let you know what your GPA was at the end of December. Or you can look actually in myWSU right now to find your GPA, and if you have questions about whether or not you qualify for honors based on that, you can certainly email your advisor or feel free to send me an email at the ckincaid@wsu.edu. So feel free to email me, if you have questions on those GPAs, and I'd be glad to send you to break breakdown. OK.

So I do want to talk a little bit about the graduation celebration in Seattle. Again, it is at the Museum of Flight from 6:00 to 9:00, on Sunday, May 6. And again, that's just an informal celebration, not commencement ceremony, so you will not need any kind of regalia for that.

So now let's talk a little bit about the commencement bulletins. What does that mean? That is just a fancy way of referring to the programs that are used during the commencement ceremonies. So when you go to commencement, the names of graduates and candidates for graduation are included in the commencement graduation bulletin or the program. And those are compiled well before the ceremony.

So that's why we have these deadlines of like February 16, March 2, and things like that for you to let folks know if you're planning on walking in commencement. Because, otherwise, the bulletins are going to be printed well in advance and your name might not be in it, if you

haven't registered to walk in commencement. So sometimes students are a little hurt, if they apply for graduation very late, and then they don't say their name in commencement. You know, it really doesn't mean anything except that you applied a little bit late. So if you want to make sure your name is in a bulletin for the campus that you want to walk in, just be sure to contact that campus and RSVP as soon as possible.

So let's talk about ordering caps and gowns. So we talked a little bit about this earlier. So these are rented and ordered directly from Jostens. And after you place your order through Jostens, you'll be letting them know during the ordering period that you are going to be participating in commencement at one of the WSU campuses. So then your information is automatically going to be forwarded to the Pullman commencement coordinator, or the Vancouver commencement coordinator, you know, wherever you've chosen to walk.

And those folks will then send you a message in myWSU that just confirms your registration. So this process can sometimes take over a week, so don't panic if you don't get confirmation right away. But if you don't get something within a week, I would reach out to the campus that you're planning on participating in. Also, if you ever have any questions about your cap and gown order, you can always contact The Bookie here in Pullman. And that is the wsubookie, no space, so wsubookie.graduation@gmail.com with any questions.

I also want to just kind of take a break here and let you all know that we recently sent out announcements with lots of good information about graduation and commencement to students who have applied as of last week. That was sent out to students who were undergraduates who had applied for graduation for any of the upcoming ceremonies. Now if you are a graduate student, we haven't yet sent our information and we should probably be sending that out in the next week to 10 days, so just be anticipating that that's coming.

If you haven't applied for graduation for one of the upcoming semesters and you're just joining us tonight for information, don't worry. As soon as you apply for graduation, we'll be sure that at some point, you're sent this information. And we do send it out a couple of times during the semester.

I want to get back to talking about caps and gowns. If you did choose to have The Bookie possibly hold your order so that you can come to Pullman and pick it up, you might want to consider picking it up early, because sometimes the gowns are a little bit wrinkled and could use some pressing. So you know, there's usually an iron in the hotel rooms. So that's something good to know that you might want to pick it up early so that you can give it a good pressing before you wear it in commencement.

And then, here in Pullman, anyway, The Bookie is usually open from 7:30 in the morning to 7:00 at night the day before commencement, if you're planning on coming into town that day. And then on the day of commencement, if you're not going to make it into town until that morning, they're usually open from 7:30 in the morning till 5:00 on the day of commencement. And then you've got to return your cap and gown to The Bookie prior to closing on Saturday, if you're

planning on leaving town. Otherwise, like I said, they allow students to return them through 7:00 at night on Monday. So hope that gives you lots of good information about regalia.

ASWSU also has a cap and gown reimbursement program and sometimes they are able to reimburse the cost of caps and gowns for up to 50 graduates. So if you want more information about that, you can also log into CougSync and go to the ASWSU site in CougSync and just look at that information there.

So I gave you a little bit of information about the commencement logistics, but let's talk a little bit more about the Pullman ceremony logistics. So as I mentioned earlier, all commencement ceremonies are held at the Beasley Coliseum. And for fall commencement, all of the students who are going to walk in commencement walk all at once in one ceremony. For spring commencement, it's broken down into the three ceremonies just because there's so many students that are walking.

And again, free to go to the commencement ceremonies website at commencement.wsu.edu where they have the fall and the spring schedules, they have checklists, the regalia information, disability seating and parking information, about photography, and just lots of good information regarding commencement. Most of the commencement ceremonies last about two hours. I usually get a lot of questions about that. And like I said earlier, reservations aren't required and there aren't any admission fees or anything like that.

