



# South College

## **2025 South College Commencement** ***Knoxville, CBE, and Online***

**Friday, June 13, 2025**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Knoxville Convention Center**

**701 Henley St.**

**Knoxville, TN 37902**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who can participate in the ceremony?**

Knoxville and Online students who have completed or are scheduled to complete all coursework in the 2024-2025 Academic Year (graduation dates between July 1, 2024 and September 30, 2025) are eligible to participate.

CBE (Competency-Based Education) students are eligible if they have completed their program after July 1, 2024, or if they are enrolled in their dissertation/capstone course by May 1, 2025.

If a student who meets these criteria is unable to attend this year's ceremony or cannot travel to the Knoxville Convention Center, he/she may request to participate in the following year's ceremony. However, approval for this request will not be granted until the next academic year.

### **What time do I need to arrive on the day of the commencement ceremony?**

Graduates should expect to arrive between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. EST on Commencement Day at the Knoxville Convention Center. Signage and staff will be available to direct graduates to the graduate holding area where additional information will be provided. Graduates are encouraged to take photos with family and friends prior to the ceremony.

### **How do I obtain my cap and gown?**

Upon RSVPing for the ceremony, you will be given a link to order your cap and gown through Jostens.

- Knoxville students will use the following link:  
<https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/customer/1041144/South-College/>
- Online students will use the following link:

<https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/customer/3146494/South-College-Online/>

- CBE students will use the following link:

<https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/customer/3394181/South-College-CBE/>

The deadline to order your cap and gown is **Friday, May 2, 2025**. Caps and gowns cannot be guaranteed to arrive in time if orders are not placed by this deadline. If you miss this deadline, please contact [knoxcommencement@south.edu](mailto:knoxcommencement@south.edu).

If you are unsure as to which cap and gown option to select, please contact [knoxcommencement@south.edu](mailto:knoxcommencement@south.edu).

The cost of the cap and gown was covered by your graduation fee and will be shipped directly to your home. Your cap and gown are yours to keep. Please note that caps and gowns usually ship within 5 weeks of the placement of your order.

*\*\*Please note that you may also order announcements and diploma frames from these websites (South College diploma sizes are 8.5 X 11). \*\**

### **Do my guests need a ticket to enter the ceremony?**

No tickets are required for family and friends to attend. Seating is on a first-come first-served basis with doors opening at 9:00 a.m. to guests.

### **Where should I park for the ceremony?**

Parking is available at a variety of locations in the downtown Knoxville area. It is recommended that all students and guests download the Parkopedia application to their smartphone prior to the of the ceremony, as this application will help those in attendance locate available spots and quickly pay for parking. To download the application, scan the QR code below or visit <https://www.parkopedia.com/>.



One of the closest parking options is the [Locust Street Garage](#) (540 Locust St SW, Knoxville, TN 37902). This garage costs \$1/hour, \$7 max/day. The Locust Street Garage also provides direct access to the Knoxville Convention Center via a skybridge. There are other general downtown Knoxville parking options.

**Where do I need to report the day of the ceremony?**

All graduates will need to report to the graduate holding area (Exhibit Hall B) on the day of the commencement ceremony. Signage and staff will be available that morning to direct all graduates to the appropriate location.

**Will there be a dress rehearsal?**

There will not be a dress rehearsal or practice run prior to the ceremony. Additional instructions and aids will be made available to graduates closer to the day of the ceremony. It is strongly encouraged that all graduates review these materials ahead of time so that they feel prepared for the day of the ceremony.

**What do I need to bring with me to the ceremony?**

You will want to ensure that you bring your cap and gown to the ceremony, along with your GradPass.

GradPasses will be sent via email closer to the date of the ceremony. It is recommended that graduates print their GradPasses prior to the ceremony and/or take a screenshot on their phone. Please note that if you have a cracked phone screen, you must print off your GradPass ahead of time.

We encourage all graduates to take the time once they have received their cap and gown to try it on and steam/iron it.

