

Summer Convocation
of the
Two Hundred Third
Commencement



Saturday, July 25, 2026
10:00 a.m.

Lindsay Lane Baptist Church
Athens, AL



This program contains a list of candidates for graduation,
prepared prior to submission of final grades,
and inclusion herein does not constitute evidence of graduation.

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Commencement Ceremony Order of Exercises

<i>Processional</i>	<i>“Pomp and Circumstance” by Sir Edward Elgar</i>
<i>Invocation</i>	<i>Dr. Lawrence Reeves Instructor of Logistics/Supply Chain Management</i>
<i>National Anthem</i>	<i>“The Star Spangled Banner” Lyrics by Francis Scott Key Music attributed to John Stafford Smith Mr. Blake Hargett Instructor of Elementary Education</i>
<i>Welcome and Introduction of Special Guests</i>	<i>Dr. Alyson Gill Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services</i>
<i>Opening Remarks and Recognition of Honors</i>	<i>Dr. Catherine Wehlburg President</i>

Greetings

50 Year Club - Recognition of the Class of 1976

Dr. Wehlburg

Presentation/Hooding of Candidates/Conferring of MFA Degree

Dr. Wehlburg

Dr. Gill

Dr. C. David Ragsdale, Dean of Colleges

Presentation/Hooding of Candidates/Conferring of Graduate Degrees

Dr. Wehlburg

Dr. Gill

Dr. Ragsdale

Presentation/Pinning of BSN Candidates/Conferring of Undergraduate Degrees

Dr. Wehlburg

Dr. Gill

Dr. Ragsdale

Dr. Mark Reynolds, Chief Nurse Administrator & Assistant Professor of Nursing

Commencement Ceremony

Order of Exercises

Presentation/Oath/Pinning of Teacher Candidates/Conferring of Undergraduate Degrees

Dr. Wehlburg
Dr. Gill
Dr. Ragsdale
Dr. Johnnie Lundin, Assistant Dean, College of Education

Presentation of Candidates/Conferring of Undergraduate Degrees

Dr. Wehlburg
Dr. Gill
Dr. Ragsdale

Announcer Mrs. Amy Garrison
Dean of Students
Closing Remarks Dr. Wehlburg
Alma Mater Mr. Hargett
Benediction Dr. Reeves
Recessional "Onward Ever"
Greg Danner

Commencement Officials

Commencement Marshal

Mr. Blake Hargett
Instructor of Elementary Education

Mace Bearer

Dr. Sergio Olivares
Assistant Professor of Homeland and Corporate Security

Faculty Marshal

Dr. John Moore
Assistant Professor of Management

Candidates for Master Degrees

Master of Fine Arts

Trevor Joseph Thomas	Horton, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
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Master of Accountancy

Mia Helene Alati	Anaheim, CA	College of Business
Chandra Monique Bizzell-Holmes	Harvest, AL	College of Business
Jasmine Jean Bulls	Florence, AL	College of Business
Austin Childers	Vina, AL	College of Business
Lorna-Megan Bass Cooper	New Hope, AL	College of Business
Brooklyn Craig Reeves	Moulton, AL	College of Business
Jessica Rowan Goff-Foster	Hartselle, AL	College of Business
Summer Monroe Lindsey	Brownsboro, AL	College of Business
Kelli Rose Marquez	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Cynthia F. McDaniel	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Riina Niemeyer	Toney, AL	College of Business
Kendall Ashley Pierce	Moundville, AL	College of Business
John Louis Reicks	Des Moines, IA	College of Business
Valerie B. Roberts	Boaz, AL	College of Business

Master of Arts

Zachary Ryan Gray	Yorktown, IN	College of Arts and Sciences
Jordyn Nicole Lee	Falkville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Jerid Simon Morisco	Seattle, WA	College of Arts and Sciences

Master of Education

Wesley Kole Balentine	Florence, AL	College of Education
Porcher M. Carter	Harvest, AL	College of Education
Krysta La'Shon Darling	Tuscaloosa, AL	College of Education
Emilie Kathryn McKee Davenport	Gadsden, AL	College of Education
Jacob Ross Richter	Cullman, AL	College of Education
Crystal Elizabeth Robinson	Vernon, AL	College of Education
Selena Barrientos Romero	Athens, AL	College of Education
Daniel Wayne Yocom	Huntsville, AL	College of Education

