

TO: CLASS OF 2025 **POTENTIAL** GRADUATES
 FROM: K. Umesh Vig, Director of Student Affairs Operations
 DATE: April 7, 2025
 RE: **SECOND COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY – Thursday, May 22, 2025**

The Second Commencement Ceremony of CT State Community College Manchester (CT State Manchester) will be held on Thursday, May 22, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. sharp, at the Bicentennial Band Shell, on the campus lawn. The Commencement Speaker is Magdalena Gómez, an award-winning performance poet, playwright, performer, teaching artist and highly sought after keynote speaker and workshop facilitator.

INVITATIONS, CAPS AND GOWNS

All student participants are required to wear, and may keep, the traditional blue gowns, mortarboards and tassels. Students may invite an unlimited number of guests to the outside ceremony. If it rains, only two guests per graduate may attend the inside ceremony. The Follett Bookstore @ CT State Manchester (Student Services Center SSC L176 or call 860-645-3140,) will distribute regalia (pre-measurement is not required), and a maximum of four (4) invitations per graduate as per the schedule below:

Starting Thursday, May 1, 2025 through Thursday, May 22, 2025

MAY 1	9AM – 4PM	MAY 9	9AM – 1PM	MAY 19 – 21	9AM – 4PM
MAY 2	9AM – 1PM	MAY 12 – 15	9AM – 5PM	MAY 22	9AM – 3PM
MAY 5 – 8	9AM – 4PM	MAY 16	9AM – 1PM		

INVITATIONS, CAPS AND GOWNS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON COMMENCEMENT DAY UNTIL 3:00 PM!

PARKING & SEATING

After entering the campus, please carefully follow the directional signs. Graduates and their guests are asked to park in East Lot and West Lot. Individuals with special needs may park in designated areas of East Lot. There will be no traffic or parking of vehicles allowed near the Bicentennial Band Shell during the Commencement Ceremony. Seating will be provided for graduates. Family members and guests are asked to bring their own lawn chairs or blankets as seating is limited. Graduates and guests are asked to remain seated until all degrees and certificates are conferred, and the program has finished.

LINE-UP & ROBINING

Rain or shine, all graduates participating in the ceremony are to report in regalia on Thursday, May 22, 2025, to the 1st floor lobby in the Student Services Center (SSC). Faculty and Staff will assist and guide all graduates with the line-up. If the sun shines, **ARRIVE NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m.** If it rains, see *Rain Plans* (p. 2) for arrival times. **PLEASE BE ON TIME. Since there is no rehearsal, we need ample time to line up in alphabetical order, by curriculum, and provide instructions to all graduates before 4:15 p.m.** We ask that you turn off cellular phones and do not chew gum. Do bring sunglasses and dress appropriately for the occasion. Family members and guests will not be permitted in the student robing area (see *Line-up Instructions*, p. 3).

PHOTOGRAPHER

GradImages® will be photographing all graduates with the Chief Executive Officer as they receive their diplomas at the Commencement Ceremony. Please visit their website, www.gradimages.com, and click on Pre-Event Email Registration. Enter your email and up to six emails of loved ones who would like to share in your accomplishment by viewing and ordering your photos. By pre-registering, you will receive a discount of 20% off an order of \$50 or more. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your photographs, please contact GradImages® Customer Service Department at 800-261-2576, online at www.gradimages.com or email ecc.giservice@gradimages.net. During the Commencement Ceremony photographer/s from GradImages® will be available on Campus throughout the evening to take individual photographs of graduates.

SPECIAL NEEDS

It is the policy of CT State Community College Manchester to ensure equal access to its events. If you need accommodations for the event, please contact Joseph Navarra, Coordinator of Disability Services at joseph.navarra@ctstate.edu. In order to provide accommodations in a timely manner, please submit the request at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the Commencement Ceremony.

DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES

Diplomas and certificates will be mailed in late Summer 2025 to students who have met all academic and financial requirements. For questions regarding the completion of your degree or certificate requirements, contact Joanne Faust, Degree Audit Technology Specialist at joanne.faust@ctstate.edu. Make sure the One Stop Services Office has your correct mailing address. For questions regarding the Commencement Ceremony, contact K. Umesh Vig, Director of Student Affairs Operations at kunwarumesh.vig@ctstate.edu.

