



Student Commencement Speaker Information and Selection Guidelines

1. Selection of spring 2026 Commencement Student Speaker on Tuesday, May 12, 2026:
 - Student speakers may be nominated, but must complete the application.
 - Eligible students must be graduating by the end of the spring term.
 - All applicants should follow the directions on the Speaker Information Guidelines, including all the required information on an outline of the speech they plan to present, if selected.
 - Only one student speaker will be selected per ceremony by the Selection Committee which is appointed and chaired by Dr. Mark Bukowski, vice president, Student Services.

2. Timeline:
 - Notice of the opportunity to speak at Commencement will be posted at all College sites, on the College website: southflorida.edu, social media, Brightspace, and Panther Central beginning **Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2026**.
 - Information forms will be available at the DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, and Lake Placid campus locations, and all academic deans' offices.
 - A detailed outline of the speech is **due Monday, March 23, 2026** and may be turned in via email to SFSCStudentServices@southflorida.edu.
 - The Selection Committee will read the detailed outlines and select finalists by **Friday, April 3, 2026**.
 - Finalists will present speeches to the Selection Committee on **Friday, April 10, 2026**.
 - The Commencement Speaker finalist will be **notified by Friday, April 17, 2026**.

3. Speech Requirements:
 - The speech should not exceed 10 minutes.
 - The Commencement Speaker should use appropriate examples, stories, and/or instances of humor for a graduation ceremony and the audience. The audience will range from small children to senior adults, the graduates, the SFSC District Board of Trustees, students, faculty, and staff.
 - Applicants must select their own topics. They may wish to make points in the message that are relevant to college graduates. Some possible topics might be the value of education, specifically at SFSC; the role that education will play in the graduates' futures; or ways that education changes people's lives. These are only examples.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER APPLICATION INFORMATION

Due Monday, March 23, 2026

Thank you for applying to become the 2026 SFSC Commencement Speaker.

You MUST be able to complete all graduation requirements by the end of the spring term of 2026 to be eligible. The Selection Committee will review all applications and finalists will be selected by **Friday, April 3**. Finalists will present their speeches to the Selection Committee on **Friday, April 10**.

Finalists will be notified of the speaker selection on or around **Friday, April 17, 2026**.

The Commencement Ceremony is **Tuesday, May 12, 2026 in the evening**.

Applicants must select their own topic. They may want their speeches to: (1) address topics of interest to graduates and the audience, (2) include humor, and (3) be no longer than 10 minutes in length.

Your speech is your application, please provide a detailed outline of your speech with the following **required information**:

- ✓ **Name**
- ✓ **Student ID#**
- ✓ **Address**
- ✓ **City/State**
- ✓ **Phone Number(s)**
- ✓ **Email Address**
- ✓ **Degree or Certificate Program**
- ✓ **Graduation Date**

Email your speech to the following email address before 5 p.m. on **Monday, March 23, 2026**:

SFSCstudentservices@southflorida.edu

For additional information, you may contact:

Mark Bukowski, Vice President, Student Services, 863-784-7107