Prior to the ceremony, you're going to be asked to fill out a name card and it's very, very important that you do this. You're going to be asked to fill out that name card with a phonetic spelling of your name and you need to take care when doing that, otherwise they may pronounce your name incorrectly during the ceremony. So your name is going to be read aloud from that card as you walk across the stage and receive your diploma cover.

So it's just a cover. I have students ask about that. You know, I'm not going to get my diploma when I walk? But because you will have just very recently finished up the last of your degree requirements, they don't hand out diplomas in commencement. You actually are just handed a diploma cover. And then your degree or diploma is actually going to be sent out about two months after the commencement date.

So at the ceremony, there's going to be an official photographer and they are lined up on both sides of Beasley Coliseum. A lot of students wonder if they're going to know where they need to go. And every step of the way, there are going to be people telling you where to line up, here's a sign, here's the College of Business, line up next to this sign. There's people all over the place that want to help. If you're unsure of where to line up, there's going to be people all over to help you out with that.

Once you get into the Coliseum, you'll be shown where to sit, you'll line up, and then, as your class is called, you will all stand up as a group. And then you will basically just march in a line. You'll go through the photographer, then you'll be sent over to the folks that will be announcing

your name as you walk across the stage, where you will hand them your card that I talked about.

And then the announcer will use that to announce your name as you walk across the stage. And in real time, there is going to be a giant jumbotron going at all times in Beasley Coliseum that shows each student as they walk across the stage and shake the hand of the president of the university. So your friends and family will be able to see you very easily as you are picking up your diploma cover.

So I talked a little bit about photography. So your family and friends are welcome to take pictures, of course, but the pictures that are taken by the professional photographer at the event will also be available to you after commencement. And that information will be sent to you and if you would like to order pictures, you can, but you aren't required to order any pictures or pay for pictures if you don't wish to.

Another thing that I would like to talk about is special accommodations during the ceremonies. Sometimes we have folks that have a disability, or they have family members that have a disability or may have difficulty walking, and so those folks might find it easier to enter the Beasley Coliseum through what we call the north entrance. And you will be getting information about this once you RSVP to walk in commencement. I just wanted you to know that there is a way that it is easier to get into the Coliseum than the big ramps or stairs, and it's a very gentle sloping ramp that goes down to the commencement floor.

There also is handicap parking available all around the Beasley Coliseum, as there are at the other venues on the various campuses. So there's some limited disability seating inside the first three rows of seating on the concourse level in Beasley. And they just ask that people limit the number of family and friends that would be sitting with someone there just to make sure that there is plenty of space available for other folks that may have some kind of a disability.

All right. So we talked a little bit about-- let's see-- students who might need special accommodations and if there's anything that you would need that is very special, you can always contact the commencement coordinator for each campus. OK. So feel free to reach out if there is something special that you need for yourself or a family member to make sure that the day goes well for you.

So for the next step here, we want to talk a little bit about announcements and class rings. And those are also available through Jostens. And you can order announcements, you can order rings, there's jewelry, and there's different diploma frames, so lots and lots of different things available through Jostens, if you'd like to go to their website and have a look. And they have things personalized for the various campuses that students graduate on, so you can find your Cougar gear there.

If you are planning on attending the Pullman commencement ceremony, you can always print a campus map online by just going to the campus map portion of wsu.edu. Again, we'll be

sending out this information, if you haven't already received it. You can also contact us at 1-800-222-4978, if you want to just request that we send you a campus map.

If you are flying into Spokane because you have to come a long ways to come to Pullman, that is the closest international airport, anyway, which is about 70 miles north of Pullman, and the Wheatland Airport Express provides a pretty inexpensive shuttle service from the Spokane airport to the Pullman campus. If you're flying into Pullman, Pullman also has a shuttle and a few taxi cabs at our small little airport that are available if you should need a ride into Pullman, which just is really a quick three to five minute drive.

If you will be driving, there are certain areas on the Pullman campus that you can park in, on a first come, first serve basis. There are parking regulations that are enforced at all times, especially in handicapped areas. And if you have questions about parking at the other campuses, please be sure to contact the campus that you plan on attending at.

So oh, so, Chad, you're going to be flying in from Phoenix. That's a long ways to come. So that's great that you're coming. And yes, if you're flying into the Spokane airport, check out the Wheatland Airport Express and see if you can get that. And yes, we would love it if you could bring the warm weather with you. Much appreciated.

