RUTGERS
School of Business | Camden

School of Business–Camden
227 Penn Street
Camden, NJ 08102

P: 856-225-6800
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rsbc.rutgers.edu

Commencement Student Speaker Information and Criteria

The Rutgers School of Business-Camden's Commencement Ceremony is held each year in May. One undergraduate student and one graduate student will be selected for the role of student commencement speaker for the Commencement Ceremony. Being chosen as a speaker is one of the highest honors a graduate can achieve and carries tremendous responsibility. Graduates from any School of Business-Camden Program, regardless of location (day, evening, off-campus, or online), are eligible to be nominated as a Commencement Student Speaker.

The Student Speaker Selection Committee will review all finalist submission packages and will select the chosen speakers.

- One undergraduate and one graduate student will be selected to speak at the Honors Ceremony (date & time TBA)
- One undergraduate and one graduate student will be selected to speak at the Commencement Ceremony (date & time TBA)

The Commencement Address

The Commencement Address should speak primarily to the graduating students, but should also be inclusive of family and friends in attendance. The graduating students include students at all Rutgers School of Business-Camden campus locations, including the online. Creativity is encouraged. Speakers should keep in mind the mission and values of the School and the University and should speak to the unique experience of being a Rutgers School of Business-Camden student.

Additionally, since the Commencement ceremony is a celebration of student achievement and accomplishments of our graduating class, Commencement Speakers should have the ability to give a positive, meaningful and inspirational address to the graduating class and their families. Therefore, nominees should be skilled public speakers.

Student Speaker Eligibility

- All undergraduate and graduate students graduating in the **Class of 2021** from the Rutgers School of Business-Camden is eligible to be the Commencement Speaker. The student should have submitted a diploma application or have been approved for degree candidacy if the student completed her/his coursework in August or December.

- The ideal student will be graduating with honors (summa cum laude, magna cum laude, or cum laude).

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- The candidate must be in good standing with the School and the University.
- The candidate must embody the spirit of the graduating class and represent the School and the University well.
- The ideal candidate will possess strong public speaking skills and be able to deliver a strong message to the graduating class and to the Rutgers University community.
- In addition to academic excellence, the ideal candidate will have demonstrated qualities in professionalism, civic engagement, and leadership during their studies at the School of Business-Camden and ideally campus-wide.

How it Works

1-Nominations by Faculty and Staff

To nominate a student, School of Business-Camden faculty and/or staff must submit the **Commencement Student Speaker Nomination Form**, which can be found at: **https://business.camden.rutgers.edu/commencement-speaker/**

Students cannot self-nominate. An interested student may discuss his/her intent with RSBC faculty and/or staff.

To be eligible for a nomination, a student must be nominated by two (2) School of Business-Camden faculty and/or staff of which at least one (1) faculty nomination is required.

Note: A nomination does not ensure acceptance.

2-Review of Nominations

Based on the nominated students' eligibility and the strength of the nomination itself, the Student Speaker Selection Committee, made up of Rutgers School of Business-Camden faculty and staff, will review all nominations.

3-Submit Draft Speech

Once semi-finalists are identified by the Student Speaker Selection Committee, candidates will be asked to submit a draft of his/her speech and a copy of his/her resume to the Committee, directed to:

- Undergraduate students: Kathryn Potts, Administrative Assistant for the Office of Academic Services (k.potts@rutgers.edu)
- Graduate students: Jasmin McMillon, Student Support Assistant (jasmin.mcmillon@rutgers.edu)

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The content and style of the draft speech submitted will be the primary criteria used by the Student Speaker Selection Committee to select the finalists. The delivery time of the speech must be no longer than **five (5) minutes**. Notable speeches are often those that: a) have the most meaning for the largest number of persons in attendance, b) reflect on the common educational experiences, and c) share, in a personal way, the value of the education received at Rutgers School of Business-Camden.

Draft speeches and a copy of the student's resume must be emailed to Kathryn (undergraduate students) and Jasmin (graduate students).