RAIN PLANS – Please Read Carefully

ANNOUNCEMENT

In case of rain, only one Commencement Ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 22, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. sharp, inside the SBM Charitable Foundation Auditorium in the Arts, Sciences and Technology Center (AST). The decision about an inside ceremony will be made by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. The CT State Manchester website is your best source for information. Please watch the CT State Manchester website (www.ctstate.edu/locations/manchester) for the rain plan announcement.

GUESTS

Only students will be admitted into the SBM Charitable Foundation Auditorium in the AST and guests will be provided with seating in the classrooms (with live telecast). In case of rain, only two guests allowed per Graduate.

LINE-UP & ROBING

In case of rain, all graduates participating in the ceremony are to report in regalia on Thursday, May 22, 2025, to the 1st floor lobby in the Student Services Center (SSC) and Faculty and Staff will assist and guide all graduates with the line-up. **ARRIVE NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise specified. Please be on time!**

Students will line up by curriculum and in alphabetical order with their Program Coordinators/Presenters. The Commencement Ceremony will begin at 5:30 p.m. sharp.

See you on Thursday, May 22, 2025, your Special Day!

CT STATE MANCHESTER SECOND COMMENCEMENT: LINE-UP INSTRUCTIONS

Please Read Before Arriving On Campus

1. Please report by 3:00 p.m. sharp to the Student Services Center, on Thursday, May 22, 2025, to find your Program Coordinator/Presenter and/or Program Sign, to line up for the student procession and to receive instructions. All non-graduates will be asked to leave. We will begin marching at exactly 4:45 p.m. The volunteers will distribute Commencement Programs to you.
2. Please use the index cards provided during Line Up & Robing and print your name in block letters as you wish it to be read by your Program Coordinator/Presenter. If your name is difficult to pronounce, please print it phonetically. Hold on to your name card until it is asked for by the Program Coordinator/Presenter.
3. You should line up by your degree and in alphabetical order two by two when called. The Program Coordinator/Presenter will be near your Program Sign and help you with this.
4. You should not move around once you are in line. **Please do not leave the line to greet family and friends.**
5. If anyone needs a bathroom break, this is the time to go, but let your Program Coordinator/Presenter know you're stepping out.
6. Once all the academic programs are lined up you will begin marching two by two following the Bagpipers, the College Marshal and the Program Coordinators/Presenters to the Band Shell area for the Commencement Ceremony.
7. **IMPORTANT:** At the Band Shell, it is essential that you move into your seats as quickly as possible and walk to the end of the row. Please do not leave any seat/s empty.
8. If you have flowers, please leave them on your chair when going up for your diploma. You are not to move outside the roped area to greet or visit with family or friends.
9. When your row is called, follow the Program Coordinator/Presenter to the stage area.
10. When your name is called, walk briskly on the red carpet to the end towards the Chief Executive Officer. **Take the diploma cover in your left hand and shake hands with your right hand.** Shake hands with any regents that may be standing there, stop at the photographer station for another picture, then return to your seat.
11. Graduates and guests should remain seated until all degrees/certificates are conferred, and the program has finished.
12. At the conclusion of the program, the graduates must follow the platform party and the faculty as they march out. The marshals will lead the graduates out, two rows at a time. Students will march within the ropes to the top of the hill before disbursing. Please do not stop to greet family and friends while recessing; have them meet you later.

DO'S AND DON'TS

***No cameras, vendors, guests or soliciting allowed in student line-up/robing area.**

***All cell phones should be turned off during the Procession and the Commencement Ceremony.**

***If you earned two degrees, select which discipline you will march with and stay in that one line only.**

***Tassels are worn on the right. You will be told by the Chief Executive Officer when to move them to the left.**

***No gum chewing while receiving your degree and being photographed.**

***Keep headgear on for the National Anthem if outdoors.**

***You are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes as the Band Shell grounds may be hard to walk on due to the uneven nature of the terrain.**

***Bring sunglasses and dress somewhat formally.**