A. INTRODUCTION

The University of Colorado Denver and University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus confers degrees several times a year and holds at least one Commencement ceremony a year. Commencement ceremonies are opportunities for students and their families to celebrate the students’ accomplishments. The conferring of degrees (graduation) occurs when all degree requirements have been completed and verified. Commencement and graduation are not synonymous.
B. POLICY STATEMENT

Participation in commencement ceremony does not constitute conferral of a degree, nor does it obligate the university to award the degree before all requirements have been met.

Normally, student participation in Commencement ceremonies is reserved for students who have successfully completed all degree requirements. Students can participate in any commencement ceremony following the completion of their degree requirements. For doctoral students, successfully completing degree requirements includes successfully passing comprehensive examinations and successfully defending the dissertation. However, at the discretion of the dean, a student may participate in the Commencement ceremony if the student is expected to complete all degree requirements prior to the next Commencement ceremony.

C. EXCEPTIONS

1. In the case of students in master’s and doctoral programs within the Graduate School, the Graduate Dean, in consultation with the appropriate college/school dean, determines exceptions to this policy.

2. For graduate programs not within the graduate school, the dean of the college/school within which the program resides can approve an exception to this policy.

3. At CU Anschutz, exceptions to this policy can be made by the dean of the appropriate college/school. For undergraduate degree programs, the dean of the college/school within which the program resides can approve an exception to this policy.

4. International students who will meet all graduation requirements in the summer, within one semester, can participate in the spring commencement if they cannot participate in the fall following ceremony due to being out of the country. The dean of the appropriate college/school, in consultation with the director of the Office of International Affairs, can approve an exception to this policy.

Notes

1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:
   July 6, 2004: Adopted
   July 1, 2011: Updated and reinstated by the Provost
   April 19, 2019: Modified
   January 1, 2020 (Pending): Revised

2. History:
   April 19, 2019: Modified to reflect a Campus-wide effort to recast and revitalize Campus policy sites into a standardized and more coherent set of chaptered policy statement organized around the several operational divisions of the university. Article links, University branding, and formatting updated by the Provost’s office.
   January 1, 2020 (Pending): Minor clarifications. Exceptions to this policy clarified to
3. Initial Policy Effective Date: July 6, 2004
4. Cross References/Appendix: N/A