Dear Families of the Class of 2016,

As the school year commences, many Williams families are looking forward to celebrating their senior's college graduation in June. It is my pleasure to invite you to attend the 227th Commencement of Williams College. My colleagues and I congratulate you on your Williams senior's accomplishments while a student here.

Over the coming months we will work out the details of Commencement weekend 2016. In order to help you plan ahead, here are the dates and times of the four major events:

Ivy Exercises, Saturday, June 4, 1:10 p.m.
Baccalaureate, Saturday, June 4, 5:00 p.m.
Commencement, Sunday, June 5, 10:00 a.m.
President's Reception, Sunday, June 5, 12:15 p.m.

In addition, I have enclosed an information sheet giving you an overview of the weekend. You will receive a more detailed calendar in March. As events develop, we will post updated information on our Commencement website.

http://commencement.williams.edu

If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact Carrie Greene (413-597-2347) or me by telephone or email us at commencement@williams.edu.

We look forward to seeing you at Commencement.

Sincerely,

Jay Thoman
J. Hodge Markgraf Professor of Chemistry
College Marshal
Williams College Commencement Weekend
Saturday and Sunday, June 4 & 5, 2016

Overview of the Main Events
Ivy Exercises, 1:10–2:40 p.m. Saturday. Ivy Exercises, held outdoors on the West College Lawn (the Science Quad), is an informal event presented by the Officers of the Senior Class. Members of the Class plant ivy, read the Class Poem and the Class History, perform music, and sing the College Song. The Dean of the College announces over one hundred student awards. The event ends with dropping a watch from the top of Thompson Memorial Chapel. If the watch breaks, the Class will have good luck! Tickets are not required.

Baccalaureate, 5:00–6:15 p.m., Saturday. Baccalaureate is a service of gratitude and remembrance, using the languages of many religions to celebrate the transformation of learning into wisdom. Seniors will gather in Chapin Hall. Tickets are required for family members with a limit of one ticket per senior. Other family members and guests are welcome to view a live stream of the service in the ’62 Center for Theatre and Dance, which offers plenty of seating for all. Tickets for the live stream are not required. If you plan to make Saturday evening dinner reservations after the ceremony, it is best to make them for 6:30 p.m. or later.

Commencement, 10:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m., Sunday. This is the big event! Commencement is held outdoors on West College Lawn, weather permitting. It begins with a formal academic procession. Three members of the Senior Class give brief speeches, honorary degrees are awarded, and an honorary degree recipient gives the Commencement Address. Finally, President Adam Falk awards each senior his or her diploma. Tickets are not required for outdoor Commencement.

President's Reception, immediately after Commencement on Sunday. President Falk invites the graduates and their guests to this buffet lunch on Chapin Lawn. Tickets are not required.

A note for family members and friends who are unable to attend Commencement Weekend events: Williams College will live stream Baccalaureate and Commencement for viewing on computers around the world. See the Commencement website on the event days for the link. We will also post segments of the ceremonies online shortly after the weekend.

Tickets
All of the official events of Commencement weekend are free of charge. As noted above, tickets are not required for Ivy Exercises, outdoor Commencement, or the President's Reception.

In case heavy rain forces us to hold Commencement indoors in the Lansing-Chapman Rink, all seniors will receive four guest tickets for the rink when they pick up their caps and gowns. Unlimited overflow seating will be available in Chandler Gymnasium where the ceremony can be viewed on a large screen.

Due to limited seating in Chapin Hall, tickets are required for families and other guests. In April or May, seniors have the opportunity to request a single guest ticket for Baccalaureate in Chapin Hall on a first-come-first-served basis. Tickets are not required for the live stream of Baccalaureate in the ’62 Center for Theater and Dance.
General Information

Accommodations:
- A full list of hotels, motels, and B&B's in and around Williamstown can be found at [http://commencement.williams.edu/housing/](http://commencement.williams.edu/housing/)
- Seniors on financial aid from the college may request beds in Mission Park for their families on Friday and Saturday nights of Commencement Weekend. The charge is $20 per bed for the entire weekend. Aided seniors will be invited to reserve campus housing in April.

Caps and Gowns: The College provides Greenweaver caps and gowns (made from 100% post consumer plastic bottles) at no charge to students. Seniors may pick them up Wednesday, June 1 through Saturday, June 4.

Handicap Access: Every effort is made to anticipate the needs of the many guests who will be gathering for this occasion. We do have handicap seating available for guests who need it. Please contact us if you have a handicapped or impaired family member and would like specific instructions. Although we cannot provide wheelchairs, we encourage you to contact Surgimed (109 Eagle Street, North Adams, 413-663-8655) at least one week in advance if you need such services.

Pictures and videos are taken by independent companies. You will be contacted prior to graduation by the following firms: Commencement Photos (978-851-5924) and Collegiate Video (802-365-4414).

Rain Plan: Every effort is made to hold Ivy Exercises and Commencement outdoors. In the event of heavy rain, Ivy Exercises and Commencement will be moved inside to the Lansing-Chapman Rink. Admission to Lansing-Chapman Rink for Commencement is by ticket only. Chapel bells will toll at 9:00 a.m. Sunday morning to signal indoor Commencement.

Yearbooks: *The Gulielmensian* will contact parents and students about ordering yearbooks.

Contact Information

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