

May 15, 2018

Dear Graduating Senior:

On Sunday, June 17, Union College will hold its 224th Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2018. Information regarding Commencement weekend is posted at www.union.edu/commencement, where any updates will also be posted. Please forward this web address to family and guests attending. All involved in the planning of the ceremony want it to be a meaningful and exciting experience for you and your family. Since there is no rehearsal, I want to take this opportunity to outline some aspects of the ceremony that you should understand in advance.

Commencement Exercises will be held outside, weather permitting, in front of Schaffer Library, with the academic procession at 9:30 a.m. followed by the ceremony at 10:00 a.m. Please be sure to assemble on South Terrance Lane no later than 8:45 a.m. The faculty and student marshals will help each of you find your place in line. In the event of rain, the website and phone number (518-388-8373) will give the location for assembly. The arrangement of the graduates will be in alphabetical order. It is imperative that you arrive on time so that alphabetical order can be properly arranged. Our goal is to ensure that family members and friends will be able to anticipate the moment of your graduation. Otherwise, as has been the case at times in the past, family members may miss the moment. Accordingly, only if you remain in alphabetical order can we assure you that we will be able to read your name and have the photographers record your graduation without error. Please note that no alcoholic beverages may be brought to the ceremony, or to the areas in which students line up.

After you receive your diploma case, please return to your seat and remain seated during the rest of the ceremony. At the conclusion of the ceremony, graduates will pass through the ranks of faculty and staff to allow them to be the first to congratulate you and your class, the newest members of the alumni body. Please then proceed to Rugby Field (or in Messa Rink in the event of rain), where tables of departments and programs will be situated. You will be able to retrieve your diploma and will have a chance to socialize informally with your family, classmates and faculty.

In the event of sustained, drenching rain or severe weather, the ceremony will be held in the Memorial Field House. There will be no marching. Please go straight to the graduates reserved area no later than 9:15 a.m. Look for your seats in alphabetical order and be seated. Due to limited indoor seating capacity and compliance with the fire code, you can have a maximum of 4 rain tickets to the Memorial Field House. Other guests may seek refuge in the adjacent Messa Rink and view the ceremony on a big screen. No tickets are required to get into Messa Rink.

To help me learn to pronounce your name correctly for the Commencement ceremony, I am asking that you go to <http://www.name-coach.com/record/UC2018> and follow the instructions there. You will type in your name, email and cellphone number; you will immediately receive a call back at the cellphone number you provide. Listen to the instructions and record your name. If you do not have access to a cellphone, or if you have any difficulty, please stop by Emily Tong's office in Feigenbaum Hall, contact her by phone at 518-388-6102 or email her at tonge@union.edu.

In order to ensure that you will have a lasting memory of this occasion, GradImages will take three individual pictures of you: first before you step up to the stage, second as you receive your diploma case from President Ainlay, and the third a close-up after you leave the Library Porch before you walk down the Lippman Hall Colonnade. Approximately two weeks after the Commencement, Grad Images will send you a selection of the proofs so you may purchase photographs. In addition, Balfour will be providing graduation announcements and other related products. Allowing these companies to provide you information is intended as a service. You are under no obligation to purchase their products.

I want to make sure that you are aware of the activities that will take place on Saturday, June 16. The Baccalaureate Commemoration will take place at 4:00 p.m. in Memorial Chapel. This is a ceremony for the graduating seniors and their guests, with senior class speakers, a faculty speaker and music. Please return to campus at 8:00 p.m. to attend the Garnet Gala in the ballroom in College Park Hall. Registration is required (<http://www.union.edu/garnetgala>) and admission is free. I encourage you and your family to attend both of these events.

I look forward to seeing you on Commencement Weekend and to celebrating with you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Strom Thacker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Strom" and last name "Thacker" clearly distinguishable.

Strom Thacker
Stephen J. and Diane K. Ciesinski Dean of the Faculty
and Vice President for Academic Affairs