ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE CUNY BA/BS COMMENCEMENT

WHEN IS THIS YEAR’S CEREMONY?
Wednesday, June 3, 2009. Rehearsal at 9:00 am, ceremony at 10:00 am.

WHERE?
The Cooper Union in Manhattan’s East Village at East 7th St., between 3rd and 4th Avenues. For directions go to http://www.cooper.edu/administration/about/how_to.html

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO MARCH?

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?
$75.00 – for the cap, gown, stole, tassel, program book, and reception. If you are renting a cap/gown from your home college, you can use that attire as long as the color is all black. In that case, the cost is $60.00 and you'll get a tassel and stole from CUNY BA. A check or money order is preferred (if that is not possible, you can bring cash to the office in person – do not mail cash).

HOW DO I SIGN UP? WHAT IS THE DEADLINE?
Students eligible to participate (based on their graduation audit) fill out and return the materials they receive in the mail. The due date is April 6. Fees are nonrefundable after May 1.

WHAT IF I MISS THE APRIL 6 DEADLINE?
You may submit your materials up until May 1 for an additional $10 fee. After May 1, we cannot accommodate requests to participate in the ceremony.

WHAT IF I CAN’T AFFORD THE $75.00 FEE?
A limited number of fee reductions may be available. Contact Lidija Markes, CUNY BA Scholarships Coordinator, in writing to explain your situation (LMarkes@gc.cuny.edu).

I RECEIVED THE MAILING AND RETURNED THE PAPERWORK. WILL I RECEIVE AN INVITATION?
No, the cover letter you receive with the forms to fill out serves as the invitation. (You will receive confirmation by email that we received your payment as well as another mailing in late April with additional details.)

IF I HAVE TO TAKE AN INCOMPLETE IN A CLASS, CAN I STILL PARTICIPATE?
Yes.

IS THERE A RECEPTION AFTER THE CEREMONY?
Yes, at the Great Hall from Noon – 1:00 pm. Light fare – fruit and cheese. It is not a luncheon.

HOW MANY GUESTS CAN I BRING TO THE CEREMONY?
No tickets are required. Students should try to limit themselves to five-six guests if possible. The Great Hall seats over 900 people. There is standing room in the back of the Great Hall if needed. Seating, on a first-come, first-seated basis, begins at 9:00 am.

CAN CHILDREN ATTEND?
Children under 16 are welcome as long as they remain with a responsible adult (other than yourself) for the entire ceremony and are able to sit quietly. It is best to keep young children/toddlers who may not be able to sit through the ceremony at home. Childcare arrangements are not available.
I HAVE FRIENDS AND FAMILY OUT OF THE COUNTRY AND THEY WILL NEED NONIMMIGRATION VISAS TO GET HERE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?
CUNY BA will prepare a letter for YOU to request permission for your relatives or friends to travel to the US for the ceremony if you put your request in writing to Jean Myers, CUNY BA Administrative Assistant (JMyers@gc.cuny.edu) with this information: full name(s) of relative/friend, relationship to you, name of embassy/consulate and mailing address. If you are unable to find out the name and address of the embassy or consulate, use http://usembassy.state.gov/ as a reference. Make your request as soon as possible (ideally before April 6); there can be long waits for visas.

HOW LONG WILL THE CEREMONY BE?
About 1 ½ hours long (10:00am - Noon). This does not include the reception.

WILL MY FACULTY MENTOR BE INVITED?
Yes, but students are also strongly encouraged to personally invite their mentors.

I WILL HAVE ELDERLY OR DISABLED GUESTS - ARE THERE SPECIAL SEATING ARRANGEMENTS?
Yes, contact Jean Myers at JMyers@gc.cuny.edu or 212-817-8220 in late May.

WHEN AND WHERE WILL I GET MY CAP AND GOWN?
Caps and gowns will be distributed from the CUNY BA office around Memorial Day. Students will receive detailed instructions via e-mail about cap and gown pick up and about the ceremony in early May. The information will also be posted on our web site and blog.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRADUATING AND COMMENCEMENT?
Commencement is a ceremony. For CUNY BA, it takes place once a year, in June, to which the prior September, January, June and upcoming September graduating classes are invited. Graduation indicates the completion of all degree requirements and the conferral of your degree.

Students who complete their degree requirements in the fall become January graduates; students who complete their degree requirements in the spring become June graduates; students who complete their degree requirements in the summer become September graduates.

WILL I RECEIVE MY DIPLOMA AT THE CEREMONY?
No. Students will be contacted by mail about picking up their diploma (at the office). Diplomas take several months to produce.

WILL WE TAKE GRADUATION PHOTOS? IS THERE A YEARBOOK?
We have arranged for a professional photographer to take photos of each student crossing the stage. Students will be notified about purchasing them after the ceremony. You are under no obligation to purchase them. There is no yearbook or video. You will receive a commencement program listing the speakers and graduates at the ceremony.

DO WE HAVE CLASS RINGS?
The Balfour Company sells our class rings – 1- 877-Balfour (225-3687). The CUNY BA’s account with Balfour is BK06334-10.

CAN I MARCH IN MY HOME COLLEGE’S COMMENCEMENT?
Yes. In March, the CUNY BA Registrar sends the names of graduates to the senior colleges and you should be invited. (NB: Some colleges do not allow upcoming September graduates to march in June, however.) If you have questions about your home college’s commencement, contact your home college.