So let me just move on to some Global Campus and ASWSU events. We do have a reception the night before the commencement ceremony here in Pullman, and that is the evening before. And it's going to be at the Chinook Center here on the Pullman campus, which was formerly the old student bookstore, and that is going to be on Friday, May 4. And that is free to all family members and free to you as a graduation-- or as a graduate or a grad candidate.

So you can feel free to bring your family and friends and it's just a fun time to get together. They usually have a speaker. Butch the Cougar usually shows up at these events and so you can take pictures with your family, and yourself, and if you bring the kiddos, you can take all sorts of pictures with Butch. What else? There's usually some kind of live music and a light dinner.

And then they also take time to have the graduates and grad candidates introduce themselves and just maybe tell us just briefly about their journey. Because you have been on a real big journey and it takes a village to get somebody to graduate, so we want to include your family and thanking them for supporting you through this time and just give you a few minutes to, maybe, talk a little bit about your journey. So it can be very inspirational.

If you are planning on coming to the Pullman campus commencement ceremony, I do want to tell you that. It's really important that you secure your lodging early. If you're planning on graduating, for instance, next fall, it is not too early to get those reservations made at some of the hotels. I do want to let you know that just up the street from the Beasley Coliseum here in Pullman, if you're planning to attend here in Pullman, there have been two new hotels built. They're both Marriotts, and so if you would go on Google, Pullman, Marriott, they would show

up instantly. I believe one of them is a Marriott Garden Inn, or something like that, and the other one is like a Marriott Courtyard.

The nice thing about booking at one of the Marriotts is, is that they are both just right up the street from-- right up the street from the Beasley Coliseum. So if you park there, you can just stay parked there, and you could just put your cap and gown on and walk with your family and friends down the street to the Beasley Coliseum, without having to try and go down and park near the Coliseum and things like that. So if you're looking for a place to stay and you've got plenty of time to book something for next December or next May, I would recommend staying at one of the Marriotts just because you're within walking distance of the Beasley Coliseum.

So I've talked a lot about commencement and the various things we need to do for commencement. And I just want to talk lastly a little bit about graduation clearing. So let's say, you've completed all of your classes, you've walked in commencement, now what happens? So graduation clearing takes place within about four to six weeks after each graduation date in May, August, and December, even though we don't have a commencement in August, we are still graduating folks in August. So the degrees get posted to students' transcripts weekly during a graduation clearing period that starts after the grades have been posted.

Like, for instance, when the grades posted in this December, then the graduation process starts and it's completed this Friday, February 2. So during that entire time, the graduation office is looking for students who have cleared all their degree requirements. If you have a transcript that needs to be sent in from a community college or something else like that, it's very important that you get that in so there's time for that transcript to be evaluated, if you have another class posted from another institution. So you have to make sure that everything is done by that clearing date or you will not get your diploma. So this is really important to make sure that you have checked after you've graduated that you've cleared graduations in myWSU.

So if you have any questions about how to check for that, you can also ask your academic advisor, but it's pretty simple. You just go in and you look up your graduation date that is listed in your academic tab in myWSU, and when they show underneath a completion date, that means that you have cleared graduations, and you're done, and you are an official alum. So students, again, do not receive diplomas at commencement. You're going to receive a diploma cover.

So the diploma is going to be arriving later on, once the degree clearing process is complete, then the diplomas for all of the campus are all ordered in one giant batch, and then they're all sent out to students at a home address that's listed in myWSU. And again, that's why I said it's so important for you to make sure that at home address is correct.

So your degree is going to become official when it is posted to your transcript, not by your participation in commencement. So we have had students say, well, I walked in commencement. I thought I had graduated. And the commencement is the celebration. So

actually clearing and making sure that you have completed all your requirements in myWSU and then the receipt of your diploma is the official, I guess, the official clearing of your degree.

So I've got a bunch of questions over here that I want to answer. So Holly, you asked will you be notified when clearing is complete? So the way you're notified is that there is that little notice on your academic tab in myWSU that shows your completion date. So that's what you're going to want to be looking for. And like I said, if you're ever unclear about that, you can contact the graduations office, you can contact me, you can contact your advisor. So just look on your academics tab for the date that you've applied to graduate and then underneath that, once you've cleared, it's going to show a completion date.

