

FLORIDA COASTAL SCHOOL OF LAW

Commencement Procedures and Policies

ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE – FACULTY/STAFF

Deans and faculty and/or staff who teach required and/or elective courses, are invited to walk in the commencement ceremony.

ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE – STUDENTS

- Students completing graduation requirements for the Juris Doctor degree during the preceding fall, or current spring semester are eligible to participate in the commencement exercises scheduled in May of that academic year.
- Students who are scheduled to complete the graduation requirements during the summer following the commencement exercises are considered December graduates, but may file a petition to walk in the May ceremony prior to their graduation if there are extenuating circumstances. The Dean of Student Affairs will determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis.
- A student who has a pending Conduct or Honor Code investigation or hearing may be denied the opportunity to participate in commencement exercises, graduation programs, awards, or elections, at the discretion of FCSL Administration

HONORS

Florida Coastal School of Law awards Latin Honors for students completing degree as follows:

- Cum Laude: Grade Point Average (GPA) = 3.25-3.49
- Magna Cum Laude: Grade Point Average (GPA) = 3.50-3.74
- Summa Cum Laude: Grade Point Average (GPA) = 3.75 and above

HONORS ORGANIZATIONS & PRO BONO ACHIEVEMENT

Florida Coastal School of Law recognizes the following organizations as Honors Organizations:

- Law Review
- Mock Trial Team
- Moot Court
- Pro-Bono*

* For Pro Bono Achievement recognition, students must have completed 125 hours or more of volunteer service to the community.

REGALIA AND HONOR CORDS

Regalia

The FCSL Juris Doctor candidate wears a black soft tam and a black gown trimmed with three velvet purple stripes on the sleeves and purple velvet front facing. A purple tassel is attached to the tam. During the ceremony, a doctoral hood bearing the colors of FCSL will be placed over your head signifying the conferral of the Juris Doctor degree. Academic regalia (cap or *tam*, tassel, and gown) is rented through our designated vendor each year.

Honor Cords

In addition to the gown and tam, FCSL permits the wearing of approved honor cords to be worn with the tam and gown at graduation. Those students who have achieved Latin (academic) honors, who are active members of an Honors Organization listed above, and those who have achieved Pro Bono recognition status are eligible to wear FCSL cords. Pro Bono recognition status involves 125 hours of community service as defined by that organization. A single cord may be worn for each honor. Each faculty/staff advisor for the honors organization is responsible for reporting the names of all graduating and eligible members to the Dean of Student Affairs. Cords are to be worn only by those eligible, as determined by the faculty/staff advisor.

Students are encouraged to take photographs before and after the ceremony with *all* earned honor cords and stoles. However, **only FCSL approved honor cords are to be worn with your tam and gown during the commencement ceremony.**

ATTIRE AND DECORUM

Commencement celebrates significant academic achievement and is a joyous ceremony rich in tradition. All graduates should be attentive and respectful as each graduate commences. While we recognize the joyous nature of this occasion, understand that we expect celebrations to be reasonable.

The appropriate attire to be worn with your regalia is professional, business dress.

GRADUATION AWARDS AND STUDENT SPEAKER

Graduation Awards and the Student Commencement Speaker are selected by the student body. The Graduation Awards Committee is responsible for publishing the awards, determining eligibility, nominating and voting procedures. The Executive Council of the SBA is responsible for selecting the members of the Graduation Awards Committee. Per the SBA bylaws, the Vice President of Internal Affairs shall facilitate the selection of the Committee.

Graduation Awards Selection Procedure

Graduation Awards Committee:

- The Committee will be selected by the Executive Council of the SBA, will represent a cross-section of the student body, and consist of four 3L students and a minimum of one faculty or staff member.
- The Graduation Awards Committee will notify the 3L class of the process, procedures and timeline for the Awards Nominations and Voting.
- The composition of the Committee will remain anonymous.

