

Classification: **Student Affairs**

Approving Authority: **President** Responsible Authority: **Vice President of Enrollment & Student Services** Implementing Authority: **Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Services**

Effective Date: **April 2025**

Review: **March 2028**

Commencement Ceremony - Procedures

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets forth the rules and steps for organizing and conducting graduation events at AUIB.
- 1.2 The objective is to organize an inclusive ceremony for all graduating students and their families while upholding the University's customs and reputation.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all schools and departments of the university involved in organizing and carrying out commencement ceremonies. It includes faculty members as well as staff and students.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Academic procession - the formal entry and exit of academic officials and graduates during the commencement/graduation ceremonies.
- 3.2 Conferral of degrees - the official act by the university of granting academic recognition and certification to students who have successfully completed their prescribed course of study.
- 3.3 Commencement - the formal ceremony celebrating the academic accomplishments of students who have completed their respective degree programs.
- 3.4 Commencement Coordinator - the designated staff member or committee responsible for coordinating all aspects of the commencement/graduation ceremonies.
- 3.5 Graduation - the process of conferring academic degrees upon eligible students after they have fulfilled all requirements for graduation.
- 3.6 Graduate - a student who has fulfilled all academic requirements and has been awarded the degree.
- 3.7 Honor roll - a list of graduating students who have achieved outstanding academic performance.

4.0 Policy

- 4.1 Degrees will be conferred with the highest level of academic integrity, guaranteeing that only students who have fulfilled all degree requirements before the ceremony will participate.
- 4.2 Ceremonies will be designed to prioritize the celebration of student achievements and recognize their hard work and dedication.
- 4.3 The University shall hold a commencement ceremony annually, as published in the academic calendar.

Students who have met all degree requirements or are officially cleared for graduation by the Registrar shall be eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony.

The commencement ceremony is open for attendance by students, alumni, families, and invited guests. Students who are not yet eligible to graduate may attend as guests but may not participate in the academic procession or degree conferral.

- 4.4 The ceremony will be presided over by the University President or a designated representative.
- 4.5 The University shall communicate the details of commencement ceremonies well in advance to all students, guests, and stakeholders.
- 4.6 Commencement ceremonies may include speeches, presentations, and traditional academic regalia while encouraging innovation and creativity in the celebration format.
- 4.7 Cords for the Dean's List, and stoles for student activities to be awarded by the respective Dean.
- 4.8 The program for the commencement ceremonies shall include speeches, award presentations, the conferral of degrees, and other traditional elements.

The University shall provide reasonable accommodations to ensure full participation in commencement ceremonies in accordance with the Accommodations Policy. The ceremonial conferral of degrees will take place during the commencement ceremony. Official diplomas will be issued by the Office of the Registrar in accordance with university timelines and procedures.

- 4.9 The University will adhere to established academic regalia guidelines and protocols during the commencement ceremony.
- 4.10 In circumstances like sudden emergencies or public healthcare crises, the University can change or postpone the graduation ceremony to ensure the safety and welfare of students and guests.

The Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Services will work with stakeholders to create and uphold guidelines for this policy's implementation such as planning ceremonies and managing student registrations and guest arrangements while adhering to academic regalia standards.4.16 All participants and guests are expected to adhere to the University Code of Conduct. Disruptive behavior may result in removal from the ceremony.

- 4.11 The University may record or photograph commencement ceremonies for institutional use. Attendance constitutes consent for such use.

5.0 Procedures

- 5.1 The President holds the authority in overseeing both academic and administrative matters within the institution. When it comes to commencement ceremonies, The President holds final authority over commencement ceremonies and may approve exceptions or modifications to these policies and procedures as necessary.
- 5.2 The Academic Affairs Office is responsible for ensuring that the commencement ceremonies align with academic standards and uphold the University's reputation.
- 5.3 The Commencement Coordinator is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the commencement ceremonies. They collaborate closely with the Commencement Committee and other departments to guarantee that the ceremonies are well planned following guidelines and regulations for an event.

- 5.4 College Deans represent their departments and contribute to the event's formality and dignity. They also play a role in conferring degrees and presenting academic honors and can be recognized by a ceremonial medallion.
- 5.5 The Commencement Committee consists of individuals from departments responsible, for organizing and managing the ceremonies – from designing the program and inviting speakers to arranging the venue and selecting awards while ensuring smooth coordination of the overall event.
- 5.6 The Office of the President will appoint a Commencement Coordinator at the start of each academic year who will lead the Commencement Committee.
- 5.7 The Commencement Committee shall consist of representatives from academic units, student services, facilities management, security, and other relevant departments.
- 5.8 In collaboration with academic units, the Commencement Coordinator will determine the ceremony venue based on the anticipated number of attendees and accessibility requirements.
- 5.9 The Office of Student Affairs will communicate ceremony details, including registration processes, guest invitations, obtaining and wearing academic regalia, and parking information, to graduating students and their guests through appropriate channels.
- 5.10 The Commencement Committee will design the ceremony format and theme.
 - 5.10.1 Marketing and Communications will design the ceremony program and other promotional materials according to the Committee's plan and with their approval.
 - 5.10.2 The Committee will establish the order of events, speeches, and award presentations.
 - 5.10.3 Honors and awards will be presented with due recognition and included in the ceremony program.
 - 5.10.4 Event coordination will encompass managing event staff, security, first aid services, and guest services during the ceremonies.
 - 5.10.5 The Committee will create a comprehensive emergency and contingency plan in coordination with relevant departments. Event staff will be trained to respond to emergencies and follow evacuation procedures if necessary.
- 5.11 The Commencement Coordinator will:
 - Arrange the academic procession, specify the order of participants, and ensure appropriate seating arrangements on the stage.
 - Collaborate with the appropriate departments to provide necessary accommodation for graduates and guests.
 - Schedule rehearsals for graduates and academic officials to familiarize them with the ceremony procedures.
- 5.12 The Registrar will prepare the Honor Roll, list of graduates, and award recipients according to the Student Awards policy and procedures.
- 5.13 The Office of Student Affairs will organize post-ceremony activities, such as receptions or alumni gatherings, to celebrate graduates' accomplishments.
- 5.14 Distinguished speakers, including honorary degree recipients or alumni, may be invited to address the graduates and attendees.

- 5.15 During the ceremonies, graduates will follow the prescribed processional route, and academic officials will perform their respective roles according to established protocols.
- 5.16 Graduates and guests will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the ceremony, allowing the University to enhance future events.

Related Policies

Academic Standing Policy

Student Conduct and Community Standards Policy

Commencement Guidelines and Protocols Accommodations Policy

Health and Safety Policy Security Policy

Student Awards Policy Events Management Policy

Graduation Policy