

## **Graduation Banquet FAQs:**

### **What is the banquet?**

Each spring, the School of Public Affairs & Administration (SPAA) hosts an annual graduation reception and banquet to recognize and celebrate all undergraduate, MPA and PhD students who have graduated or are graduating during the current academic year (summer, fall and spring semesters).

### **When and where is it held?**

The 2017 SPAA banquet will be held on Friday, April 28 in the Kansas Memorial Union Ballroom (Level at 6:30 p.m. Doors to the Ballroom will open at 6:00 p.m. so that you may find seats together with your family and friends. Please try and fill any and all seats – if you have two in your party, please find seats at a table with two spaces remaining vs. starting a new table.

### **How many people will be there?**

Typically, a couple hundred people attend the banquet, including SPAA faculty and staff, graduating students, family and friends.

### **Can I invite guests to the banquet?**

Absolutely! Invite anyone with whom you would like to share this moment of celebration and recognition. There is no limit to the number of guests you may invite. Registration information can be found on the School's website ([kupa.ku.edu/graduation](http://kupa.ku.edu/graduation)).

### **How much does it cost to attend the banquet?**

The banquet is complimentary for all graduates. The cost for each guest is \$30, current KU SPAA students are \$20 each, children ages 2-10 are \$15 each and children under age 2 are free.

### **Is registration for the banquet required?**

Yes, we ask graduating students and guests who plan to attend the banquet to register by **Wednesday April 19, 2017**. Complete the registration form on our website ([kupa.ku.edu/graduation](http://kupa.ku.edu/graduation)). Advance registration is necessary so we may obtain an accurate headcount for catering.

### **Where should I park?**

The Mississippi Street Garage is connected to the Kansas Union. If you look for the Mississippi Street Garage on the [KU Parking Map](#), it's at about K# and is an orange block with a listing of MISSPG.

[Visitor parking](#) prices (and other information) is on the KU Parking website (The Mississippi Garage is \$1.75 for the first hour and \$1.50 per hour for all subsequent hours.) If you need to talk to the Parking Office (785-864-PARK) during their office hours, their hours are listed at the bottom of their [website](#).

Paying for the Mississippi Garage can be done by credit card as you exit or by cash payment through the machines located on the 4<sup>th</sup> level of the parking garage in the stairwell/elevator area.

**Please do not attempt to park in any of the apartment complex lots or any of the lots on campus (other than the parking garage) as these are heavily enforced restricted lots and you will be ticketed and/or towed.**

**Is the Union wheelchair-accessible?** Yes.

**How do people dress for the banquet?**

Typically, people dress up a bit. Men wear a suit or jacket and tie, and women wear a dress or business suit. Those who have uniforms – law enforcement, fire fighters, etc. – may choose to wear them.

**How many students are in the SPAA academic programs?**

The majority of SPAA students are in the MPA program. In any given year, total SPAA enrollment includes about 75 undergraduates (the undergrad program is only available at the Edwards Campus), 15 PhD students, and 150 MPA students from all three campuses. Only a portion of these students graduate in any given year, but certainly, MPA is the largest program in the School and at the graduation banquet.

**How is the Ballroom arranged?**

A large stage is set up at the front of the room. It stands about 3 steps above the ballroom floor. The floor is full of round tables with 8 settings on each table. Groups may want to be there when the Ballroom opens at 6:00 p.m. to claim their tables.

**What happens at the banquet?**

The banquet begins with a brief welcome from the SPAA Director and a buffet dinner. Then there are a few recognitions and short speeches. Among the recognitions are notable graduates, alumni, SPAA partners, and outstanding graduates from each of our programs –

After an intermission, each of the cohorts is recognized.

- Graduating PhD students – usually 1-2 per year – are called to the stage and presented by his/her advisor. Graduates shake hands with their Dissertation Committee members, who are assembled on the stage, and get a picture with School Director, Reggie Robinson.
- Graduating undergraduate students – usually 15 or so – line up alphabetically by last name by the stage and then are called to the stage to be recognized individually and get a picture with School Director, Reggie Robinson. . A favorite memory of each graduate (collected in advance of the banquet\*) is read aloud while the student shakes hands with an assembled line of Undergraduate Committee members.
- Graduating MPA students – usually 40 or so – line up alphabetically by last name by the stage in their regalia and are called to the stage individually to be hooded by SPAA faculty. A favorite memory of each graduate (collected in advance of the banquet\*) is read aloud while the student shakes hands with a line of faculty members.

\* When registering for the banquet, each undergraduate and MPA student is asked to submit a few words about a memorable aspect of their time in the School. Those brief remarks are read aloud as the student makes his or her way across the stage. The favorite memory can be anything significant that comes to mind when you think of pursuing your degree. Past graduates have mentioned particular classes, faculty members, humorous or memorable experiences, etc.

