Frequently Asked Questions for Graduation Events
May 22-26, 2012

Any additional questions from parents may be directed to Deb Dalton, Parent Communications Liaison for West Point (845) 938-5650 or deb.dalton@usma.edu

Graduation at West Point is a celebration for the graduating class. Many of the activities surrounding graduation are open to families and guests of cadets. Some do require tickets. The information below is intended to assist with planning.

Parking and bus transportation will be posted separately. Guests will be encouraged to park in designated areas and use the shuttle bus service.

In the case of inclement weather, call (845) 938-7000 for event status and location.

What is the Superintendent’s Reception and who attends?
Members of the graduating class in each regiment are invited to attend a reception in their honor, hosted by the Superintendent during graduation week. The receptions will be held in Eisenhower Hall ballroom. Cadets are welcome to bring parents and family members. First and second regiment receptions are held on Wednesday, third and fourth regiments are on Thursday. Attire for the reception is informal – suit or coat and tie for men, dress or suit for ladies.

Date and Time – Wednesday, May 23 - First Regiment – 1:30 – 3 p.m.; Second Regiment – 3:30 – 5 p.m.
Thursday, May 24 - Third Regiment – 1:30 – 3 p.m.; Fourth Regiment – 3:30 – 5 p.m.

What is the Brides’ Coffee? – This is an invitation-only event sponsored by the Daughters of the United States Army intended for fiancées of cadets as “Welcome” to the Army Family. For more information contact Patty Bastianelli via e-mail - 2012USMABridesCoffee@gmail.com. Mothers, future mothers-in-law, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, etc., are all welcome to attend with the brides to be. An announcement is sent out to the cadets during spring semester asking for addresses for future brides who may wish to attend.

Academic Awards – On Thursday (1 – 5 p.m.), 13 academic departments will host award ceremonies. The ceremonies are open to family and guests of those cadets who are receiving awards. Cadets receiving awards will have the appropriate information to share regarding time and place. A master schedule of all academic award ceremonies will be available on the Class of 2012 page in May.

Baccalaureate services – Each of the respective chapels will host a baccalaureate service. All services begin at 7 p.m. Bus service will be available to all chapels on post.

Graduation Parade
There are NO tickets required for the Graduation Parade. Please accommodate those with mobility challenges when possible. Standing room is available on the sides of the Plain (along the fence) near Doubleday Field and you are welcome to bring chairs for those areas. This is also an excellent area for those in wheelchairs. It is one event that is NOT to be missed…the parade is a time honored tradition where the graduating class “leaves” the Corps and is honored as the rest of the Corps passes in review. Throughout the parade a narrator will describe the customs and traditions. The West Point Band will provide the music for the event. The parade will last approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

Date and Time – FRIDAY, May 25 – 10:30 a.m. (Updated May 21, 2012)

Awards Convocation – Held on Friday afternoon (2 p.m.) at Eisenhower Hall is an event where various organizations and donors will present awards to deserving graduates. There is a reception following for award recipients and presenters. Not all cadets attend.

Date and Time – Friday, May 25 – 2 p.m.

Pre-Banquet Reception – The pre-banquet reception is open to all cadets and guests. The reception will be held in Eisenhower Hall. Each regiment will have a designated area where they can socialize with classmates, family and friends.

Date and Time – Friday, May 25 - 4:30 - 6 p.m.
Graduation Banquet - The banquet is limited to graduating cadets plus three (total of 4 seats). Additional seats may be available via the cadet’s company. Additional family members and guests can enjoy the banquet from one of two satellite locations, either the West Point Club or the Hotel Thayer.

West Point Club will begin taking reservations on MONDAY, April 30, 2012 - (845) 938-5120 or (845) 446-5545.

Thayer Hotel will begin taking reservations on MONDAY, May 7, 2012; (845) 446-4731 ext. 7927.

Approximate cost at each location is $42-$44 per person.
The banquet is broadcast to both locations via closed circuit television. Shuttle buses will drop guests off at both locations.

For those attending the banquet in the cadet mess, please be at your seats by 6:45 p.m. The banquet will begin promptly at 7 p.m.

At the conclusion of the banquet, please be patient as the shuttle buses make their way around West Point transporting guests back to their cars/parking lots.

