



2011

Commencement Guide

Soka University of America



Letter from the President

Dear member of the Class of 2011:

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Soka University of America (SUA), I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to you on your graduation. As you know, your graduation marks the tenth anniversary of the opening of our Aliso Viejo campus and it will be the first commencement ceremony held in the new Soka Performing Arts Center. You are to be commended for your academic and personal accomplishments as an SUA student. We are also proud of the role you have played in SUA's continuing success and recognition as an academically rigorous, international university.

As you begin preparing for your graduation in May 2011, we would like to provide you with this Commencement Guide to inform you of the activities that will take place during Commencement week. We hope that this guide will offer you ample time to plan in advance for a memorable graduation.

We look forward to celebrating this joyous occasion together with you, your family and friends.

Sincerely,

Daniel Y. Habuki, Ph.D.
President

Table of Contents

Greetings from the University-wide Commencement Committee	3
End-of-Year Activities Schedule	4
Graduation Fair	6
Senior Exit Interview	6
Institutional and/or FFELP Loans Exit Interview	
IT Related Information	
Commencement Rehearsal	7
Diplomas	7
Commencement Ceremony	7
Commencement Tickets	8
Student Graduation Department	8
Student Commencement Speaker(s)	9
100 and 50 Days to Graduation Celebration	9
Future Expo	9
Jazz Monsters Concert	9
Undergraduate Appreciation Reception	10
Campus Tours	10
Young Founders Alumni Dinner and Annual Meeting	10
Young Founders Alumni Mixer	10
Discounted Meal Tickets	11
Hotel Accommodations	11
Parking	11
Wheelchair Request	11
Bookstore Hours	11
Directions to SUA	12
Important Telephone Numbers	Back Cover

Greetings from the University-Wide Commencement Committee

Dear graduating students,

Each year, the University-wide Commencement Committee, consisting of administrators and student representatives, come together to plan for our Commencement Ceremony and related events leading up to that special day.

In anticipation of your Commencement, I'm sure you and your family members have many questions such as when certain events will be held and how many family members and friends you may be able to invite. In this guide, you will find answers to such questions as well as other important information you should know as you prepare for your Commencement. As we plan for graduation this year in the new Soka Performing Arts Center, you'll find there are some details that have yet to be completely fleshed out. Still, there is ample information here for you to start your planning process with all good diligence. Please review this guide carefully and, of course, let us know if you have any questions.

Our committee is committed to making all Commencement events truly special for you, your families and friends.

We look forward to celebrating your new departure together.

Sincerely,

Jay Heffron, Ph.D.
Chair
University-wide Commencement Committee

End-of-Year Activities Schedule

February 18 Friday	100 Days to Graduation Celebration Gameroom 7:00pm
March 3 Thursday	Nomination for Student Commencement Speakers Due to Student Graduation Department By 5:00pm
March 5 Saturday	Future Expo Student Affairs 12:00pm – 3:00pm
March 30 Wednesday	Graduation Fair Dining Hall 11:30am – 1:30pm
April 1 Friday	Faculty Appreciation Get-Together Place TBA 5:30pm – 6:30pm
April 7 Thursday	50 Days to Graduation Celebration Dining Hall 8:00pm
April 15 Friday	Student Commencement Speaker(s) Announced
May 4 Wednesday	Graduating Senior Exit Interview Pauling 216 4:30pm – 6:30pm

May 25 Wednesday	Commencement Rehearsal for Graduating Students In front of Peace Fountain 9:30am Jazz Monsters Concert Place TBA 7:00pm
May 26 Thursday	Campus Tour for Family and Guests Founders Hall Atrium 10:00am and 2:00pm UG Appreciation Reception Place TBA 6:30pm – 8:00pm
May 27 Friday	Commencement Ceremony Soka Performing Arts Center 2:00pm
May 28 Saturday	Young Founders (UG) Alumni Dinner and Annual Meeting Time and Place TBA Young Founders (UG) Alumni Mixer Time and Place TBA
May 31 Tuesday	Seniors Res Hall Check-out By 5:00pm

Graduation Fair:**REQUIRED for all graduating seniors**

Date: Wednesday, March 30, 2011
Place: Dining Hall
Time: 11:30am – 1:30pm

Graduating seniors will be able to order their cap and gown, stole, class ring and announcements. Class rings and announcements will be sent directly to the students, but the cap, gown and stole will be sent to the Registrar's Office. The cap, gown and stole can be picked up during the Senior Exit Interview.