Master of Science

Glenda Rene Acklin	Florence, AL	College of Business
Myah Rachelle Alexander	Fort Payne, AL	College of Business
Wesley Clemons	Brownsboro, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Javian Martez Conley	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Pamela Drake	Madison, AL	College of Business
John Winston Garth	Athens, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
John G. Hambright	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Hunter Hodge	Athens, AL	College of Business
Mia Jonell Howard	Athens, AL	College of Business
Mason Tyler Lentz	Decatur, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Demika Michelle Mason	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Barbara Savannah Meagher	Owens Cross Roads, AL	College of Business
John Michael Mizerany	Birmingham, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Brandy Charlotte Moore	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Andrea Parsley	Madison, AL	College of Business
Elsa Marina Phann	Crossville, TN	College of Business
Steave Wayne Phann	Crossville, TN	College of Business
Hannah Katherine Long	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Maddison Rowe	Madison, AL	College of Business
Eliu Gregorio Segovia Orozco	Benito Juarez, MX	College of Business
Kaliyah Settlers	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Jeannia Terry	Moulton, AL	College of Business
Dalton Allen Thrasher	Vinemont, AL	College of Business

Candidates for Bachelor Degrees

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Vanessa Anderson	Toney, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Carsyn Nilah Blankenship	Cullman, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Javier J. Bueno	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Lauren Marie Hawley	Converse, TX	College of Arts and Sciences
Shelby Hogan	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Keshauna Airielle Jones	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Chiquita Lynette Latiker	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Shanita Render-Maize	Birmingham, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Cassandra M. McCorry	Guntersville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Jennifer Ryleigh Patterson	Hartselle, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Jamie Pitts Prince	Scottsboro, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Lacey N. Ridgeway	Elkmont, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Britani Lynn Ristine	Cullman, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Scarlet Rean Taylor	Harvest, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Carlie Cameron Wright	Moulton, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Chasite Vestavia Thomas	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Elizabeth Grace Thompson	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Ashlyn Brooke Thornton	Athens, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Bridget Dawn Walley	Muscle Shoals, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Alexis Grace Weeks	Hillsboro, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Jill Elaine Windham	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences

Bachelor of Science in Education

Skeeter Benford	Phil Campbell, AL	College of Education
Zaebriere Boykin	Vestavia Hills, AL	College of Education
Tonya Louise Causey	Boaz, AL	College of Education
David Trent Chapman	Crossville, AL	College of Education
Madison B. Compton	Athens, AL	College of Education
Maria Covarrubias	Oneonta, AL	College of Education
Autum L. Davis	Montgomery, AL	College of Education
Gage Dutton	Moulton, AL	College of Education
Alix Samantha Franklin	Pinson, AL	College of Education
Kendriand Idette Garner	Hazel Green, AL	College of Education
Dewayne L. Garth	Decatur, AL	College of Education

Tahrea Harris	Montgomery, AL	College of Education
Cody Michael McAteer	Collinsville, AL	College of Education
Dawson Neal McRea	Hanceville, AL	College of Education
Heather Danielle Pierce	Gallant, AL	College of Education
Destiny N. Stanley	Blountsville, AL	College of Education
Eriel Laine Thompson	Athens, AL	College of Education
Madalyn Gracie Wilson	Anderson, AL	College of Education

Bachelor of Fine Arts

Keandra Antionette Garth	Belle Mina, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Lauren Goforth	Winfield, AL	College of Arts and Sciences

Bachelor of Arts

Abby Mae Allen	Scottsboro, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Alexandra Grace Conrad	Blountsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Steven Ray Cornelius	Trinity, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Katelin Elizabeth Ferrell	Cullman, AL	College of Arts and Sciences

