

## Most graduates choose to attend final ceremonies

By Julie Naughton  
Senior Reporter

Although a University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduation ceremony can last longer than three hours, more than 65 percent of each graduating class elects to go through the ceremony, said Rodney Moore, assistant director of the Office of Registration & Records.

Moore said the university stages three graduation ceremonies each year. They are in May, August and December. Students are required to receive their diplomas in the period that they finish their degrees; for instance, someone that finished his or her degree requirements in June would receive a diploma in August, Moore said.

Traditionally, the largest graduation ceremony is in May. At that time, about 2,000 students go through the ceremony, Moore said. The May graduation ceremony also is the longest, as this is the only graduation where special awards from the Alumni Association are granted and honorary degrees are awarded.

The August graduation ceremony, Moore said, traditionally is the smallest. About 775 to 800 students go through that ceremony, he said.

"Still, about 65 to 70 percent of the students opt to go through the ceremony," Moore said. Those that choose not to go through the ceremony usually have job-related reasons, Moore said.

The December graduation falls in between the two numbers and typically graduates between 1,100 and 1,200 students, Moore said.

All graduates' names are listed in the graduation program which is distributed at commencement. However, the only diplomas taken to the Bob Devaney Sports Center are the diplomas of those students who attend the ceremony.

Moore said all graduation candidates are sent a letter about six weeks before commencement, asking if they plan to attend the ceremony. They are required to respond by a certain date, and from that, numbers for the ceremony are compiled. The graduates are arranged by college.

Doctoral students are the only students that have their names read off at the ceremony. Undergraduate and graduate degree candidates are given numbers according to their college and walk to the stage in that order. This is because of time limitations, Moore said.

"If we read off every name, at say a May graduation," Moore said, "The ceremony would be much longer than three hours. That would be over 2,000 names, for a typical graduation."

All graduation ceremonies include a speaker, chosen by UNL Chancellor and NU Interim President Martin Massengale and an invocation and a benediction given by a member of the local clergy; religions are rotated each year. This year's speaker is Jack MacAllister, chief executive officer and chairman of the board for US West.

As well, each graduation has live music before and during the ceremony. The national anthem, graduation recessional and processional and entertainment music are played. For the May and December graduations, this music is played by the UNL Concert and Symphony Bands. For August graduations, the music is played by the Capital City Brass Ensemble, a group made up of UNL alumni.

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