

# 50<sup>th</sup> & 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion Graduation March

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who is allowed to march with the 50th & 55th reunion classes in the Graduation Procession?**

All degree-holders of the Classes of 1971 and 1976 are invited to march in the Graduation Procession.

### **Do I need to register or can I just show up?**

Because academic regalia must be ordered for each individual through the Columbia bookstore, **it is imperative that you pre-register for the Graduation March by Friday, April 3, 2026.** To register, complete the RSVP form linked on the Reunion March Webpage or contact the Reunion Office at reunions@law.columbia.edu or by calling 212-854-0533.

### **May I bring my spouse or a guest?**

Yes. Alumni may each invite a guest to accompany them at the Graduation Ceremony. Guests participate in all aspects of the day but do not march.

### **What do alumni wear to march in the Graduation Procession?**

Academic regalia will be provided, though MUST be ordered in advance. The deadline for ordering regalia is **Friday, April 3, 2026.** Gentlemen may choose to wear a jacket and tie under their robes; however, jackets are not required. Ladies often choose summer suits, dresses or slacks. Since participants and guests will be outside for part of the time, attire should align with weather conditions in late Spring.

### **I am a college professor, but not at Columbia. May I wear my academic robes of the institution where I teach?**

The official regalia for the 50th and 55th reunion classes is the Columbia regalia, regardless of subsequent academic career.

### **Is the Graduation Procession a great distance?**

Class members will join the procession and lead the degree candidates. Alumni will process behind their own signs from the steps of Butler Library, up the South Field walkway, to the podium, then make a left to the reserved section and join their guests for the remainder of the ceremony. The actual distance is approximately 300 yards, and seating is available during the line-up to join the procession.

### **I see something called “Commencement” and something called “Graduation.”**

#### **Is there a difference between these ceremonies?**

*University Commencement* is held on Wednesday of graduation week. It is two Columbia-wide ceremonies in which degrees are officially conferred. The Graduate Schools participate in the morning and the Undergraduate Schools participate in the evening. The Commencement speaker is traditionally the president of the University. Separately from Commencement, individual diploma ceremonies take place in each of the colleges and graduate and professional schools. The **Law School's Graduation** ceremony recognizes candidates for the degrees of Juris Doctor, Master of Laws, and Doctor of Juridical Science and are presented individually, by name, by the Dean of Columbia Law School. Law degree candidates who are receiving top prizes are also recognized and the Willis L.M. Reese Prize for Excellence in Teaching is awarded to a member of our faculty.

### **What happens at Graduation?**

Enjoy a two-part experience: first, attend a private reception with classmates for camaraderie, robing, and class portraits in Satow Room, FL5, Alfred J. Lerner Hall. Then, guests will be escorted to reserved seating with a good view of the procession while the 50th & 55th Reunion Classes join the Dean, faculty, and Class of 2026 in the procession. Alumni marchers will rejoin their guests upon leaving the procession and remain together throughout the remainder of the ceremony. **Academic robes will be collected so alumni will not have to sit through the ceremony in cap and gown.**

### **What can I bring with me to the Graduation?**

Bags are strongly discouraged. Bags, backpacks, and purses larger than 12" x 6" x 12" are not permitted. Individuals with bags exceeding the size limit will not be permitted to enter. All bags will be searched upon entry. Personal belongings cannot be left in the reception space once Graduation begins. Staff will be on hand to transfer any personal belongings to your ceremony seats.

**What if I need assistance in walking/have a walker?**

Please let us know your concerns at your earliest convenience. We expect to be able to accommodate your needs and would be delighted to do so.

**I am confined to a wheelchair. May I still participate in the Procession?**

Absolutely! Please let us know this when you register and we will work with Disabilities Services to make the Graduation Procession as smooth as possible for you.

**Where do the 50th and 55th reunion classes sit?**

A seating section specially reserved for the 50th reunion class is located in the front of the reserved seating area and has an excellent view of the proceedings. 50th and 55th Class members and their guests sit together in this area.

**How long is Graduation? Do I have to stay the whole time?**

The beginning of the Procession to the closing remarks usually takes about 2.5 hours. Alumni are free to leave early if desired.

**What if it rains?**

The exercises will be held regardless of weather conditions. Most of the procession and all seating is in the covered area. This area is not, however, climate controlled, so be sure to dress accordingly, especially if heat is predicted.

**Where should I arrive on the day of the event?**

A private reception will be held in Satow Room, FL5 of Alfred J. Lerner Hall, prior to the Graduation Ceremony. Arrival instructions will be shared after registration, prior to the event day.