

From: NYU President Andrew Hamilton office.president@nyu.edu
Subject: A Message about NYU's 2020 Commencement
Date: March 25, 2020 at 12:01 PM
To:



Members of the NYU Community,

There are few academic rituals more meaningful and enduring than Commencements. On these special occasions, we come together as a community to mark the achievements of our talented graduates in the presence of families and friends, faculty and alumni; to proclaim the power of learning and scholarship; to pass the torch of knowledge from one generation to another.

It is with deepest regret, therefore, that I write to let you know that NYU's 188th All-University Commencement Exercises, due to take place in Yankee Stadium on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, must be postponed to a date still to be decided. Likewise, the individual school graduation ceremonies cannot go forward as planned. Given the advice of public health officials, as well as the restrictions put in place by city and state authorities, and out of our own sense of obligation to safeguard the safety of our community, it is impossible to imagine we could or should hold such large assemblies this spring.

Be assured, however, that once we are on the other side of this difficult and extraordinary time, we will find a way to hold an in-person graduation exercise and properly recognize the Class of 2020 with all the pomp and circumstance you deserve and that NYU knows how to muster.

In making this decision, we have consulted with student leaders as well as the deans of our schools, and we are grateful for their guidance. In short order, the deans will also be in touch with their graduates about the plans for the school graduation ceremonies or celebrations, whether virtual this spring and/or future in-person events at a later date. And while we cannot go forward with our physical gathering in Yankee Stadium, I want you all to mark the date May 20, 2020 on your calendars, for we will be looking for special ways to make sure we stay connected and celebrate the Class of 2020 on that day and in the weeks leading up to it--and to assure you that, yes, for all eligible graduates, degrees will be conferred!

To the Class of 2020: I feel keenly the disappointment you must be experiencing and I would remind you of the special bond I feel for your class. We "entered" NYU in the same year and I so looked forward to marking our four years together as you progressed from freshman to senior year. And I recognize that this news follows a string of developments and announcements, each one more unnerving than the last. Many of you and your families may have already put plans in motion to be on campus in May. I also realize that you understandably have a multitude of questions for which we do not yet have answers as we all navigate these turbulent times. But we pledge to keep you informed over these coming weeks and months as our plans evolve and we get a better sense of our options.

In an academic career spanning four decades at five universities, the highlight for me of each of those 40 years - without a doubt - has been Commencement. While we will have to delay this year's celebration, what does not have to be postponed is our expression of pride in what you have accomplished. And when we do convene to celebrate the Class of 2020 it will come with an added dose of praise and congratulations for the tremendous resiliency you have shown in the face of great adversity.

Please take care of yourselves and each other.

Sincerely,

Andy Hamilton

