

UC Davis Commencement Review

Authored by Emily Galindo

Background Information

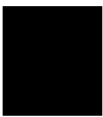
Historically, UC Davis has offered a decentralized commencement model for its spring undergraduate commencements. Each of the colleges has taken responsibility for its ceremonies and all were held in the University Credit Union Center. The college-based undergraduate ceremonies were supported by event staff from Student Affairs and Ceremonies and Events personnel who were responsible for the commencement program.

As the campus has grown over the past few decades, additional ceremonies have been added to accommodate greater numbers of graduates and their families. The increase in ceremonies has impacted those involved with planning and execution from both a facilities and staffing perspective. In addition to the logistical challenges, there has been a desire to create a more celebratory event

Brief Sketch of What Transpired Commencement Weekend

On Thursday, June 9th, a walkthrough was conducted with a number of staff who would be attending the commencement ceremonies. The purpose was to review the calling of names in real time. Full Measure (a contracted media vendor) representatives, along with Ceremonies and Events staff and some volunteers, coordinated walking up to the stage, presenting the QR codes which contained student names and majors, and then proceeding across the stage. Other walkthroughs were also done that week, but separately, for teams that would be working during commencement weekend. For example, the dining team that was responsible for a portion of the water service went to the stadium on Wednesday, June 8th to review concessions plans and the placement of water stations.

On Friday, June 10th, staff and volunteers began to gather as early as 4 a.m. An Emergency Operations Command (EOC) was designated in one of the press box rooms in the stadium. O C



ceremonies where the students were released from front to back. As the temperature grew hotter, the students in the front rows became reasonably uncomfortable and anxious and began to walk up to cross the stage without specific direction. It was not possible for the small number of volunteers to keep this from happening.

The heat also resulted in students seeking water. The placement of the water stations in the back of the rows of chairs, under tents, caused the students to congregate and remain standing. This picture of the field as the ceremony progressed was ultimately very chaotic. At the same time, attendees in the stands were likewise seeking water and shade. They appeared to be unaware of the cooling stations that were available, but located outside of the venue. The no re-entry policy kept many from seeking that as a solution for their discomfort.

As the commencement progressed, several individuals began to experience heat exhaustion and emergency services were notified. The Acting Fi

UC

