



## USC sparks backlash for canceling main stage commencement ceremony: 'Caving to campus terrorists'

### Description

**USC : The University of Southern California (USC) announced Thursday that it was canceling its main stage commencement ceremony for 2024 graduates as anti-Israel protests have shut down its campus.**

"With the new safety measures in place this year, the time needed to process the large number of guests coming to campus will increase substantially.

As a result, we will not be able to host the main stage ceremony that traditionally brings 65,000 students, families, and friends to our campus all at the same time and during a short window from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.," USC stated on its website.

The university noted that individual school commencement ceremonies, doctoral hooding ceremonies and other celebrations and activities will still be held between May 8-11, though it warned students and their families to "allow more time" to get to their commencements due to heightened security measures.

Among the outlined safety measures include showing tickets in order to be granted access to the USC campus as well as attendees and their bags being screened, with "a clear bag policy."

Fox News national correspondent Bill Melugin reported, "USC announces it is cancelling its main stage commencement ceremony. Comments shut off. Brutal for the class of '24. Likely didn't get a high school graduation during COVID in 2020, and now won't get a traditional college graduation."

"Just a disgrace. Have the graduation and arrest anyone who disrupts it," Fox News contributor Marc Thiessen told USC.

"Students, family, and friends all look forward to celebrating graduation. Now because of the pro-Hamas mob, they can't. This shouldn't be happening in America," Rep. Rudy Yakym, R-Ind., said.

"Pro-Hamas 'protesters' have wreaked havoc on one of America's great universities. As a

result, USC is canceling its main commencement, a long-standing tradition celebrating all their hard-working students. This is beyond unacceptable,” Rep. Mark Alford, R-Mo., reacted.

“USC has gone from banning the student commencement speaker to canceling its entire graduation ceremony in a couple of weeks,” hedge fund manager Tom Hearden wrote.

The decision was made after USC announced that its campus would remain closed “until further notice” following the large anti-Israel protest on Wednesday that resulted in 93 arrests.

The Los Angeles Police Department arrived at campus around 4 p.m. after agitators from the “Gaza Solidarity Occupation” protest refused to follow the university’s request to leave the area, Capt. Kelly Muniz said on X Wednesday night. Most of the arrests were made due to trespassing violations, though Muniz noted that one altercation ended in an arrest for assault with a deadly weapon.

Earlier this month, USC faced intense backlash for barring its valedictorian, Muslim biomedical engineering student Asna Tabassum, from speaking at the commencement ceremony over safety concerns after her critics accused her of promoting anti-Israel rhetoric on social media.

**“To be clear:** this decision has nothing to do with freedom of speech. There is no free-speech entitlement to speak at a commencement. The issue here is how best to maintain campus security and safety, period,” USC Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Andrew T. Guzman wrote at the time.

“I am not surprised by those who attempt to propagate hatred. I am surprised that my own university—my home for four years—has abandoned me,” Tabassum reacted.

Anti-Israel protests have erupted on college campuses across the country in recent weeks, many of them forming encampments which have often escalated tensions with authorities.

**By Joseph A. Wulfsohn**

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