



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY



April 22, 2020

More Information About Virtual Commencement

As many of you already know, commencement is one of my favorite days of the year, which is why it was difficult to announce that we will not hold a traditional in-person commencement ceremony next month for the Class of 2020. We have all had a few weeks to process this news and instead of focusing on what “could have been,” I am asking our ETSU family to look forward to what is on the horizon.

It is my sincerest hope that everyone will participate in the Virtual Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 9. While I understand that in many respects this is not the experience our graduates had in mind, a virtual ceremony offers a unique opportunity for us to gather together and safely celebrate the many accomplishments of our students. Even in a virtual setting, we will continue to uphold the traditions of our great University. There will be performances from the Department of Music, special messages of encouragement and reflection, and most importantly, I will confer degrees on behalf of the ETSU Board of Trustees.

In listening to the feedback from our students, we are making every effort to ensure this is a personalized experience. Each graduate will have the opportunity to attend a virtual ceremony for their respective college. In addition to having their name called, each member of the Class of 2020 may submit a photo to be shown during the virtual ceremony. (See instructions below)

More information on how to watch the Virtual Commencement Ceremony will be provided closer to the date. I look forward to celebrating the Class of 2020 during this special event.

Virtual Commencement Ceremony Photos

[Home](#)

[Initiatives](#)

[Academics](#) ▼

[Degree Works](#) ⓘ

[Graduation](#) ▼

[Registration](#) ▼

[Records](#) ▼

[Catalog](#) ▼

[Who We Are](#)

Please use the form below to provide your name and upload a photograph, which will be shown during the Virtual Commencement Ceremony on May 9, 2020.

Photo Requirements:

- Photos must be uploaded in jpg, jpeg, or png format.
- One graduate per photo, no group photos will be allowed.
- Max photo size for upload is 5MB.
- Wearing regalia for photo is encouraged, but not required.

By uploading a photo, I release ETSU and its employees and agents, including any firm authorized to publish and/or distribute a finished product containing the images, from any claims, damages or liability which I may ever have in connection with the taking or use of the images or printed material used with the images.

[Click here to upload your information and photograph](#)

A website has been set up for each May 2020 graduate to upload a graduation photo. Visit etsu.edu/gradpics and sign in with your ETSU username and password for further instructions and to upload your photo by **Tuesday, April 28 at 5 p.m.**

Note: The photo request does not apply to Quillen College of Medicine or Gatton College of Pharmacy graduates.

Students who have not yet picked up their regalia for the Virtual Commencement Ceremony should check their email to learn when they can do so this week.

Board of Trustees to Meet on Friday

I hope you will join us for the quarterly meeting of the ETSU Board of Trustees this Friday, April 24, at 10 a.m.

In light of the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will be conducted permitting participating by electronic or other means of communication if necessary. Our Audit Committee will meet at 8:30 a.m. prior to the Board of Trustees meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Public attendance to both the Board of Trustees and Audit Committee meetings will be available via livestream at www.etsu.edu/trustees/livestream.php. Agendas and accompanying materials are posted online at www.etsu.edu/trustees under "Meeting Schedule & Materials."

Faculty/Staff Appreciation Week

As we celebrate the success of our students and the milestones they have achieved during the past academic year, I want to take this opportunity to thank the faculty and staff of ETSU for all they do each day to support our students. Our Faculty/Staff Appreciation Week runs April 27-May 1. ETSU will host a virtual trivia game on Friday, May 1, at noon, and I hope you will participate in this fun event. Details and instructions on how to play will be provided next Monday in our Weekly Update. Trivia topics will include current events, entertainment, sports, and more.

New Option for Paying Fall 2020 Fees

Registration for the fall 2020 semester has already begun. This year, ETSU students will have three options for paying their fees. These include:

- Pay-in-full option
- Four-installment payment plan
- NEW five-installment payment plan that begins this fall

Those wanting to take advantage of the five-installment plan will need to make their first payment on or before July 31. More information about these options will be available from the Bursar's Office.

In addition, the fee payment deadline for fall 2020 will be Monday, August 17, at 6 a.m. The new deadline for fee payment is earlier than in the past and allows ETSU offices and staff members to be available to assist students with any issues that might cause disenrollment from classes due to fee non-payment. To learn more, visit the [Fee Payment Information site](#).

Update on CARES Funding

Announced last week, the CARES Act stimulus funding provided by the federal government will help support students with financial needs that have emerged as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Implementation protocols that will provide details for the distribution of these funds are forthcoming. We are deeply grateful to Senator Alexander, Senator Blackburn and Congressman Roe for their leadership in making these funds available to our students. I will provide additional information about the availability of these funds soon.

Follow-up Regarding Announcement from Governor Lee Regarding Safer-at-Home

Earlier this week, Governor Bill Lee announced that the Safer-at-Home order he had issued will expire on April 30. With this announcement, we will see local businesses begin the process of reopening as early as next week. The university will continue to monitor this situation very closely. Until further notice, all ETSU faculty and staff will continue to work remotely. Access to campus facilities continues to be limited. I will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

Congratulations to the New ETSU Presidential Fellows

It is my honor to announce that Dr. Nick Hagemeyer (Gatton College of Pharmacy), Dr. Jodi Polaha (Quillen College of Medicine) and Dr. Megan Quinn (College of Public Health) will serve as Presidential Fellows for the fall 2020 semester. Our Fellows will develop and execute a project that is aligned with one of our major teaching, research, and service initiatives and will work closely with my office and leadership team and the Center for Teaching Excellence.

You can read more about our Fellows on the [ETSU news site](#).