Date and Time – Friday, May 25 – 7 p.m. – (Please be in the Cadet Mess no later than 6:45 p.m.)

What is the attire for the banquet? Banquet – Attire is formal or semi-formal.
Cadets will be dressed in India Whites, a formal summer uniform. Military will wear the equivalent dress uniform, men typically wear a tuxedo or a dark suit, women – long or cocktail type dresses or evening pant suit. See page 3 of this document for more information on suggested attire.

What if a guest needs a wheelchair?
If you are traveling with a family member who needs a transport chair, recommend bringing it with you (if possible) or contact Home Health Pavilion (845) 569-1250 for a rental. They are located in Newburgh and have been very accommodating. For those who are able to walk, but have some challenges, a wheelchair may still be a good idea as there is a lot of walking required.

Handicapped Guests and transportation for Graduation – For those guests requiring handicap transportation to the graduation ceremony, only one family member may accompany that guest on the handicap bus. The handicap buses are limited in size and it is necessary to limit access in order to accommodate all those in need of special transportation.

Graduation – Gates will open at 7 a.m. Each cadet will receive 10 tickets for graduation in a “preferred” seating area. These seats are normally in an area allowing a direct line of sight to view graduation and your graduate receiving his/her diploma. Additional tickets (beyond the 10 given to each graduate) will be available during graduation week at the Holleder Center Ticket Office during regular business hours, Wednesday – Friday (May 23-25), 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. and also at the stadium gates on graduation day. It is recommended that guests be seated by 9 a.m. as the graduating class will march in beginning at approximately 9:30 a.m. The graduation ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. and lasts approximately 2 hours. Gates are opened early to allow plenty of time to pass through security. For the majority, the gates on the west side of the stadium will serve as your main entry points. Handicapped guests will be allowed access via Gate 1 on the east side of the stadium until the arrival of the guest speaker. There is plenty of seating for all guests who desire attendance. It is open to the public.

SPECIAL NOTE - During the ceremony, parents/family members wait to hear their graduate’s name called signifying they are about to receive their diploma. Although many will want to cheer as loudly as they can at the reading of their graduate’s name, please be considerate and wait until ALL names have been read to cheer, to prevent others from missing out on hearing their graduate’s name – congratulating the entire class on their accomplishment! Thank you!

Babies and graduation tickets – Infants sitting on a parent’s lap do not need a ticket. However, please keep in mind if you have an infant carrier, it will require some space. In that case it would be polite to have a ticket to account for that space.

Hat Toss – At the end of the graduation ceremony, the graduates will toss their hats into the air in celebration. There will be announcements on the stadium video board as to location and time to gather. Children must be between the ages of 6 and 10 years old and height must be between 42 and 54 inches tall. Hats are limited to one per child. Please know cadets will sometimes place pictures and other items inside their hats.

Graduation photos – Academy Photo will be present at graduation and will photograph the cadets as they receive their diplomas. Proofs are sent to parents around the end of June. Every cadet will receive a card from Academy Photo asking for an updated (if necessary) address for their parent/guardian before the end of the academic year. You can also call to update Academy Photo if you wish to confirm your address to facilitate receiving the proofs; (845) 938-3448.

Prepared by West Point Parent Communications       (845) 938-5650       www.westpoint.edu
Ferry Service – DUE TO UNFORSEEN DELAYS ON A CONSTRUCTION PROJECT AT GARRISON LANDING, THE FERRY SERVICE WILL NOT BE OPERATIONAL FOR GUESTS TRAVELING TO WP VIA TRAIN. (Updated May 21, 2012)

Inclement weather plan – In the event graduation has to be moved indoors due to SEVERE weather, the following sites will be utilized for additional guests – Eisenhower Hall Theater will be the primary location for the graduating class and limited family members. Alternate locations include - Eisenhower Hall Ballroom, Eisenhower Hall Cadet Restaurant, Thayer Hall - Robinson Auditorium and various lecture rooms, classrooms will also be available in Bartlett Hall and Mahan Hall Auditorium.

For those not able to attend, the ceremony will be available online. Please visit www.westpoint.edu for the link. It will also be shown on the Pentagon Channel. Check your local listings for availability.