Please also note that South College is committed to providing a safe environment for this celebration. It is recommended that all individuals in attendance limit the number of personal items brought into the Knoxville Convention Center and/or utilize a clear bag.

**What are the expectations and etiquette at the ceremony?**

Students are expected to arrive at the Knoxville Convention Center between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. EST. Upon arrival, there will be South College faculty and staff to provide you with instructions on items including check-in and other options for photography with your family, friends, and classmates.

During the ceremony please be respectful. This includes:

- Remaining quiet and seated through the conclusion of the ceremony and marching out in the recessional.
- Wearing proper attire
  - o Expect warm weather, so plan to wear something lightweight underneath your regalia (cap and gown).
  - o Business casual is a good rule of thumb and black is probably the best color since it will not compete with your gown.
  - o We recommend that you select comfortable footwear, as there will be lots of standing and walking (try to avoid high heels).

- Do not smoke or consume any alcohol on the premises.
- Cellphone ringers must be turned off during the ceremony.
- Photography is allowed; however, no group photos, selfie sticks, or photography near the stanchion barrier. A professional photographer will take a photograph of each graduate as diplomas are awarded.
- No air horns, cow bells, megaphones, or disruptive noisemakers are allowed.
- No helium balloons are permitted.

### **What should I wear under my cap and gown?**

Graduates should arrive in business casual attire. Although there is no dress code, the following is recommended:

- **Males**
  - o Dress slacks (black preferred but khakis are also suitable)
  - o Dress shoes
  - o Dress socks
  - o Button down shirt
  - o Tie
- **Females**
  - o Conservative dresses
  - o Skirts, blouses, and/or dress slacks
- Comfortable dress shoes such as <https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/customer/3146494/South-College-Online/>
  - o flats (*Note: there will be lots of standing and walking, making high heels an undesirable choice*)

### **What is a GradPass?**

A GradPass is an electronic version of the traditional stage card used to facilitate ceremony display during the commencement ceremony. We encourage graduates to print their GradPass prior to the ceremony so that it can be scanned and discarded prior to entering the stage. If you wish to screenshot your GradPass to your mobile device, please note that you will be crossing the stage with your phone in your hand.

*\*\*Please note that GradPasses will not be distributed until approximately 1 week prior to the ceremony. \*\**

### **Is there a place to leave my personal belongings during the ceremony?**

Please leave all personal belongings (purses, jackets, etc.) with a family member or friend before arriving. Graduates will not have an opportunity to return to the lineup area, and while they will exit through the staging area, they will not be able to stop along the exit route. South College is not responsible for any lost or stolen items left unattended.

**How long with the ceremony last?**

The ceremony is anticipated to end by 12:00 p.m. EST. Graduates are expected to stay for the entirety of the ceremony. South College staff and faculty will dismiss all graduates in an orderly fashion at the conclusion of the ceremony.

**Will there be professional photography at the ceremony?**

Yes, professional photography will be available at the graduation ceremony. Each graduate will have the opportunity to be photographed individually at key moments throughout the event. These photos will be made available electronically for download and purchase approximately one month after the ceremony. All students who participate in the ceremony will receive an email notification once the photographs are available. While we encourage graduates and their guests to enjoy this professional service, we also welcome family and friends to capture their own special moments during the celebration.

**What is the proper placement of the tassel?**

**Undergraduate Degrees/Certificates:** For those receiving undergraduate (certificate, associate, or bachelor's) degrees, tassels first begin on the right side of your cap. Upon receiving your diploma, the graduation tassel will be moved to the left.

**Master's & Doctoral Degrees/Certificates:** For graduate degrees, different rules apply. The difference is that your tassel will begin on the left side of your cap and will remain there until the ceremony is complete. Graduate tassels are not required to be moved at all.

**How do I obtain my diploma?**

South College students receive their diploma directly from Parchment within 2-4 weeks after the completion of their final course(s). Your diploma will be mailed to the address that is provided on the Application for Graduation directly from Parchment. After graduates complete their program, they will receive an email to their South College email address prompting them to confirm the delivery address of their diploma within 72 hours. Graduates will also receive a digital diploma within 48 hours of it being ordered. Graduates can track the order of their diploma through their Parchment account at

<https://www.parchment.com/u/registration/252783/institution>.

