Commencement Changes

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Lots of planning and safety precautions have gone into preparing for not one but two commencement weekends at WKU next month.

Amy Bingham explains how they will be held safely in this week’s View from the Hill.

For two Saturdays in May, Feix field here at Houchens LT Smith Stadium will be covered with up to fifty rows of graduates. It’s almost time to celebrate the class of 2021 and the long overdue celebration of the class of 2020.

“We’ve been talking all through the pandemic of what this year might look like and how to do it safely.”

Campus events director Rachel Goodman recently did a stadium walk- through with the commencement committee.

“All of the folks that have been conceptualizing what this would like could actually be here and realize how cool this stadium is to begin with.”

Goodman says utilizing the stadium’s giant video screen during the ceremonies was a no-brainer.

“How do we give them that moment in a socially distanced covid pandemic times, the biggest thing we could think of, the largest thing we have is that video board.”

Graduates have been asked to submit a photo or video of themselves to be shown during the ceremonies.

“I put this photo in there…”

Student Government Association President Garrett Edmonds is thrilled commencement is going to happen.

 “Cause I’m a first generation college student. I want my parents to be there. I want my family to see the accomplishment. I just want them to be able to celebrate with all my friends as well.”

He says Covid has made for a very interesting year.

 “I think students have made the most of it. I think, you know, it wasn’t what we wanted but everyone’s had their own experience with it and I’ve just tried to make the most of the time I’ve had left.”

Goodman says graduates will be masked and Healthy on the Hill guidelines will be in place. She says guests will be socially distanced from other families in the stadium, on the South Lawn and in Diddle Arena.

 “I think the important thing for us is just to give all the graduates their moment. Especially the 2020 graduates who had to leave mid-semester. I mean their world shifted so dramatically.”

Ceremonies will be held May first for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 graduates. Spring 2020 graduates will be celebrated here on May eighth.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

For all the commencement information, log onto wku dot edu slash commencement.

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