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Ouachita News Bureau

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OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS



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For immediate release

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By Felley Lawson

May 6, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University will hold its 135th Spring Commencement Saturday, May 14, at 9:30 a.m. on the front lawn of Cone-Bottoms Hall. The ceremony honors more than 350 graduates who have earned Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Education, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Master of Science degrees, as well as those who have earned post-baccalaureate certificates for Dietetic Internship. The nursing graduates, a cohort of 19, are the university's first-ever B.S.N. degree recipients.

Commencement exercises will be led by Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president, who will serve as Commencement speaker. Dr. Jim Files, associate professor of accounting at Ouachita, will serve as Commencement marshal. Honorary marshals include Dr. Glenda Secrest, professor emerita of music; Dr. Jon Secrest, professor emeritus of music; Dr. Amy Sonheim, professor emerita of English; and Dr. Doug Sonheim, professor emeritus of English.

Senior Class President Bennett Hasley, a biology major from Fort Smith, Ark., will deliver the invocation. Ouachita's vision and mission will be read by Lori Motl, director of admissions counseling, and Dr. Rickey Rogers, dean of students.

Scripture will be read by Noah McCallum, a Christian studies/Biblical studies & theology major from Jonesboro, Ark.; Lucas McCann, a Christian studies/Biblical studies & theology and Christian ministry double major from Camden, Ark.; Hope White, a community & family services major from Conway, Ark.; and Jael Winterholter, a Christian studies/Biblical studies & theology major from Fort Wayne, Ind. All are students in the Pruet School of Christian Studies.

Dr. Gary Gerber, dean of the School of Fine Arts, will lead in the singing of "Great is Thy Faithfulness" and Ouachita's alma mater, accompanied by the Wind Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Craig Hamilton, Lena Goodwin Trimble Professor of Music and director of bands. Distinctive data about the class of 2022 will be shared by Dr. Deborah Root, director of assessment and institutional research and professor and chair of the Rogers Department of Communications.

Candidates for graduation will be presented by Dr. Stan Poole, vice president for academic affairs. Sells will confer degrees upon the graduates and recognize those with military commissions. Graduates recognized include students who completed their degree requirements in August 2021, December 2021 and May 2022.

Dr. Jeremy Greer, dean of the Pruet School, will lead a responsive reading, and John McCallum, vice chair of Ouachita's Board of Trustees and senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Hot Springs, will offer a prayer of dedication.

The B.S.N. students are graduates of Ouachita's distinctive RN-to-BSN dual enrollment completion program in partnership with Baptist Health College Little Rock. Every student in the cohort achieved a 100% pass rate on their first attempt of the NCLEX, the exam that students are required to pass in order to become licensed nurses.

Ouachita's nursing program launched in 2018, and since then has added two additional nursing degree pathways: a fully-online RN-to-BSN degree program, available for students who already have a valid registered nurse license, and a fully in-person 4-year pre-licensure program on Ouachita's campus. Ouachita received initial approval from the Arkansas State Board of Nursing for the on-campus pre-licensure program, which will launch in Fall 2022.

In the case of rain, the ceremony will be moved to Cliff Harris Stadium. The event will be streamed live online at livestream.com/obu. See more details about attending at obu.edu/graduation.