

# FSU to host virtual commencement ceremony for Spring 2020

BY: [DENNIS SCHNITTKER](#) | PUBLISHED: **APRIL 16, 2020** | 3:33 PM | SHARE: [f](#) [t](#)



**Editor's note:** Names of the 7,000 graduates will be read aloud by their college in separate videos to be posted at [commencement.fsu.edu](http://commencement.fsu.edu) on May 2. Graduates' names will not be read aloud during the virtual ceremony as doing so would extend the program by several hours.

## **Graduates and families invited to participate remotely while practicing social distancing**

Florida State University will stream a virtual commencement ceremony for its spring graduates Saturday, May 2.

President John Thrasher will preside over the ceremony, which will be streamed on the university's website, Facebook and YouTube channels. The ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. ET.

"We were all heartbroken when the coronavirus pandemic forced us to cancel spring commencement at the Tucker Center," Thrasher said. "We still want to recognize our students on graduation day and award the academic degrees that they earned through years of study and hard work. Hopefully, this virtual ceremony will give our graduates and their loved ones an opportunity to participate in a meaningful shared experience."

The virtual ceremony will incorporate many of the traditional customs associated with the usual on-campus commencement exercises, such as an opening processional to "Pomp and Circumstance," the playing of the National Anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance, the official conferring of graduate and undergraduate academic degrees, and the turning of tassels on the graduates' caps.

Thrasher will be joined at the virtual ceremony by a handful of university administrators in full academic regalia. Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Sally McRorie, Dean of Undergraduate Studies Karen Laughlin, Dean of the Graduate School Mark Riley, and Dean of the Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship Susan Fiorito will participate while observing social distancing guidelines.

Ed Burr, chair of the FSU Board of Trustees, and 2019-2020 Student Body President Evan Steinberg will deliver brief remarks via video.

The virtual ceremony will also include a commencement address by Mark Zeigler, a teaching professor from the FSU School of Communication.

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of traditional spring commencement ceremonies scheduled at Florida State and at other institutions across the nation. FSU normally hosts four separate commencement ceremonies at the end of the spring semester to accommodate its graduates and their guests.

Several changes have been made to shorten the ceremony and ensure the health and safety of the participants. No graduates or guests will be present. Graduates and their family members and friends should remain at home and not come to campus.

Graduates' names will not be individually announced during the virtual ceremony due to time constraints. Names will briefly appear at the end of the virtual ceremony and can be found in the digital commencement program that will be posted online at [commencement.fsu.edu](http://commencement.fsu.edu) prior to the ceremony.

Florida State will award degrees to 6,973 graduates this semester: 5,628 bachelor's degrees, 1,134 master's degrees and 211 doctorates. These totals include graduates at FSU Panama City and the university's campus in the Republic of Panama. The university will recognize students who have earned academic honors as well as student-veterans and members of the Garnet and Gold Scholar Society.

The College of Medicine, which will graduate 114 new medical doctors, has scheduled a virtual commencement ceremony for 10 a.m. Saturday, May 16. The ceremony will be livestreamed at [med.fsu.edu](http://med.fsu.edu). The College of Law will award 159 juris doctor degrees, 33 juris master's degrees and five LL.M. degrees at a ceremony to be held at a later date.

A campus celebration for the spring 2020 graduates will be held at a future date after public health officials determine it is safe to resume large social gatherings. Plans will be announced well in advance to allow sufficient time to make travel arrangements.

"When it's safe to do so, we hope our spring graduates will come back to campus so we can celebrate together," Thrasher said. "In the meantime, we hope they will participate in this virtual ceremony and share their commencement photos and videos with the university community via social media."

The virtual spring commencement ceremony will be streamed at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 2, via the following websites and social media platforms:

[live.wfsu.org](http://live.wfsu.org)  
[YouTube.com/floridastate](https://www.youtube.com/floridastate)  
[Facebook.com/floridastate](https://www.facebook.com/floridastate)

The virtual ceremony will also be telecast in the Tallahassee area at 6:30 p.m. May 2, on Comcast cable channel 4.

It will be archived online for future viewing on-demand at [www.learningforlife.fsu.edu/fsu-graduation/](http://www.learningforlife.fsu.edu/fsu-graduation/).