After the end of the MPA hooding process, all graduates gather on stage as a group, and typically, John Nalbandian leads the entire room in singing the alma mater and doing the Rock Chalk cheer.

The SPAA graduation banquet concludes after this, and graduates are asked to stay at the stage for group photos.

### **Are students inducted into Pi Alpha Alpha at the banquet?**

Pi Alpha Alpha is the honor society for schools of public affairs and administration. Student eligibility in Pi Alpha Alpha is determined in advance of the banquet. Eligible students are contacted and given the opportunity to join Pi Alpha Alpha, which requires a \$50 payment. At the graduation banquet, Pi Alpha Alpha inductees are presented with a pin and certificate. Students who have earned Pi Alpha Alpha honors are also designated in the graduation program. There is no formal induction ceremony.

### **Do I need to have a cap and gown?**

\*Only MPA graduates will wear a cap and gown at this graduation banquet, in addition to a tassel and master's hood.

For undergraduates, graduation regalia consists of two pieces: a cap with a tassel and a gown. You will **not** need regalia to participate in the SPAA graduation banquet, but will need it to participate in the University's commencement ceremony.

For MPA graduates, graduation regalia consists of three pieces: a black cap with a black tassel, a black gown, and a master's hood. The hood is black with a crimson and blue interior (each school has its own colors) and white velvet lining (each academic specialty has its own colors as well). You will need regalia to participate in the SPAA graduation banquet and any of the University graduation events.

For doctoral graduates, graduation regalia consists of three pieces: a cap with tassel, a gown, and a doctoral hood. You will **not** need regalia to participate in the SPAA graduation banquet, but will need it to participate in the University graduation events.

### **Where do I get regalia?**

All regalia can be purchased or rented from the Kansas Union Bookstore ([kubookstore.com/c-230-graduation.aspx](http://kubookstore.com/c-230-graduation.aspx)).

The School has some master's regalia donated by former graduates that is available for you to borrow on a first come, first served basis. Email Alajah Fitzpatrick at [puad2@ku.edu](mailto:puad2@ku.edu) if you're interested in this option. She will need to know your height and US hat size ([johnhelmer.com/level.itml/icOid/54](http://johnhelmer.com/level.itml/icOid/54)).

**Will students' guests be introduced?**

There just isn't time to introduce guests individually during the ceremony, so we'll applaud the audience as a whole for their support of the graduates. SPAA faculty and staff would love to meet your guests before or after the banquet.

**Are small children welcome?**

Yes. They are certainly welcome if you feel their presence would enhance your enjoyment of the evening. You might position yourself near an exit in case they get bored or restless.

**What about the University-wide hooding ceremony and walking down the hill?**

Many SPAA graduates enjoy participating university-wide KU graduation events.

MPA graduates may want to participate in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences master's hooding ceremony. Typically, participating students ask one of their professors to "hood" them at that ceremony. (Note: if you would like a specific professor to hood you, please contact that professor directly, either via email or phone, well in advance of the ceremony.) For more information on this event, please visit the College Office of Graduate Affairs website ([clas.ku.edu/coga/graduation/ceremonies](http://clas.ku.edu/coga/graduation/ceremonies)).

Doctoral graduates may want to participate in the doctoral hooding ceremony. For more information about the doctoral hooding ceremony, please visit the Graduate Studies website ([graduate.ku.edu/doctoral-hooding-ceremony](http://graduate.ku.edu/doctoral-hooding-ceremony)) or contact them at [graduate@ku.edu](mailto:graduate@ku.edu) or 785-864-8040.

All graduates are eligible to participate in the university-wide commencement ceremony that takes place Sunday, May 14, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. (CDT) at Memorial Stadium. Students assemble at the Campanile for the traditional walk down the hill into the stadium. Friends and family should either find a place on the hill or in the stadium when they can see and cheer their passing graduate. See [commencement.ku.edu/](http://commencement.ku.edu/) for more on commencement or contact the Office of Public Affairs at [kupublicaffairs@ku.edu](mailto:kupublicaffairs@ku.edu) or 785-864-7100.

For those participating in the commencement ceremony, we offer a couple of suggestions:

- If the day is at all warm, dress lightly beneath your robe...that black synthetic fabric is hot!
- If you want to walk as a group, gather somewhere at the edge of the chaos – say in front of Wescoe – then walk over to the Campanile.
- Decide early whether you're going to take a seat and enjoy the graduation ceremony, or just march down the hill, across the field, and out the north end of the stadium.
- Take your cellphone so you can find friends among the thousands of people who will gather on the hill.
- Have fun!

The University will send you more information on graduation events.

Any other questions? Please contact Kristina Clark ([kristinaclark@ku.edu](mailto:kristinaclark@ku.edu) or 785-864-9090) or Alajah ([puad2@ku.edu](mailto:puad2@ku.edu) or 785-864-3527).