Senior Exit Interview:**REQUIRED for all graduating seniors**

Date: Wednesday, May 4, 2011
Place: Pauling 216
Time: 4:30pm – 6:30pm

- ❖ Seniors will receive important information from the Registrar's Office regarding Commencement. The cap, gown and stole will also be distributed by the Registrar.
- ❖ *Institutional and/or Federal Family Educational Loan Program (FFELP) Loans Exit Interview:*
Students with these loans must complete an exit interview form provided by the Financial Aid Office during the Senior Exit Interview.
- ❖ *IT Related Information:*
As of the end of the day on May 31, 2011, Soka Student Accounts will not be available to graduates. In order to ensure that graduating seniors keep all their files, they must follow these two steps:
 1. Copy "U" drive files to the laptop
 2. Send important emails and contacts to personal email account

Failing to follow these steps may lead to losing important information students may want to keep after SUA. This information is shared during the Senior Exit Interview and is also available on the SUA Portal. Please call the IT Help desk at (949) 480-4357 or visit the IT Department with any questions or problems.

- ❖ *Young Founders (Undergraduate) Alumni Association:* Students will have an opportunity to receive information regarding becoming members of the Young Founders Alumni Association.

Commencement Rehearsal:
REQUIRED for all graduating students

Date: Wednesday, May 25, 2011
Place: In front of Peace Fountain
Time: 9:30am

Graduating students will rehearse the line-up, procession, picture location, seating, grip & grin photograph, and recession. It is very important that all graduating students attend this rehearsal.

Diplomas

Graduating students will not receive the actual diploma on Commencement day. They will only receive their diploma cover. Once a final degree check has been completed, diplomas will be printed and sent to the student. Students should be sure to update their home/ mailing address information in Peoplesoft before they leave.

Commencement Ceremony

Date: Friday, May 27, 2011
Place: Soka Performing Arts Center
Time: 2:00pm

- ❖ Ticket is required to enter the Performing Arts Center
- ❖ Performing Arts Center lobby doors will open at 12:00pm
- ❖ Doors to the theater will open at 1:00pm for seating
- ❖ No drinks or food allowed inside the Performing Arts Center
- ❖ Campus is closed to the public
- ❖ Light refreshments to be served following the ceremony by the walkway between the Performing Arts Center and the new academic building (In case of rain, refreshments will be served in the new academic building)

Commencement Tickets

Guest admission to the Commencement Ceremony is by ticket only. Other than graduating students, no other members of the SUA community can request tickets for their own guests. (*Children under 10 years of age will not be able to attend the ceremony. Limited number of seats will be available in the Black Box Theater for parents/guardians with the children under the age of 10 years to view the ceremony via live video feed.*)

- ❖ Parents/Guardians and Guests of Graduating Students
Graduating students may request up to a total of six (6) tickets for their parents/guardians and guests (the graduate does not need a ticket for admission). Detailed directions on how to request the tickets is forthcoming and the deadline for the request will be 2/25. Tickets will be distributed to seniors at the Exit Interview. Seniors are responsible for providing tickets to their families and guests **before** the day of the Commencement Ceremony.
- ❖ Full-Time Faculty
Faculty members participating in the ceremony do not need a ticket.
- ❖ Underclassmen, Adjunct/Visiting Faculty and Staff
Those wishing to attend can request one (1) ticket for himself/herself, and the request must be made by Feb. 25. If requests exceed the allocated number of tickets, a drawing will be held in March. Directions for how to request the ticket will be forthcoming in early February.
- ❖ Alumni
Alumni should make their request to Young Founders Alumni Association or Graduate School for Graduate Alumni.

Student Graduation Department (GD)

The Student Graduation Department (GD) is one of the departments of the Soka Student Union (SSU), the undergraduate student government organization. GD coordinates student events such as the 100 and/or 50 Days to Graduation Celebration and selection process for student commencement speakers. Chairs of this Department are elected by the student body and become members of the University-wide Commencement Committee.

Student Commencement Speaker(s)

The selection process for senior Commencement Speaker(s) is determined and coordinated by GD and University-wide Commencement Committee. Please contact GD representatives for details.

100 and 50 Days to Graduation Celebration

100 Days

Date: Friday, February 18, 2011

Place: Gameroom

Time: 7:00pm

50 Days

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2011

Place: Dining Hall

Time: 8:00pm

All SUA students are invited to celebrate 100 and 50 days left before commencement sponsored by Graduation Department.

Future Expo

Date: Saturday, March 5, 2011

Place: Student Affairs

Time: 12:00pm — 3:00pm

All students are invited to participate in the Expo to learn how to be successful after SUA. Information on various career fields and graduate programs will be presented along with how to successfully enter into those fields and programs.

