Dear Families of the Class of 2018,
With Commencement now days away, I want to share a few tips to help make this a great weekend for all.

**On Commencement Sunday**
The Library Quad, our outdoor Commencement venue, will open at 8:00 a.m. The procession begins at 9:30, and the ceremony itself begins at 10:00. Please plan to occupy only six seats per graduate in the Library Quad, and please refrain from saving seats. If additional guests plan to attend, we invite them sit in Chapin Hall, immediately adjacent to the Library Quad, where the ceremony will be live-streamed. This venue is air-conditioned, offers comfortable seating, and is accessible.

**Please review accommodations for our guests with disabilities.** Comprehensive information about parking and access for visitors with disabilities can be found here. We ask that you arrive early for major weekend events—and by 8:30 Sunday for Commencement—so that we can help you from where you’ll park to where you’ll be seated.

**Be prepared for all kinds of weather.** Commencement at Williams is an outdoor event, unless day-of predictions for electrical storms or torrential downpours would endanger attendees. A light, even moderate, rain won't stop the ceremony, so please pay close attention to the weather forecast. Bring a raincoat and umbrella or (if we end up with bright blue skies) a hat, sunscreen, and sunglasses, as there will be little to no shade. Again, the ceremony will be livestreamed in Chapin Hall, adjacent to the Commencement site, so you can always take a “weather break” there. The ceremony lasts approximately two hours. The location of family seating will allow you to get up, stretch, and walk around without interrupting the proceedings. Water coolers will be stationed at convenient locations around the Commencement site, but we recommend you bring a water bottle as well. Coffee and light snacks will be available for purchase in Paresky Center.

If extreme weather forces us indoors, here's what to keep in mind:
• We will email your seniors at around 7:00 a.m. to let them know. If Commencement moves inside, the College Bell will sound continuously at 8:30 a.m. to alert those on campus.
• We will have given each family 4 tickets to the Lansing Chapman Rink. (Your seniors will receive these tickets when they pick up their caps and gowns.)
• The rink will open at 8:00 a.m. for those ticket holders who wish to arrive and get settled early. The procession will step off at 9:40 a.m., and the Commencement ceremony will begin at 10:00 a.m.
• Family members without tickets will be welcome to view Commencement in simulcast from nearby Chandler Gymnasium.
• For those off campus, the event also will be streamed online so that anyone with an internet connection can view the ceremony from a computer, tablet, or smart phone at commencement.williams.edu.
• Our indoor Commencement venue has limited wi-fi capacity: a high volume of traffic will likely result in slow connect speeds.

In the event of severe weather, Saturday’s Ivy Exercises will be moved inside to the Lansing-Chapman Rink. This Commencement map will help you find all rain-or-shine venues and parking places. Review the full weekend schedule here.
Rain or shine, Commencement 2018 promises to be a wonderful event for you and your graduating Williams students. For now, we thank you for being flexible, remind you to pack some rain gear, and wish you a safe journey to Williamstown.
Sincerely,

Jay Thoman
College Marshal and J. Hodge Markgraf Professor of Chemistry