Changing Uniforms/Commissioning Ceremonies – After the graduation ceremony, the graduates will change into their Army Service Uniforms in preparation for their bar pinning or commissioning ceremonies. The ceremonies are held in various places around West Point. Cadets (now graduates) will often make arrangements to share their ceremony with good friends, teammates or company mates often asking a respected instructor/mentor or family member to administer the oath. The American flag is required to be present for the ceremony. The person who will administer the oath should be an active or retired commissioned US Armed Forces officer in uniform. (See page 5 for Commissioning Ceremony narrative and Oath of Office.)

Graduation Day Picnics – If you are trying to arrange a family picnic or luncheon following the graduation ceremony, Cadet Restaurant has created menu options for your consideration. They will also assist with tents, tables, chairs and sites if needed. Please visit – www.allforthecorps.com and visit the “Restaurant” link.

Graduates and departing West Point – The graduates will have to clear their rooms, complete paperwork and pick up their new military identification cards by 5 p.m. on graduation day. It may be prudent to discuss the day with your cadet ahead of time so you can plan accordingly for the attending guests. Some will plan a light picnic or possibly relocate to their hotel while waiting for the graduates to complete these tasks.

SECURITY Message - All visitors must enter through Thayer or Stony Lonesome gates only and should expect minor delays. All persons 16 and older are required to show the security guards at the gates a valid, gov’t-issued photo ID and must keep the ID in their possession at all times. All vehicles entering the installation are subject to being searched, this includes those with DoD decals. Visitors planning to attend events associated with grad week are strongly encouraged to use the shuttle bus system as parking is limited.

On graduation day all visitors must pass through metal detectors prior to entering Michie Stadium. Arrive early to allow time to pass through security. The following items will not be allowed into the stadium: large bags, backpacks, coolers, umbrellas and all beverage containers (except baby bottles). Please plan accordingly.

As guests at West Point we ask for your vigilance. Your help in the detection and reporting of criminal activities will help ensure that this year’s graduation is a success. Anyone observing suspicious behavior or activity is urged to promptly report it to the Military Police at (845) 938-3333.

REMEMBER, IF YOU HEAR SOMETHING, SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!
### Recommended Event Attire

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Attire</th>
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<tr>
<td>General daytime and nighttime</td>
<td>casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and parade</td>
<td>casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent’s Reception</td>
<td>informal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awards Convocation</td>
<td>informal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduation Banquet</td>
<td>formal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduation Ceremony</td>
<td>informal</td>
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A helpful link regarding attire – [www.usma.edu/uscc/dca/hostess/dresscodes.htm](http://www.usma.edu/uscc/dca/hostess/dresscodes.htm)

As of May, 2012 – Will be updated as needed!
COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

1. The host explains the significance of the event. The US flag is appropriately displayed.

"The Commissioning Ceremony is a time-honored tradition that signifies a new officer joining the profession of arms. This ceremony is the visible transformation from cadet to officer. A commissioned officer must administer the Oath of Office to the new Lieutenant and swear them to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. As such, each newly commissioned officer becomes an agent of the executive branch of the government, appointed by the President. The pinning of the 2LT rank is a visible sign of this appointment and of the commitment made by the officer. Please maintain proper decorum and respect as we proceed with the ceremony."

2. Oath of office is administered:

I, (First Name, Middle Name, Last Name) HAVING BEEN APPOINTED AN OFFICER IN THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, IN THE GRADE OF SECOND LIEUTENANT, DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT I WILL SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ALL ENEMIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC; THAT I BEAR TRUE FAITH AND ALLEGIANCE TO THE SAME, THAT I TAKE THIS OBLIGATION FREELY, WITHOUT ANY MENTAL RESERVATION OR PURPOSE OF EVASION, AND THAT I WILL WELL AND FAITHFULLY DISCHARGE THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICE UPON WHICH I AM ABOUT TO ENTER, SO HELP ME GOD.

3. Promotion narrative is read while the 2nd Lieutenant bars are clipped on the Army Service Uniform.

Attention to Orders:
The President of the United States has reposed special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity, and professional abilities of (FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME, LAST NAME). In view of these qualities and his/her demonstrated potential for increased responsibility he/she is, therefore, promoted in the United States Army to the rank of SECOND LIEUTENANT, effective 26 May 2012.

By order of the Secretary of the Army,
- Signed -
  John McHugh

4. Appointment Certificate is presented.

5. Remarks by Lieutenant.