Bachelor of Science

Bunola Abernathy	Section, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Adrianna Jade Adams	Elkmont, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Brayden Wade Allen	Trinity, AL	College of Business
Helena Renee Alley	Jacksonville, NC	College of Arts and Sciences
Johnny Aquite	Vinemont, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Jaden Maurice Baker	Decatur, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Karra Barcala	Arab, AL	College of Business
Meghan Michelle Barnes	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Somer Nikole Berrey	Athens, AL	College of Business
Alison Ruby Billeci	New Market, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Asulema Bishop	Fairhope, AL	College of Business
Mary Marguriete Bishop	Union Grove, AL	College of Business
Michelle Leigh Ann Bissell	Ardmore, TN	College of Business
Andrea Marie Black	New Market, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Codey Austin Blankenship	Moulton, AL	College of Business
Clark Holland Brand	Athens, AL	College of Business
Brooks Jeffery Brannon	Birmingham, AL	College of Business
William Russell Brom	Riverside, AL	College of Business
Robert Allen Brown	Union Grove, AL	College of Business

Katherine Amber Campbell	Lake View, AL	College of Business
Brian Cervený	Toney, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Kayla Gabi Chen	Owens Cross Roads, AL	College of Business
Nicholas Clayton Collins	Elkmont, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Dana Michelle Cordell	Gadsden, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
April Michelle Davis	Talladega, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Angel Desyrea Derossett	Dutton, AL	College of Business
Kennon Layne Dial	Cullman, AL	College of Business
Sharon Dodd	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Sydni V. Durm	Athens, AL	College of Business
Kiara D. Fearn	Harvest, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Mackenzie Fitts	Athens, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Troy Neal Fountain	Flomaton, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Tasmian Gamble	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Seth Gardner	Warrior, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Ronald Wade Gorham	Fort Payne, AL	College of Business
Amber Rayne Govia	Town Creek, AL	College of Business
Kristi Marie Graves	Hayden, AL	College of Business
Ariel Victoria Guerra	Decatur, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Haylee Rebecca Hagan	Pulaski, TN	College of Arts and Sciences
John Dylan Hamilton	Madison, AL	College of Business
Victoria Leonor Hernandez	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Kayleigh Marie Herring	Florence, AL	College of Business
KeLai Hicks	Tuscaloosa, AL	College of Business
Katie Ann Hovis	Harvest, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Kyle Joseph Hoyt	Owens Cross Roads, AL	College of Business
Samuel V. Hubbard	Athens, AL	College of Business
Megan Marie Jenkins	Athens, AL	College of Business
Gabrielle Neeley Johnston	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Melissa Beckham Kellum	Athens, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Sarah Catherine Konvalin	Pittsburgh, PA	College of Business
Devin Amaru Leverette	Meridianville, AL	College of Business
Alfred Britton Lewis	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Landon Dewayne Lindsey	Brewton, AL	College of Business
Savannah Faith Lopez	Huntsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Madeline Anne Loyd	Madison, AL	College of Business
Savannah Louise Mann	Cullman, AL	College of Business
Tyler C. McDonald	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Kendall Ann Miller	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Sean Christopher Morgan	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Yadira Murga	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences

Jared Stephen Nichols	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Ruth Okorley	Trussville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Sydney Anye Nicole Pendley	Portland, OR	College of Arts and Sciences
Brianna Marie Randles	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Connor Christian Rawls	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Landen Ray	Fayetteville, TN	College of Business
Umbria Claire Louise Richards	Madison, AL	College of Business
John Mason Rigoni	Jasper, AL	College of Business
Michael Alatar Roden-Brewer	Ardmore, AL	College of Business
Carlton D. Rogers	Opelika, AL	College of Business
Kristen Saine	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Brylie Cynthia Singleton	Hartselle, AL	College of Business
Emani Milan Smalley	Madison, AL	College of Business
Madison Grace Smith	Dora, AL	College of Business
Sacha D. Smith	Prattville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Stella Catherine Smith	Cullman, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Marteena Marie Snow	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Sara G. Sparks	New Market, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Weldon Majors Steadman	Evergreen, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
James William Stevens	Sylacauga, AL	College of Business
Sydney Straub-Vickers	Hoover, AL	College of Business
Terry Wade Teal	Blountsville, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Chaney Race Turner	Harvest, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Detra Rice Turner	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Emma Godwin	Fyffe, AL	College of Business
Denisse Valdez	Arab, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Zeighanna Yazmin Ware	Harvest, AL	College of Business
Kaysha Holliday Warren	Cibolo, TX	College of Arts and Sciences
Dannielle Russell Watley	Decatur, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Keely Ann Watts	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Brittany Wheeler	Warrior, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Erika Lynn Whisante	Huntsville, AL	College of Business
Vanessa A. Williams	Fayetteville, GA	College of Business
James Baker Wilson	Decatur, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Mellissa Ann Wilson	Athens, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Charlotte Witt	Decatur, AL	College of Business
Amber Womack	Madison, AL	College of Arts and Sciences
Erica Mauldin Yarbrough	Warrior, AL	College of Business
Shelby Brooke Zieke	Athens, AL	College of Business