Hard copies or digital copies are acceptable, but digital copies are preferred. In the email, clearly identify yourself, your intention, your major, and your undergraduate/graduate student status; include your email and phone number. These identifiers will be recorded and then removed from your submission for an unbiased review by the Student Speaker Selection Committee. Members of the Student Speaker Selection Committee will then review the unidentified copies of the speeches to determine the final pool of finalists who will be invited for in-person auditions.

4-Finalists Selected

The Student Speaker Selection Committee will review all draft speech submissions. In selecting the best submitted draft, the Student Speaker Selection Committee rates the submitted speech along the criteria below:

- Clarity of ideas
- Appropriateness of topic and suitability for the event
- Relevancy to and embodies the "spirit" of all SBC students
- Possesses and tells a compelling and interesting story
- Overall quality of the speech and the speaker

5-Auditions

Once finalists are identified by the Student Speaker Selection Committee, candidates will be asked to make a speech (audition) to the Committee.

NOTE: The Committee encourages applicants to view previous student commencement speeches from Rutgers University and other prestigious schools to gain a clear understanding of the assignment that you are requesting.

6-Commencement Student Speakers Named

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The Student Speaker Selection Committee will review all finalist submission packages and will select the chosen speakers for the following events:

- One undergraduate and one graduate student will be selected to speak at the Honors Ceremony (date & time TBA)

- One undergraduate and one graduate student will be selected to speak at the Commencement Ceremony (date & time TBA)

The chosen Student Speakers will receive assistance from selected faculty and staff of the Rutgers School of Business-Camden in preparing the final version of their speeches prior to the Honors Ceremony and Spring Commencement Ceremony.

Final approval of the speech is required from the Rutgers School of Business-Camden. Additionally, the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Commencement Speakers will have a seat on the dais with School officials and honorees during Commencement Ceremony. Family members of the Commencement Student Speaker may be able to sit in the reserved section.

All finalists who audition will receive a memento from the School in appreciation of their effort.

Timeline

- Nominations from RSBC Faculty and Staff are due by April 5th (revised)
- Semi-Finalists must submit a draft speech by April 16th (revised)
- Finalists will be contacted for auditions. Auditions will occur between April 21st – 23rd
- Announcement of Commencement Student Speakers will shortly follow the auditions (approximately April 30th)
- Rehearsal(s) will occur approximately the 2nd week of May

Questions

Writing a Commencement Speech is a challenging and rewarding task. If you have additional questions or concerns about appropriate content or the selection process, please do not hesitate to contact Rachel Tomlinson, Director of Operations (rachel.tomlinson@rutgers.edu), Kandace Diedrick, Assistant Dean, (kandace.diedrick@rutgers.edu), or Christine Ebner, Assistant Dean (christine.ebner@rutgers.edu), or call 856.225.6216.

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NOMINATION PHASE: SELECTION COMMITTEE EVALUATION SHEET

Anonymous Applicant #	**Scoring** **1=high** **5=low**	**Comments**
Applicant meets minimum eligibility requirements	***Yes/No***	
Strength of Nomination		
Strength of Applicant (academic, professional, engagement, and connection)		
OVERALL SCORE		

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DRAFT SPEECH PHASE: SELECTION COMMITTEE EVALUATION SHEET

Anonymous Applicant #	Scoring 1=high 5=low	Comments
Clarity of idea(s)		
Appropriateness of topic and suitability to the event		
Student's speech has relevancy to and embodies the "spirit" all RSBC students		
Student possesses and tells a compelling and interesting story		
Speeches overall quality		
Overall comments		
OVERALL SCORE		

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AUDITION PHASE: SELECTION COMMITTEE EVALUATION SHEET

Anonymous Applicant #	Scoring 1=high 5=low	Comments
Clarity of idea(s)		
Appropriateness of topic and suitability to the event		
Student's speech has relevancy to and embodies the "spirit" all SBC students		
Student possesses and tells a compelling and interesting story		
Speech and speaker's overall quality		
Overall comments		
OVERALL SCORE		