So Britney, you said, is there any resource for dietary restrictions for these ceremonies? In general, they usually include gluten-free options. But if there is some kind of special dietary restriction that you have for the Pullman campus, you can feel free to email me and I will be happy to check on that for you. As far as other campuses, usually, it's just the commencement ceremony and not a reception the night before. So basically, it would be if you're going to be in Pullman, I'd be happy to check on that for you. So feel free to email me, again, at ckincaid@wsu.edu.

Now Holly, you had a good question. If you don't walk, do you get a cover mailed to you? And we don't, in general, just email the covers to students that don't participate in commencement, but if you wanted one and you didn't order one from Jostens, if you will contact me, I can help you with that.

And then, Celine, you asked, when's the official transcript going to be available? As soon as you have cleared graduations, you'll be able to order an official transcript online, if you want one. So that would be something, like I said, to be watching in myWSU. They do start posting students official clearing dates as soon as grades post at the end of your final semester, so you'll just want to watch for that completion date in myWSU and once you see that, you should be able to then go ahead and order your official transcript online.

So I think that, in general, I'm kind of at the end of our evening tonight, but I do want to take some time to answer any additional questions that any of you might have. Hopefully, this has helped to clear up the difference between graduation and commencement. I am here until 7:30 and I am happy to answer any additional questions that you have. And like I said, too, if you think of something later, feel free to email me at ckincaid@wsu.edu.

So any additional requests, feel free.

KAITLIN HENNESSY: Chrisi, we did get questions earlier on in the evening. I think there was a lot of activity was going on the chat box that asked, how does the Global Campus work to the times of when you line up for graduation? Like do you line up by Global Campus or by your college? How does that work?

CHRISI KINCAID: Oh, great question. So we used to line by the Global Campus, but we found that what we were doing is actually causing more confusion than it was worth. And so now what we have students do is, if you're a College of Business student, you're going to line up in the College of Business area. They're going to have very large signs that say Carson College of Business. And then, if you're an accounting major or a management major, they'll have very large signs for that.

If you're a com major, you'll see signs for that. HD, you know, for all the various majors. And like I said, there's people all over the place. They have crimson colored vests on. They're happy to help you with questions. The Beasley Coliseum is in the round, so you will actually be on the concourse area that goes all the way around the central Coliseum, just like the-- kind of like the Colosseum in Rome. And so you'll be lining up wherever you see the signs for your college and you won't be separated out by what campus that you are graduating from.

So Heather, you said, you mentioned financial aid exit counseling for students with loans. Is this necessary for students who received grant money only? And the answer is, I don't believe that you need exit counseling if you received grants only, but again, I do think it would be a good idea to check with the financial aid office just to make sure that you've got all your ducks in a row before you graduate.

Oh, Britney, you asked, how can I be certain which college I'm a part of? And if you have any questions about that, feel free to send me an email. If you are in Criminal Justice, or Social Sciences, or Humanities, or Psychology, you are under the umbrella of the College of Arts and Sciences.

If you are an Accounting, Hospitality, Business Management major, an MIS major, or a Management major, you are under the Carson College of Business. If you are in Strat Comm, you're in Communications. And I know that I've left some folks out, but if you have any questions about which college that you're actually a part of, feel free to email me or email your advisor. I'm happy to help.

So Chad, you had a question. I will be taking my last two classes, summer, first semester. Or summer one, like the first session of summer semester. Will my employers be able to contact WSU to verify my completion of those before the August verification process? And the answer is, if you're completing classes, you can go online into myWSU and print off an unofficial transcript showing that you are enrolled in the last of your classes to graduate.

But the graduations office cannot verify that you have completed your degree requirements and are just awaiting your diploma if the requirements are actually in progress. So it's not something that they can verify for you until the courses have actually been completed and are graded and all your requirements are complete. So if they do need proof that you're enrolled in the last of your requirements, you can always print off an unofficial transcript. So I hope that helps answer that question.

Oh, good.

KAITLIN HENNESSY: Chrisi, another comment about it how long does a commencement ceremony typically last?

CHRISI KINCAID: So Carly, the commencement ceremony typically lasts about two hours. Now sometimes the ceremony in December can last a little bit longer because they are combining all of the colleges together in one ceremony. But, in general, like in the May commencement ceremonies at the various campuses, there are going to last about two hours.

You are so welcome, Carly. And I'm just excited for all of you. This is a time to celebrate. And I graduated from WSU. It's been just a few years and I would not have missed the commencement ceremony for anything, right? I think if you're going to put all that work into it, it's a great excuse to celebrate all that hard work, especially with your family present.