**How are honors levels calculated?**

For students who complete courses prior to May 16, 2025, the final Grade Point Average (GPA) achieved will be used to determine honors level. For students completing courses after May 16, 2025, the GPA earned as of May 16, 2025 will be used to determine honors levels.

**What are the various honors levels?****Undergraduate & Graduate Programs:**

Summa Cum Laude 3.90 - 4.0 GPA .....Purple Cord

Magna Cum Laude 3.75 – 3.89 GPA .....	Gold Cord
Cum Laude 3.50 – 3.74 GPA .....	Red Cord

### **Certificate Programs:**

High Honors 3.80 – 4.0 GPA.....	Purple Cord
Honors 3.50 – 3.79 GPA .....	Red Cord

### **How do I obtain my honors cords?**

Honors cords will be given out at check in. If you are eligible for honors designation, it will be printed on your check in card. Honors cords are purchased by the institution for students participating in the commencement ceremony only. Cords are considered regalia and are for the sole purpose of recognizing students with academic excellence during the ceremony. They will not be sent to students who do not participate in the ceremony. Please note that although honors will be acknowledged in the program, they will not be announced on stage.

### **How do I obtain cords/regalia for honors societies?**

Honors society cords, stoles, and other regalia are provided by the individual society, not South College. Please contact any societies you are a part of to request cords.

### **Can I decorate my cap for the ceremony?**

Cap decorating is permitted. Use of offensive quotes or pictures (including political statements, profanity, etc.) are prohibited. Please keep in mind that decorations must be tasteful and professional. It is under the purview of the institution to deny the wearing of a cap that is deemed inappropriate.

### **Can I wear my own regalia, including a customized stole, instead of what South College provides?**

Students are required to wear only the official regalia issued by South College during the ceremony, including caps, gowns, stoles, and sashes. Personal or customized regalia is not permitted. However, students are welcome to bring these items for photos at one of our designated photo stations but must remove them before the ceremony begins.

### **What is the cost to participate in graduation?**

Students are responsible for any costs associated with travel to the commencement ceremony. All other costs, including regalia, honors cord, and diploma covers are covered by the campus. Students are assessed a graduation fee (See the Catalog at <https://catalog.south.edu>).

### **If I am an Online or CBE student, can I attend a local campus ceremony instead of the Knoxville ceremony on June 13, 2025?**

South College Online and CBE students are eligible to participate in the Knoxville Campus

ceremony. If you have an extenuating circumstance that prevents you from traveling to Knoxville for the ceremony at the Knoxville Convention Center on June 13, 2025—such as a family emergency or health condition—please contact [knoxcommencement@south.edu](mailto:knoxcommencement@south.edu) for further assistance.

### **What if I am a student with a disability?**

Graduates requiring assistance or accommodations should email [knoxcommencement@south.edu](mailto:knoxcommencement@south.edu). A member from the South College Commencement team will follow up to discuss your needs.

### **How do I obtain my Master's, Post-Graduate certificate, and/or Doctoral nursing pin?**

Students graduating from the Master of Science in Nursing, Post-Graduate Certificate in Nursing, and/or Doctor of Nursing Practice programs will receive their pin at a separate pinning ceremony on Thursday, June 12, 2025 held in the ballrooms at the Knoxville Convention Center (701 Henley St, Knoxville, TN 37902). This ceremony will begin at 3:00 p.m. EST with graduates expected to arrive a half hour before the ceremony begins. Students can complete their RSVP and registration for their event through the Tassel platform at <https://south.tassel.com/login> using the personal email address (not South College email address) that was associated with their student file.

