



Policy Title
Commencement Participation Policy

Policy Number
1-038

Responsible Unit: Office of Academic Affairs	Effective Date: Before 2019
Responsible Official: Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Last Reviewed Date: March 8, 2023
Policy Classification: Academic Affairs	Last Revised Date: March 8, 2023
	Origination Date: Before 2019

I. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the commencement ceremony of Southern University Law Center (SULC).

II. Policy Scope

This policy applies to staff, students, and faculty of SULC.

III. Policy Compliance

The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Office of the Registrar must ensure that students and faculty are in compliance with this policy.

IV. Policy Definitions

A. Graduation: The successful completion of the program of legal education at SULC.

B. Commencement: A ceremony conducted by SULC to celebrate, honor, and recognize

students who have completed the requirements of the program of legal education thereby earning a Juris Doctor degree.

V. Policy Development and Implementation Procedure

The policy was created to establish guidelines for participation in the commencement ceremony of SULC. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will be charged with implementing and enforcing this policy.

VI. Policy and Applicable Procedures

- A. Commencement considered an academic activity under the SULC Code of Student Conduct.
- B. Unless excused by the Chancellor, all full-time faculty members must participate in a commencement ceremony and wear approved regalia.
- C. Part-time faculty members may participate in a commencement ceremony and wear approved regalia.
- D. Staff may participate in a commencement ceremony but are not expected to wear regalia.
- E. Pursuant to SUS Board policy number 1-002, no student will be allowed to participate in commencement if the student has not satisfied all of the requirements of the program of legal education.
- F. Students participating in commencement must:
 - 1. Have completed a degree audit, once they have earned 60 credit hours, to ensure that they have an opportunity to complete all academic requirements in their final year of study;
 - 2. Complete a graduation application – by February 1st of the year in which they intend to graduate;
 - 3. Have successfully paid all fees owed to SULC and the SU System;
 - 4. Completed SULC graduation check-out process;
 - 5. Completed financial aid exit loan counseling;
 - 6. Completed survey/checkout with the Office of Career Services;
 - 7. Completed Alumni Affairs survey/checkout;
 - 8. Completed bar exam preparation meeting; and
 - 9. Completed all academic requirements mandated by SULC in academic affairs policy number 1-020 and the American Bar Association.
- G. Students attending or participating in a commencement ceremony may not violate any policy, rule, and/or regulation of SULC and abide by the rules and policies of the facility in which a commencement ceremony is being conducted. Any violation shall be reported to any bar admission agency/entity to which the student seeks admission/membership.
- H. Students participating in graduation may only wear SULC approved regalia, limited to a tam, gown, hood, and honor cords. Other regalia (SULC organizational stoles, Greek organizational stoles, sash, etc.) may be worn for organizational pictures prior to a commencement ceremony;

however, such regalia cannot be worn during a commencement ceremony.

- I. All commencement participants must wear professional attire. While participants are not expected to wear suit coats under their graduation gown, they must wear professional attire, to include dress pants, dress shirt or blouse, and dress shoes. Participants who wear professional dresses during commencement should ensure that the dress is not longer than the graduation gown.
- J. Commencement participants are prohibited from engaging in any unprofessional actions during a commencement ceremony, to include but not limited to: dancing (as an individual or in a group), animated or choreographed movements, chanting, using profane language, using alcohol or illegal or illicit drugs
- K. Commencement participants should place their guests on notice that noise makers (to include air horns), confetti, balloons, posters, signs, banners, and animals (excluding service animals for individuals with disabilities) are not permitted inside the facility where a commencement ceremony is conducted.

VII. Policy History and Review


This policy was created and became effective prior to the implementation of the uniform policy format which was implemented in 2019. The policy was reviewed and updated, on May 13, 2022, to align the policy with SUS Board policy number 1-002 and clearly define what could be worn by participants during the commencement ceremony. The policy was updated, on March 8, 2023, to remove the specific color pants or shoes that must be worn by graduates. The policy is subject to a five-year policy review cycle and shall be reviewed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. This policy is not subject to faculty approval.

VIII. Publication of Policy

This policy is published on the Southern University Law Center website at <https://www.sulc.edu/page/sulc-policies>.

IX. Policy Approval

This policy was approved on March 8, 2023.



John K. Pierre
Chancellor, Southern University Law Center

March 8, 2023
Date