Spring Commencement FAQs

Are tickets required for guests?
No, everyone is welcome to attend. If the ceremony needs to be moved inside, due to inclement weather, every effort will be made to accommodate all guests. Unlike the Mountaineer Bowl, the gymnasium has limited seating.

What time should I arrive?
Graduates are required to be at the Mountaineer Bowl by 9:15, in their cap and gown. Many families and guests begin to arrive at that time. If you have a large group that wants to sit together, you may want to arrive earlier.

How should I dress, what should I bring?
The commencement ceremony takes place outside, at the Mountaineer Bowl. It is only moved inside if we have a severe weather situation. Dress varies widely. Family and friends are invited to sit in the bleachers and on the grass along the field.

The weather can vary widely in the Gunnison Valley in May. Wear layers and sunscreen for altering weather scenarios, from warm and sunny to cloudy and brisk. You may want to consider bringing a blanket to sit on, in the bleachers or on the grass, or as an extra layer if the winds kicks up. The Bookstore will have their trailer open to purchase incidentals and memorabilia.

Where can we park and how far will we have to walk?
Parking is available in all lots on campus. Lots closest to the Bowl will be reserved for those with physical limitations and others who need closer access. Complimentary shuttles will be available to/from area hotels, and throughout the parking lot to ease congestion at the Mountaineer Bowl entrance.

Who do I contact if guests have mobility issues?
We do make special arrangements for handicapped seating and parking. When parking, let Security know your needs. You may also contact Ginny Hayes at 970-943-2130 with specific questions ahead of time.

How can I get the best pictures?
Western hires a photographer to take each graduate’s picture when they receive their degree. Prints will be available directly from the photographer at www.gunnipix.com. Given wind and weather variables, perfect photos cannot be guaranteed. The photographer will be available to take additional photos after the ceremony.

You are welcome and encouraged to take your own pictures. Please respect flagged boundaries.

Reception Information:

Friday, from 5:00 – 7:00pm: Senior Reception, with light refreshments, will be held in the University Center. Family and friends are welcome to attend and mingle with faculty and staff. A slideshow of graduates will be on display. (If you have pictures to include in the slideshow contact Sara Phillips at 970-943-2176.)

Saturday, immediately following commencement: President Greg Salsbury will host a reception for graduates, their families and friends at the University Center.