

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Fall 2026

Commencement Guide

December 4th & 5th, 2026
Gentry Center Complex

Welcome

CONGRATULATIONS, FALL 2026 GRADUATES

Congratulations on reaching this extraordinary milestone. As a Tennessee State University graduate, you join distinguished alumni who uphold the proud history of this institution and represent its bright future. Your accomplishment provides a foundation for your personal and professional life.

This guide provides important information regarding the Fall 2026 Commencement Ceremonies. Please follow the guidelines to help ensure a memorable experience for you and your family.

Best wishes for a prosperous future as you hold close the motto, Think. Work. Serve.

— Office of the Registrar

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES

Friday, December 4, 2026 | 5:00 p.m.
College of Education · School of Graduate Studies

Saturday, December 5, 2026 | 8:00 a.m.
College of Agriculture · College of Business
College of Health Sciences · College of Public Service

Saturday, December 5, 2026 | 1:00 p.m.
College of Engineering · College of Liberal Arts
College of Life & Physical Sciences

Graduates must arrive 90 minutes before their ceremony.

Guidelines

COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPATION

Students seeking to participate must:

- Apply for graduation by October 15, 2026.
- Complete the Senior Exit Exam (undergraduate students only).
- Complete required courses, exams and degree hours.
- Complete the First Destination Survey (undergraduate and graduate students).

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

All fees and other financial obligations to the University must be paid in full for the degree to be received, as stated in the source guide. Financial statements are available through myTSU or the Bursar's Office at (615) 963-7521.

Delinquencies include parking and library fines. Students who received a guaranteed student loan through the University must complete an exit interview before graduation. Contact Financial Aid at (615) 963-5701.

DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS

- Degrees will be awarded and transcripts available by December 18, 2026.
- Diplomas will be mailed Tuesday, December 22, 2026, to the address on the graduation application; address confirmation will be sent before mailing.
- Graduates receive a complimentary digital diploma.
- The diploma name is the name of record on the TSU transcript.
- The stated degree conferral date is December 5, 2026.

Regalia & Etiquette

ACADEMIC REGALIA

Academic regalia is provided by the University Bookstore at no additional charge and has been ordered on graduates' behalf. Pickup begins Wednesday, November 18, 2026, by last name. The Office of the Registrar does not distribute regalia.

ATTIRE

- Full academic regalia and black or dark shoes are required.
- Men: dark slacks, white shirt and an appropriate tie.
- Women: dark shoes and attire that does not extend beyond the regalia. Wear shoes suitable for walking.

BEHAVIOR AND CEREMONY PROTOCOL

- Clear bags only: plastic, vinyl or PVC.
- Do not decorate or alter academic regalia, including mortarboards.
- Graduates must remain seated until the ceremony ends.
- No food is permitted in the arena.
- Guests may not sit with graduates on the commencement floor.

RESPECTING THE OCCASION

Proper conduct is expected. Chants, stepping, stomping, dancing or other disruptive actions on stage are prohibited and may result in consequences, including fines as described in the source guide. These movements may create safety risks. Help make the ceremony respectful and joyful for everyone.

Academic Distinctions

ACADEMIC HONORS

The University Bookstore supplies honor cords to undergraduate students designated by the Office of the Registrar as graduating with honors.

Cum Laude — GPA of at least 3.25
Magna Cum Laude — GPA of at least 3.50 Summa Cum Laude — GPA of at least 3.75

UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

Students who participated in the University Honors College graduate with university honors upon achieving a GPA of at least 3.25 and meeting the College's established requirements. Honor cords are provided by the University Honors College.

ACCESSIBLE SEATING

Graduates requesting accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services at (615) 963-7400 or achunn@tnstate.edu at least one week before graduation. Special seating and parking will be arranged.

Guests using wheelchairs, walkers or canes may have one companion in reserved accessible seating. Other family members should follow usher directions.

TICKETS

Commencement is currently not a ticketed event. This may change based on seating capacity. Graduates will be notified by email of any updates.

Parking & Arrival

ACCESSIBLE PARKING

Wilson Hall Parking Lot: designated accessible parking with placard.
Gentry Main Lot and Humphries: additional accessible and public parking as listed in the source guide.

PUBLIC AND DESIGNATED PARKING

Public: Torrence Hall, Holland Hall and Plant Area.
Volunteers and employees: Softball Parking Area.
Board of Trustees, Foundation Board and Cabinet: Football Stadium Parking Lot. Overflow: Albion Street and Schrader Lane.

SHUTTLE AND GUEST ARRIVAL

A shuttle bus or van will assist guests traveling between Schrader Lane and the Torrence Hall guest lots. Parking attendants will be available in campus lots to direct guests. Shuttle service will transport guests from designated lots to the venue. Ushers will direct guests requiring accessible seating.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

TSU Police: (615) 963-5171
Office of Disability Services: (615) 963-7400

Graduate Preparation

NAME CARDS

Name cards are required for seating placement and to have your name announced during the ceremony. Pickup: Office of the Registrar, Floyd Payne Campus Center, Room 305
Hours: 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m., beginning November 18, 2026

ALPHABETICAL PICKUP SCHEDULE

November 18: Last names A–H
November 19: Last names I–P
November 20: Last names Q–Z

CAP AND GOWN PICKUP

Location: University Bookstore
Begins: Wednesday, November 18 at 10:00 a.m.
Distribution follows the alphabetical schedule above through November 20. Beginning November 23, Bookstore staff will assist graduates who missed their assigned day through graduation day.

MANDATORY GRADUATION REHEARSAL

Location: Gentry Center Complex
Undergraduate students: Thursday, December 3, 2026 — 11:00 a.m.
Graduate students: Thursday, December 3, 2026 — 2:00 p.m.
Rehearsal attendance is mandatory.



Excellence
is our Habit!