Dear Parents of Students in the Class of 2017:

It is hard to believe that Commencement is about three months away. Time seems to telescope as we approach this big day. From talking with many seniors, it is clear that there is a healthy mix of excitement and anxiety about leaving what has been home to them for the last three and one-half years. While many students are still uncertain about where they will be or what they will be doing at this time next year, they will be ready to fly on May 28 with a sense of confidence and optimism borne of their Wesleyan experience and your support for them over the years.

In order to spread those wings, I have been working with the seniors to help them meet the graduation requirements, which they are responsible for knowing and completing in time to participate in the commencement ceremony. Now is a good time to make a last-minute check-in with your student about progress towards the degree. (For more information, see graduation requirements.) So seniors are indeed busy attending to the day-to-day business of being in their last semester in college. Some are nearing the completion of their senior theses, due April 19, and some are in the midst of other capstone experiences, like essays, projects, performances, exhibits, and lab research. Some are enrolled in the last courses needed to complete their majors while others are using the semester as a final opportunity to delve into previously unexplored corners of the curriculum. Many students are also taking advantage of the “last time” to engage in groups and activities that they never had the time to do before, whether that be on the field, on the stage, or in the larger community. And some are working on applications for jobs or graduate school while others are making their way to the Gordon Career Center for the first time.

It is not too late to encourage your student to take advantage of the services of the Gordon Career Center (GCC), if he or she has not done so already. The Center offers resume and interview skills workshops as well as information and guidance about career paths and positions. There are jobs out there, so persistence and creativity pay off. Encourage your student to be resourceful and flexible in the job hunt. Those who applied to graduate or professional schools are hearing around this time, and those who are still unsure of next steps have time to take advantage of the knowledge of the GCC staff, who are also available to them post-graduation.

Prior to spring break, which runs from March 10-26, seniors will receive a packet of ten Commencement announcements in their campus mailbox to distribute to family and friends. After break, I will be sending them information about caps and gowns and about how to record their name for the readers at the ceremony. Most of all, I look forward to congratulating them on their work well done at Wesleyan when classes and exams end on May 19.
The Commencement ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. on Sunday, May 28. No tickets or reservations are required to attend. Seating is unlimited and available on a first-come, first-served basis, so if you want a good seat, be sure to arrive early. Please be aware that if it rains, the ceremony may be abbreviated and under the tent, where seating will be limited. For the full calendar of commencement-related activities that will be taking place May 26-28, please consult the Reunion/Commencement website and talk with your student about plans for that weekend.

I look forward to seeing you in a few short months. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

With best wishes,

Louise S. Brown, Ph.D.
Dean for Academic Advancement and
Dean for the Class of 2017
(860) 685-2758
lsbrown@wesleyan.edu
http://classof2017.blogs.wesleyan.edu