

MASTERS/DOCTORAL MAY 16 2026 5 p.m.

CEREMONY FAQ



When and where is the ceremony?

A single ceremony for all graduates receiving their masters or doctoral degree(s) will take place Saturday, May 16, 2026, beginning promptly at 5:00 p.m. at Bradley University's Renaissance Coliseum. Directions to Renaissance Coliseum can be found [here](#).

How many guests can I invite?

Each graduate is allowed to invite and bring as many guests to the ceremony as they would like. Tickets are not required for the ceremony. However, in the **unlikely** event that seating becomes unavailable, some guests may have to stand for the duration of the event. The ceremony will also be livestreamed for guests who are unable to attend.

Will there be accessible seating for those who need it?

Yes, accessible seating will be available to guests. The first row of chairs on the floor of the gym will be reserved for accessible seating. There will also be accessible seating on the upper concourse that can be accessed via elevator.

What time do I have to arrive and how do I get to the Renaissance Coliseum?

Graduates will line up for the ceremony in the practice gym at the Renaissance Coliseum. The doors to the practice gym will open at 3:30 p.m. and graduates **MUST** be in line no later than 4:45 p.m. Directions to the Renaissance Coliseum can be found [here](#). All graduates are responsible for their own transportation to and from the event.

Where do students line up?

Students will line up in the practice gym of the Renaissance Coliseum located in the south end of the building. Doors to the gym will open at 3:30 p.m.; please enter through the doors facing the main street parking deck. There will be signs outside to get you to the proper entrance. Graduates **MUST** be in line no later than 4:45 p.m. to participate in the ceremony.

Do I need to bring anything with me?

Graduates should arrive dressed in their cap and gown and with their reader card in hand. Master's and doctoral students should not wear their hood, but carry it with them. Personal items cannot be left in the lineup area; please consider leaving all personal

items with your guests. Bradley University will not be held responsible for any items left behind, lost, or stolen during the ceremony.

How will my name be announced?

All graduates will be provided a reader card when they pick up their cap and gown prior to commencement; they will hand the card to a designated reader before crossing the stage. Distance education students will be able to pick up their reader cards the day of the ceremony in the line up area.

Can I record my name for proper pronunciation?

Yes, you will receive an email closer to the ceremony date with a customized link. This will take you to a registration page where you can record your name for our professional speaker to reference. If your name is frequently mispronounced, we strongly encourage you to complete this step.

How do I get my reader card?

Graduates will pick up their reader card when they pick up their cap and gown at the Grad Fair on May 7, 2026. Distance education students will be able to pick up their reader card in the graduate lineup area on May 16, 2026.

What time can guests arrive?

Guests may arrive at the Renaissance Coliseum as early as 3:30 p.m. Please note there will be a ceremony ending just prior; please have patience when arriving, and plan ahead! Please plan accordingly if standing for longer periods of time is difficult.

Where should I park?

Guests and graduates should park in the Main Street Parking Deck, located to the west of Renaissance Coliseum. Bradley University Police will be on site to help with traffic flow. You can find a map to the parking deck, along with other suggested parking locations [HERE](#).

Restricted Items

The following items are prohibited from the venue:

- Signs and/or Banners
- Weapons of Any Kind
- Illegal Substances
- Fireworks
- Alcohol

– Beach Balls

– Electronic Cigarettes /
Vape Pens

– Laser Pointers/Pens

Ceremony Bag Policy

Any bag that appears to be larger than the approved size of 12"x6"x12", will be subject to search by Bradley Security staff before being allowed to enter the arena.

Where should students and attendees meet after the ceremony? After the ceremony students should meet their families and guests on the Alumni Quad, located directly south of the Renaissance Coliseum and in front of the Hayden-Clark Alumni Center. See map [HERE](#). There will be a large tent set up in the event of inclement weather.

What is Grad Reception

Grad Reception will take place on May 15, 2026 at the alumni quad located next to the Hayden-Clark Alumni Center. There will be food and refreshments and students will have the opportunity to meet with faculty, family and friends. There will be a tent set up in case of inclement weather. More information will be provided as the event gets closer.

How long will my ceremony last?

The ceremony is estimated to last between 1 hr 30 min and 1 hr 45 min.

How do I order the cap and gown and when will I get it?

On-Campus Students:

You must order your cap and gown online through [Oak Hall](#). Students will receive an email communication providing them with ordering and pickup information closer to the ceremony date. The deadline to order a cap and gown is **April 1, 2026**.

Distance Education Students:

You must order your cap and gown online through [Oak Hall](#). The items you order will be sent to the address you provide when completing the order. The deadline to order a cap and gown is **April 1, 2026**.

How will I get my official commencement photo?

Professional photographers from Pro Pics will be at the ceremony to take portraits of graduates. Photos of the graduates crossing the stage, as well as individual portraits on multiple backgrounds, will be available for purchase from Pro Pics following the ceremony. To identify your photos and receive photo proofs, please visit www.BradleyUniversityPhotos.com to submit your information. You can email questions about photos to: info@propicsusa.com

Where do I get my cap and gown?

Cap and gown can be picked up during the Grad Fair, which will be held on May 7 from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Peplow Pavilion at the Hayden Clark Alumni Center. You will also pick up your reader card and get other useful information at the Grad Fair. If you cannot attend, you can have a third party pick up your cap and gown, but they must get permission from the Registrar's Office by emailing registrar@bradley.edu.

Commencement Help Desk Office Hours

Do you have questions about commencement? Do you need in-person help to complete your registration for commencement? Commencement staff will be available to assist you during open office hours. Please come to the front lobby of Comstock Hall Tuesday or Wednesday between 1 and 3 p.m., and staff will be able to answer your questions and help with the registration process. Note - this is for commencement registration only. Graduation eligibility/application is completed through the Office of the Registrar.

Will the ceremony be live streamed for guests who cannot attend? The ceremony will be livestreamed. The link will be available on Bradley's website at Bradley.edu 15 minutes before the start of the ceremony on May 16.

Will I receive a diploma cover?

Students who attend the ceremony will receive their diploma cover during the ceremony. Diploma covers will NOT be mailed to students who do not attend the ceremony.

When will I get my diploma?

Diplomas and official transcripts will be mailed approximately six to eight weeks after graduation, pending successful completion of degree requirements. If you have a grade hold on your record for any reason, your diploma(s) will not be released until the hold is cleared. Holds do not inhibit the conferral of a degree, only the release of the official documents (i.e., diplomas, transcripts). Please contact the Office of the Registrar at registrar@bradley.edu or 309-677-3101 if you have any questions.

Will I get a tassel?

If you ordered a cap and a gown through Oak Hall, your tassel will come with your order.

How do I get my honors stole?

If you have earned an honors stole and you ordered a cap and gown, the honors stole will be included when you pick up your cap and gown. Please note, honors are only applicable to undergraduate students and are not bestowed on master's or doctoral students.

What is a legacy stole?

The legacy stole can be worn by a graduate who has a parent, grandparent or sibling who graduated from Bradley University. Legacy stoles can be ordered through Jostens at the time of cap and gown ordering.

Does Bradley have yard signs?

Yes! You can order a standard or customizable sign [here](#).

Am I required to participate in my commencement ceremony in order to graduate?

No, if you choose not to participate in your commencement ceremony and you have met the university requirements, you will receive your diploma in the mail.

If I don't participate in my commencement ceremony, do I still have to apply to graduate?

Yes, you must apply to graduate regardless of participation in a ceremony. For information about how to apply to graduate as an undergraduate student, please visit the [Registrar's Office](#).