50 Year Club Class of 1976

Jean Killen Adair
Willis Adkisson
Mary Aldridge
Stephen Allen
Jeanne Cox Allen
Larry Almon
Aubrey Anderson
Franz Atkinson
Ron Austin
Bernice Bailey
Sandra Pressnell Bailey
George Bailey
Dwight Baker
James Baker
Edward Ball Jr
Kathie Ball
Robert Ballew III
James Ballowe
Gordon Banks
Patricia Lee Banks
Nancy Colane Barksdale
Billy Barley Jr
Dallas Barnack
Vickie Thompson Bates
Shirley Beard
Gregory Beitzel
Delbert Bellairs
Joe Belyeu
Peggy Busby Bennett
Teddy Billings
Charles Blackwell
Cordelia O'Hehir Bodie
Vickie Bohy
Jane McGehee Bouman
Beverly Branson
Mary May Breedwell
Rowie Bridges Jr
Gloria Simpson Brown
Judy Paustian Steelman Brown
Catherine Atchley Freehling Bruhn
Samuel Buchanan
Deborah Burn
James Butler
Arthur Butler Jr
Wilsolene Vice Cadman

Loudell Cameron
Despina Campaine
Paula O'Neal Campbell
Jack Campbell
Billy Cannon Sr
Bubba Carter Jr
George Cavender III
Ken Chapman
Rhonda Pruitt Chapman
Elizabeth Cuentas Cheatham
Susan Duke Chenault
Mark Chisom
Richard Clark
Bobbie Clem
Carol Davis Cloud
John Coker
Vincent Colane
David Collins
Jann Johnson Collins
Eugene Cope
Donna Netherton Cornelius
Charles Crain Jr
Jesse Crider
Judith Daniel
Henry Davis
Stanley Davis
Gayle Romine Davis
Doris Vinson Davis
Kenneth Deerman
Tommy Degrom
Patricia Lemons Dix
Bobby Dobbs
Marilyn Dobson
Joyce Dove
Robert Duke
Suzette Dunn
Earl Dunn
Cathy Terry Dutton
Janice Decker Eason
Karen Ellsworth
B J Carter Evans
Lynne Farmer
Neta Roberts Faulkner
Virginia Tate Ferguson
Paul Fite

Owen Ford
Susan Foster
Virginia Self Fowler
Joanne France
Jean Francis
Jennifer Aldridge French
Jimmy Fry
Raymond Funderburg
John Galyon
Cedric Gibb
Clarence Gibson
Doyle Graham
George Green
Patricia Green
Harvey Gregory
Marilyn Bentley Griffin
Thomas Gritzmacher Jr
Patricia Pullin Gryder
Don Hampton
Thomas Hand
Andrew Hanvey
William Harmond
Chan Harris
Mable Harris
Randy Harrison
Hugo Haufler
Wanda Davis Henderson
Valarie Nelson Hendrix
William Hennessee
W G Henry
Michael Henry
Elbert Herchenhahn
Kathye McCool Hillis
Emily Morgan Hodges
John Hodnett
Leroy Holland
June Cooley Holt
Robert Hooks
Reba Hubbard
Ava Noland Hudick
Willie Hunter
Robert Jack
Voncile Jackson
Kathy Mobley Jacobs
Dianne Miller Jeffries