### **Will there be a hooding ceremony?**

A separate ceremony will be held for graduates from graduate level programs on Thursday, June 12, 2025 held in the ballrooms at the Knoxville Convention Center (701 Henley St, Knoxville, TN 37902). This ceremony will begin at 11:30 a.m. EST with graduates expected to arrive a half hour before the ceremony begins. Students can complete their RSVP and registration for their event through the Tassel platform at <https://south.tassel.com/login> using the personal email address (not South College email address) that was associated with their student file.

### **How will I know where to meet my family and friends after the ceremony?**

All graduates must remain for the entire ceremony and participate in the recessional to ensure a respectful and safe exit for everyone in attendance. We recommend that you arrange a designated meeting point with your guests before reporting to the graduate staging area, as you will not be able to stop along the exit route.

### **Where can I stay in Knoxville if I am traveling from out of town?**

South College has booked a block of rooms at the following locations throughout Knoxville to help accommodate our graduates and their families who may be travelling from out of town. Each hotel has a link to provide you with a discounted rate. To receive the discounted rate, all reservations must be booked on or before May 16, 2025.

**Hampton Inn & Suites Knoxville Papermill Dr**

Address: 601 N Weisgarber Rd, Knoxville, TN 37919

[Click here to book Hampton Inn & Suites](#)

**Hilton Garden Inn Knoxville Papermill Dr**

Address: 6200 Papermill Dr NW, Knoxville, TN 37919

[Click here to book Hilton Garden Inn](#)

**Courtyard Marriott Knoxville West/Bearden**

Address: 250 Brookview Centre Way, Knoxville, TN 37919

[Click Here to Book Courtyard Marriott](#)

**What do I do if I lose my GradPass?**

South College will be distributing GradPasses multiple times as graduation day nears. We encourage graduates to print a copy of it once it has been distributed and to take a screenshot of the pass on a mobile device so that it can easily be accessed on the day of the ceremony. If you are unable to locate your GradPass on the day of the ceremony, there will be a help desk for you to visit upon checking in and South College staff will be able to reissue your pass to you.

**What if my family and friends can't attend the ceremony but still want to watch it?**

The ceremony will be streamed live via the South College YouTube channel. More information regarding the live stream will be made available the day of the ceremony. We encourage all individuals who are unable to attend in person to follow South College on social media for ease of accessing the live-stream.

**What time do I need to arrive on the day of the commencement ceremony?**

Graduates should expect to arrive between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. EST on commencement day. Upon arrival, graduates will be directed to the graduate holding area where additional information will be provided. Please try to arrive as close to 8:00 a.m. EST as possible so that you have ample time to take photos with your family, friends, and peers, at one of our photo stations around the primary concourse.

**When will I need to return to the lineup area after checking in?**

All graduates are asked to be ready to line up at 9:00 a.m. EST. At 9:00 a.m. EST, graduates will be provided with directions to process to their seats. We encourage graduates to use the restrooms prior to the lineup time to minimize any delays.

**What happens if I forget my cap and gown for the ceremony?**

South College will have extra regalia available for those students who may forget their cap and gown. Although extra regalia may be made available, please note that there is no guarantee that



we will have the appropriate size and degree program regalia available for that day. Should you forget your cap and gown, please see a staff member on the day of the ceremony.

**How can I share the photos I take during the ceremony?**

To make it easier for everyone to view and enjoy the photos taken during our Commencement Ceremony week activities, we encourage you to use our official event hashtag:

**#SouthCollegeGrad**. By including this hashtag in your social media posts, you'll not only share your photos with fellow attendees but also contribute to a collective album of cherished moments.

**What accommodations are available for guests with disabilities at these ceremonies?**

The Knoxville Convention Center is fully compliant with ADA regulations and laws. Guests with disabilities are encouraged to review the [Know Before You Go](#) page on the Knoxville Convention Center's website for detailed information on accessibility, including parking, seating, and other accommodations. If additional assistance is needed, please contact the venue directly at (865) 522-5669.

**Who can I contact if I have additional questions regarding the ceremony?**

If you have questions regarding the ceremony and day of events, please reach out to the commencement support team at [knoxcommencement@south.edu](mailto:knoxcommencement@south.edu).