

TIPS FOR PREPARING STUDENT GRADUATION SPEECHES

Here are some suggestions for students who are planning to audition for selection as the Student Commencement Speaker. We welcome your interest and look forward to your audition.

Commencement is a formal ceremony. As such, a formal greeting is appropriate to start the speech. The correct order of the greeting is: “Members of the Board of Trustees, President Tessman, faculty, staff, families, guests, and my fellow graduates.”

The Student Graduation Speech should be presented at the audition in as polished a manner as possible. The Selection Committee, which consists of the Dean of Students, President of ASNMU, two students, and two faculty members, will be considering several factors in making their selection. Those factors include:

- Is the speech appropriate to the occasion and audience?
- Is the content well organized, interesting, and does it capture the student experience or viewpoint?
- Is the speech well delivered?
- Is the speech inclusive enough to represent all of the graduates even though it may be from the perspective of a traditional or nontraditional student?
- Does the speaker avoid using the opportunity to give personal thanks or recognition to those who were important to the speaker vs. acknowledging that all of the graduates have friends, families, faculty and staff who have helped and encouraged them?
- Is the speech fresh and memorable even though it may follow the traditional (but not required) “fond look back/challenge for the future” format of most of the past student graduation speeches?
- Is the speech no longer than five minutes?
- Does the speaker reflect positively on the University?