50 Year Club Class of 1976

Mark Johnson
Randy Johnson Sr
Thomas Johnson
Robert Jones
Joan Collins Jones
Wyman Kimbrell
Cynthia Waters Kirch
Emily DeRouin Kukura
Beverly Robinson Landsdown
Nancy Simmons Latchem
Richard Lawrence
Ethel Sylvester Leatherwood
Sherry Martin Ledbetter
Jay Lee
Roscoe Leggett
James Lemay
James Lewter
Helen Lewter
Jimmy Little
Lavada Lofton
Deborah Ferguson Lovell
Norma Harbin Lovorn
Carol Mackey
Mary Valdovinos Maiker
Ann Maness
Johnie Manis
Gilbert Maples
Norman Marsh
Susan Martin
Thomas Mayfield
Sherman Mays
Karen McCaghren
Parilee McClure
Arvid McGuire
Tressie Davis McLemore
James McNichols
Rhonda Mitchell
Shirley Tucker Mohler
Kathleen Morrell
Jack Mullins
John Myers Jr
Patsy Nabors
Vicki Capps Nabors
Paul Nava
Lionel Nave

Edward North Sr
Freddy Outlaw
Pat Palmeri
Thomas Paul
John Payne
Thomas Perry Sr
Myra Sparks Pinson
Charles Pirtle
Susie Garner Pitman
Robert Prenovost
Selvin Pressnell
Richard Preston
Sheila Epps Preston
Charles Qualls
Patricia Ratliff
Holland Ray
Malcomb Ray
Martha Brackeen Reece
James Reed Jr
Terry Reid
Robert Rhodes
Pamela Cross Ricci
Michael Richard
Susan Hyatt Richardson
Robert Richter
James Ridings
Clifton Ross
Michael Ruark
Rita Teal Ruple
Ida Sabelhaus
Edith Aldridge Sandlin
Joseph Sauro
Jimmy Scott
Cathy Malone Seibert
Robert Seigh
William Sharples
Roger Shireman
James Silas
Nelson Simmons Jr
Saundra Bell Simmons
Horace Smith Jr
Love Smith
Jerry Smith
Tony Smith
Steven Smith

Wister Smith
Roy Smith
Dick Smith II
Robert South
Charles Souther
Billy Sparks
Bruce Sparling
Ravi Srinivas
Betty Strickland
Renee Suiter
Roberta Roberts Swint
Arthur Talley Jr
Ed Taylor
Floyd Taylor
Lee Thomas II
Vickie Thompson
Beverly Brazier Thompson
Randall Thornton
Martha Dean Thornton
Thomas Thornton
Curtis Tomlin
Connie Prater Torbert
Robert Townsend
Roy Townsend
Lloyd Tuffs
Roger Turner
Lewis Turner
Michael Vastano
John Wade
William Wales
Judy Brady Walker
Randy Wallace
Karey Estes Warren
Laura Simmons Warren
Ava Waryha
William Wedin
Delores White
John White
Richard Wiedemeyer
Steven Williams
Roy Williams Sr
John Winkles
Vernon Wirt
Stephen Yarbrough
Daniel Young

Athens State University History

Athens State University is the oldest continuously operated institution of higher education in Alabama's state educational system. The University was founded in 1822 by local citizens who purchased five acres of land, erected a building, and began Athens Female Academy. Ownership of the school was transferred in 1842 to the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church. With the birth of the North Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church in 1870, the College came under the jurisdiction of that body.

On May 10, 1974, the Board of Trustees requested from the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church that the College seek affiliation with the State of Alabama. The conference, at its annual meeting in June 1974, gave the Board of Trustees this permission and authorized the transfer of the College to the State of Alabama.

In June 1975, the College was accepted by the Alabama State Board of Education subject to the appropriation of operating funds by the Alabama Legislature. Later that year, the Legislature appropriated funds for the operation of the College to serve the graduates of state junior, community, and technical colleges/institutions.

The institution's name has changed several times in its history, following adjustments in purpose and governance. Athens Female Academy, upon transfer to the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church in 1842, became Athens Female Institute. Then in 1889 after having been transferred to the newly formed North Alabama conference, the College was known as Athens Female College. In 1931 the College became coeducational and was known as Athens College. In 1975, when the institution became part of the state educational system, it was renamed Athens State College, marking the initiation of an era of increased opportunity for service. In 1998, a bill was passed by the Alabama Legislature to rename the College to Athens State University.

On May 11, 2012, a bill was passed by the Alabama Legislature allowing the creation of an autonomous Board of Trustees for the University. This Board of Trustees took office in October 2012. Athens State University remains the only upper-division University in the State of Alabama. The long history of service by the University is the foundation upon which the future of the University rests.



