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## SWOSU to host first ever fall commencement

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Guaranteed Snow Thursday For

Christmas in the Park

Wednesday  
November 30, 2022

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## SWOSU to host first ever fall commencement

Kimberly Lippencott  
WDN Reporter

In May, thousands of high school and college graduates from the area will celebrate their accomplishments with friends and family, but for a smaller group of college students, they will get to don

their caps and gowns in December.

For the first time in the school's history, SWOSU is hosting a fall commencement for those who have met their graduation requirements 6 p.m. December 16 in the Pioneer Cellular Event Center.

It was first reported to the *WDN* SWOSU did host a fall commencement many decades ago, but Phillip

Fitzsimmons, University Archivist and Special Collections Librarian, was pivotal in researching the history of the university to know a graduation in December has never taken place.

"My reading of the documents is from its beginning,

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## SWOSU

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SWOSU has never had a fall graduation ceremony," Fitzsimmons said after searching through decades' worth of documents on the SWOSU digital commons.

In 2020, a fall graduation ceremony was scheduled, but it only was intended to provide a ceremony for the students who graduated in the spring but had their commencement cancelled due to COVID-19. This makeup ceremony was ultimately cancelled due to the pandemic as well.

Until this year, students who met graduation requirements in the fall had to either walk a semester early the spring semester before they had graduated or wait five months for the commencement after they had graduated. Both of these options were rather anti-climactic and inconvenient for the fall graduates.

Many times, graduates will move to a different place for their post-graduation career and sometimes they are unable to make the trip

back to Weatherford for their graduation. These students simply did not get to have the commencement experience.

SWOSU Provost Dr. Joel Kendall commented on the decision to host the December graduation ceremony. "We wanted to give them the opportunity to walk straight when they graduated. They don't have to travel back," he said. "We just wanted to make it easier for students to have that opportunity."

The university does not yet

know how many students will be walking across the stage to receive their diplomas next month, but it will be formatted differently than the May ceremonies. Instead of having multiple ceremonies, there only will be one commencement for all will be the graduates from the different degree programs.

"You never know how many are going to participate," Dr. Kendall said. "This will be everybody, all programs and degrees will be in that ceremony. This will be

interesting to see."

While this commencement will most likely be smaller than the May ceremonies, the university plans to have a fall commencement for the years to come. "We want this to be the first one, and we certainly plan on having it every year after this," Dr. Kendall said.

The fall graduation will be open to the public, and students are free to invite as many guests as they wish. No tickets will be necessary for entry.