Nominations and Eligibility:

- Nominations will be taken for each graduation award.
- Any 3L student may nominate up to one fellow 3L student, or staff/faculty where appropriate, for each award. An explanation as to why the individual is being nominated must be included for the nomination to be considered. Self-nominations will not be accepted.
- A 3L student and the associated voting audience is defined as any student matriculated into the Coastal Law Juris Doctor program and intending to graduate in that year's class, to include graduates from the previous December, and upcoming May.
- All student nominees will be asked to submit a personal statement to the Graduation Awards Committee explaining the reason(s) they should be selected to receive the award. The statement should include all accomplishments, activities, and personal traits relevant to the award. Faculty and staff nominees will not be required to submit a personal statement.
- Nominations may be made by e-mail to the Graduation Awards Committee at a designated email address.
- The Committee may consider nominations of members of the Committee, if so nominated.

Selection of Nominees and Voting:

- The Committee will review the statements of the nominees and select no more than ten (10) nominations for each student award to be voted on by the 3L graduating class. Faculty and staff awards may have unlimited candidates for each award.
- The Committee will have the discretion to select the ten (10) strongest candidates for each student award based on the nature of the candidate's accomplishments, activities and personal traits relevant to the award.
- The Committee will present the list of selected nominees to be sent out to the graduating 3L Class for voting.
- The Committee will notify the voting audience of the time, place and method of voting.
- At the Committee's discretion, the notification and/or voting process may take place via email or in person.
- Votes will be tabulated and winners will be announced prior to the Graduation Open House. The awards will be made available at the Open House, or at a time designated by a dean of the school.
- Tie votes will not be broken, but awarded to all students receiving the tie vote. If the vote for Student Speaker results in a tie, a runoff vote will be held by the same 3L voting audience at a time designated by the Committee.

Student Speaker Responsibilities

The selected Student Speaker will be responsible for giving a speech at his/her commencement exercises. The Student Speaker will process with the platform guests and will be required to

assemble with them prior to the ceremony. Immediately following his/her speech, the student will return to his/her place in line with the graduating class. The Student Speaker will recess with his/her graduating class at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Graduation Awards

The following is a list of awards recognized at graduation to members of the faculty, staff and graduating class:

- **Barbara McCalla Memorial Award** - This award recognizes one faculty member and one graduating student who have demonstrated compassion, commitment to both the community and Florida Coastal School of Law, and a strong interest in the support of justice for the less fortunate.
- **Jerome Kermit Coble Award for Distinguished Public Service** - This award is presented in memory of the late Jerome Kermit Coble, Jr., a member of the Florida Coastal School of Law charter class. The award recognizes a student participating in the commencement ceremony who has demonstrated a significant commitment to public service.
- **Phyllis Stansell Ethics and Professionalism Award** - This award is presented in the memory of the late Phyllis Stansell, a member of the Florida Coastal School of Law charter class and graduate of the Class of 1999. The award recognizes a student who has exemplified professionalism and ethical behavior while a student at Florida Coastal School of Law.
- **The Florida Coastal School of Law Faculty Vision Award** - This award is presented in recognition of a member of the faculty who has made particularly significant contributions to the law school and students. This award was established by Florida Coastal School of Law Class of 1999.
- **The Florida Coastal School of Law Staff Vision Award** - This award is presented in recognition of a member of the staff who has made particularly significant contributions to the law school and the students. This award was established by Florida Coastal School of Law Class of 2003.
- **The Florida Coastal School of Law Student Recognition Award** - This award is presented annually in recognition of a graduating student who has made significant contributions to the law school and demonstrated interest and commitment to Florida Coastal School of Law student life. The award was established by Florida Coastal School of Law Class of 1999.
- **The Florida Coastal School of Law Founders Award** - This award is presented to recognize a student who has made significant contributions to the ideals and objectives of Florida Coastal School of Law.
- **James A. Richter Humanitarian Service Award** - This award is presented to a student known for his/her devotion to the promotion of human welfare and the advancement of social reforms. The award was established by Mrs. James A. Richter in 2003.