Academic Regalia and Traditions

The traditions and the regalia associated with academic ceremonies had their origins in the Middle Ages. Because most medieval scholars were also clerics, distinctive features of the dress were associated with both church and university. In the late 19th century, American universities formed a commission that prepared a code for academic regalia. That code has been updated and is used today by most colleges and universities. Academic dress consists of a robe, cap, and hood, which indicate the degree held by the wearer and the college or university that awarded that degree.

Gowns

Representatives of American Institutions gathered in 1805 and established a body, the Intercollegiate Commission, to standardize academic dress. Gowns traditionally are all black (Harvard, Princeton, and Yale are exceptions) and are of three styles. The bachelor's gown is a comparatively simple style that falls in straight lines from an elaborate yoke and has pointed sleeves. It is worn closed in front. The master's gown is similar to the bachelor's except for its peculiar arrangement of the long sleeves with square ends that hang below the elbow. The doctor's gown is elaborate, full-cut and flowing, and is distinguished by velvet panels down the front and around the neck and by three velvet bars on the bell-shaped sleeves.

Athens State also established its tradition beginning with the 2009 Inauguration. A presidential robe was purchased as the official inaugural robe and will be passed on to each succeeding president for commencement and other academic events. The official presidential robe is a Jefferson doctoral blue robe made of royal pavilion fabric with blue velvet trim. The cording and engraved seals are gold.

Hoods

Historically, the academic hood was literally a garment to protect the wearer from foul weather. Today, it is the identifying symbol of the degree and the length indicates which degree it represents: three and a half feet for the master's and four feet for the doctoral degree. Hoods are lined with the official color of the college or university conferring the degree. The color of the trimming identifies the major field of learning: drab for business, light blue for education, maroon for human sciences, white for liberal arts, and golden yellow for sciences and math. The traditional rule for hoods is that a candidate for a degree should not wear the hood of that degree until it is actually conferred.

Caps and Tassels

The black mortar board is the cap generally worn with academic regalia. A long tassel is fastened to the middle point on the top of the cap. The graduation tassel is an ornament that has been worn for hundreds of years and symbolizes success. It symbolizes that the student has completed studies successfully and this is an opportunity to show their pride and achievement. After graduation, it is moved from hanging on the right to the left side. There are five colors of tassels at Athens State. White symbolizes arts and humanities; drab is business; light blue is symbolic of education; physical education is sage green; and the sciences are golden yellow.

Gonfalons

Another symbol used in commencement ceremonies is the gonfalon. The gonfalon is a flag or banner that hangs from a crosspiece or frame. It originated in the medieval states of Italy as an ensign of state or office.

Degrees

Master of Science - a graduate-level academic degree awarded to individuals who have completed advanced coursework, research, or a combination of both in a science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), or other related fields.

Master of Accountancy - a graduate-level degree designed to provide advanced education in accounting theory, practices, and standards.

Master of Arts - a graduate-level academic degree awarded to individuals who have completed advanced study in the humanities, social sciences, or arts-related disciplines.

Master of Fine Arts - a terminal graduate degree focused on the practice and mastery of the arts. It is considered the highest degree for creative professionals in many artistic fields.

Master of Education - a graduate-level degree focused on advanced knowledge and skills in education. It is designed for current or aspiring educators, administrators, counselors, and education leaders who want to deepen their expertise or move into leadership roles.

Bachelor of Science - a four-year undergraduate degree focused on scientific, technical, and analytical disciplines. It emphasizes quantitative skills, research, and problem-solving, and prepares students for careers or further study in STEM-related fields.

Bachelor of Arts - a four-year undergraduate degree that offers a broad, flexible education in the liberal arts, humanities, and social sciences.

Bachelor of Fine Arts - a four-year undergraduate degree focused on developing professional-level skills in the visual, performing, or creative arts. It is considered the standard degree for students pursuing careers as practicing artists or performers.

Bachelor of Science in Education - a four-year undergraduate degree that prepares students to become licensed teachers—especially in fields that require a strong foundation in math, science, or other specialized content areas.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing - a four-year undergraduate that prepares registered nurses to assume leadership positions, manage complex clinical care, and improve the health and welfare of the individuals and populations within their community and across the nation.

