

Sept. 8, 2020

To the University Community:

Slippery Rock University announced today, Sept. 8, that its winter commencement ceremony will be hosted virtually at 10 a.m., Dec. 12, for all spring, summer and fall 2020 graduates.

The move to a virtual ceremony was necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and Pennsylvania's limitations on large public gatherings in the ongoing effort to stem the spread of the virus. Currently, the state prohibits indoor events and gatherings of more than 25 people.

"While nothing can take the place of our coming together in person to celebrate the achievements of our graduates, this virtual experience will provide an opportunity for our graduates to share their special day with family and friends," said SRU President William Behre.

This will be the second commencement ceremony that has been impacted by the pandemic. The University's spring commencement ceremonies, originally scheduled May 8-9, were previously postponed. In its place, SRU offered a congratulatory video tribute to graduates with a promise from Behre that University officials would host an in-person celebration later in the year, pending the national health scene.

"Unfortunately, we simply haven't yet reached that point," said Behre. "As I stated in the spring, decisions like this are difficult and disappointing to make. And while we're saddened that we cannot celebrate in person, we are impressed by the commitment, perseverance and dedication shown by our graduates to have accomplished so much in the face of these unprecedented times."

Behre said that he stands firm on the University's promise to host 2020 graduates on SRU's campus and shake the hands of graduates.

"I haven't wavered on that front," he said. "At some point in the future, when we are able, we will invite any 2020 graduate who wants to return to the University to join us for some sort of ceremony where they can wear their cap and gown, move their tassel and be properly congratulated by Provost Zink and me."

SRU's virtual commencement will include many of the elements of regular commencement, including remarks from Behre; Abbey Zink, provost and vice president for academic affairs; and the deans of the University's four colleges. The event will conclude with the scrolling of the names of all graduates, the formal moving of the tassel and the singing of the SRU alma mater. More details on how to access the online video presentation are forthcoming.

Those students who plan on graduating in December 2020 and January 2021 must apply to graduate by Oct. 1 as graduating is not automatic. Students can apply online by accessing their MySRU portal, choosing the "Academic" tab, navigating to the "Graduation" channel and

selecting the “Apply for Graduation” link. [Beyond the Oct. 1 deadline, students will have to complete a paper application which can be found on the University website via the “Forms” page.](#) The form should then be emailed to academic.records@sru.edu.

Information about approved academic regalia (cap, gown, tassels) is available by contacting the SGA Bookstore at 724.738.2104.

As is the case with all commencements, diplomas will be mailed six to eight weeks after the graduation date.

For more information, visit the [SRU’s commencement webpage](#) or email commencementoffice@sru.edu.