Jazz Monsters Concert

Date: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Place: TBA

Time: 7:00pm

Everyone is invited to enjoy this special Jazz concert in celebration of the Commencement of Class of 2011. No reservations required and it is free for SUA community and guests of graduating students. For the public, entrance fee is \$15 for adults and free for children under 18. It is a lawn seating, so bring your blankets, low beach chairs and

a picnic (no glass or alcohol, please). Contact info@soka.edu or call (949) 480-4081 for questions.

Undergraduate Appreciation Reception

Date: Thursday, May 26, 2011
Place: TBA
Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Open to graduating seniors and their two guests only. This is a special night for seniors to thank their parents or guardians for all their support and to share what they have learned while at SUA. This is a ticketed event and each graduating senior will receive two tickets during Senior Exit Interview.

Campus Tours for Family and Friends

Date: Thursday, May 26, 2011
Place: Founders Hall Atrium
Time: 10:00am and 2:00pm

Campus tours will be provided for friends and families of the graduates who will be visiting the university the day prior to Commencement. The morning tour begins at 10:00am and the afternoon tour begins at 2:00pm.

Young Founders (Undergraduate) Alumni Dinner and Annual Meeting

Date: Saturday, May 28, 2011
Place: TBA
Time: TBA

New alumni members of the Class of 2011 are invited to attend the SUA Undergraduate Alumni Dinner and Annual Meeting. This event is for Alumni only. Alumni must RSVP to Ruby Nagashima at rnagashima@soka.edu.

Young Founders (Undergraduate) Alumni Mixer

Date: Saturday, May 28, 2011
Place: TBA
Time: TBA

This event is open to all 21 years and older.

Discounted Meal Tickets

Students may purchase discounted meal tickets for guests from Dining Services for \$35. Each packet contains 5 meal tickets which can be used for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Hotel Accommodations

There are no lodging accommodations on campus. However, family and guests can find nearby hotel information on the Soka website: http://www.soka.edu/about_soka/visit_soka/hotels-dining-entertainment/

Parking

Parking is available on campus and maps of parking lots will be provided at the Main Gate by the Security upon request.

Wheelchair Request

Graduating students should indicate in their request for tickets if their guest(s) requires special seating on the day of Commencement. If the guest requires a wheelchair, SUA has a limited number of wheelchairs available. Please contact Student Services at (949) 480-4139 or hmoon@soka.edu as soon as possible and no later than Friday, April 29, 2011.

Bookstore Hours during Commencement Week

Mon-Wed: 10:30am – 5:30pm
Thurs, Fri: 10:30am – 6:30pm

Directions to Campus

From Interstate 5:

1. Go to Oso Parkway exit and turn west (right if you are coming south, left if you are coming north)
2. Oso becomes Pacific Park Drive
3. Travel about five miles on Pacific Park Drive - turn left on Wood Canyon Drive
4. After one mile, turn right on University

From the South on Interstate 5 via Toll Road (SR73*):

1. From Interstate 5, take the northbound State Route 73* toll road.
2. Travel on the 73 to Aliso Creek - turn left on Aliso Creek, right on Pacific Park, left on Wood Canyon Drive
3. After one mile, turn right on University

From the North on Interstate 405:

1. From Interstate 405, take the southbound State Route 73* toll road
2. Travel 11.8 miles on the 73 to the Glenwood Exit (right)
3. Turn right on Wood Canyon Drive
4. After one mile, turn right on University

From the East on State Route 55:

1. From State Route 55, take the southbound State Route 73* toll road
2. Travel 11.8 miles on the 73 to the Glenwood Exit (right)
3. Turn right on Wood Canyon Drive
4. After one mile, turn right on University

From the West on Pacific Coast Highway:

1. From Pacific Coast Highway, take Laguna Canyon Rd. (SR133) north
2. Travel 3.2 miles on Laguna Canyon Rd. to El Toro Rd. - Turn right on El Toro Rd
3. Travel 1.3 miles on El Toro Rd. to Aliso Creek Rd. - Turn right on Aliso Creek Rd
4. Travel 2.6 miles on Aliso Creek Rd. to Glenwood - Turn right on Glenwood
5. Travel 0.7 miles to Wood Canyon Drive - Turn right on Wood Canyon Drive
6. After one mile, turn right on University Drive

* State Route 73 is a toll road costing up to \$5.25 to use. For a toll-free route take Interstate 5 to Oso Parkway, turn west and follow directions above.

Important Telephone Numbers

Community Relations	(949) 480-4081
Development	(949) 480-4072
Financial Aid	(949) 480-4042
Health Services	(949) 480-4143
Office of Dean of Faculty	(949) 480-4207
Office of Dean of Students	(949) 480-4139
Office of the President	(949) 480-4008
Registrar	(949) 480-4045
Residential Life	(949) 480-4134
Security	(949) 480-4100
Student Accounts	(949) 480-4129
Student Affairs	(949) 480-4138



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