University Medallion – Presidential Chain of Office

The concept of a University medallion began prior to the Middle Ages as a symbol of authority and to signify the transition of that authority from one leader to the successor. The Presidential Chain of Office is one of the grand traditions of higher education. Commissioned by the 2009 Inaugural Committee, the Presidential Chain of Office was created to symbolize the great responsibilities of the office of the President and the continuity of that position, as the chain and medallion passes from one President on to the next.

The medallion was introduced at the inauguration of President Robert K. Glenn on May 5, 2009. The links of the Athens State chain holding the medallion are engraved with the names of the 36 presidents of Athens State University, with the current President's name on the link directly above the medal and the official University seal appearing in the center. This presidential medallion was made possible through contributions by the faculty and staff of Athens State University. It will be worn at commencement and other times when academic regalia is appropriate.

Ceremonial Mace

The mace was originally a weapon of offence and carried in battle by medieval bishops since canonical rule forbade clerics to shed blood by sword. Later, maces began to have a ceremonial function, though they were still intended to provide protection, usually to the king's person, and were borne by sergeants-at-arms within the royal bodyguard. By the late sixteenth century the mace's warlike aspect had gradually diminished and increasing attention was paid to its ornamentation with precious metals and even jewels. Since then, the mace has been used in ceremonial processions as an ensign of authority.

At Athens State University, the mace bearer is a member of the faculty, who carries the mace before the President on all ceremonial occasions over which the President presides. It is a symbol of the fact that the President represents the tradition of the University and that in the President is vested the authority and good name of the University.

The Ceremonial Mace of Athens State University has been designed to pay tribute to the rich history of the University. The four panels of the bronze cap mark distinct periods of our cultural and educational progress. Preceding the present facility the land belonged to Native Alabamians of the Southeast; thus the first panel of the bronze cap points to the agrarian nature of our Alabama natives and their basic diet of corn, beans and squash as primary staples. This panel also marks the initial stage of the institution as a female college through the gift of Judge John McKinley in 1821; this initial stage is depicted by the female symbol on top of an open book. In the second panel the male and female symbols celebrate the coeducation of the College in 1931 and the Methodist symbols of flame, cross and oil lamp recall the Methodist sponsorship of the College which had begun just two decades after its founding. The third panel marks the 1975 change of sponsorship from Methodist Church to State of Alabama. The fourth panel represents the August 1998 name change from Athens State College to Athens State University. A globe spotlights the new commitment to technological communications, and the wide upper flags denote our mission as an upper division institution of higher learning.

Immediately below the bronze cap follows a wooden-fluted column which pays tribute to the fluted ionic columns of Founders Hall. The polar wood shaft is made from boards removed during a renovation of Founders Hall, which was first erected in 1842. The shaft rests inside a decorative globe as its base and holder. This bronze base is designed to show the oceans of the earth and is inscribed with the names of all thirty-six presidents of Athens State University.

The Ceremonial Mace was a gift to the University by the faculty, staff and administration and was first used at Spring Commencement, May 11, 2001.



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

Phone: 256.233.8114
Email: alumni@athens.edu

STAY CONNECTED

athens.edu/alumni

The purpose of the Athens State University Alumni Association is to develop a strong alliance with the University, to encourage graduates to continue a lifelong, active relationship with their alma mater, to develop resources, and to enhance the image of the University.

The Alumni Association has donated more than \$335,500 to the University, students and Athens State Community since 2010 for scholarships and to support campus projects.

Alumni membership is open to everyone. Every member will receive benefits from both local and national businesses. Call, email, or visit our website if you are interested in becoming a member.

Annual Membership – \$25

Lifetime Membership – \$250

All new graduates receive a one-year complimentary membership!



**LET A PAVER AT FOUNDERS
HALL TELL YOUR STORY**

Athens State University

Alma Mater

*On Alabama's Northern border,
Reared against the sky,
Proudly stands our Alma Mater,
As the years roll by.
Alma Mater, Alma Mater,
Conquer and prevail;
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater;
Athens State, All Hail!*

*Through the years we've learned
to love you
And we sing your praise;
For the pleasure you have shown us,
Through our college days.
Onward ever, be our watchword,
May we never fail,
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater
Athens State, All Hail!*

