



# Dr. Anthony Fauci Addresses UC Irvine Graduates

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IRVINE (CNS) - The virtual commencement ceremony for UC Irvine's School of Biological Sciences featured a surprise speaker this morning: National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr. Anthony Fauci.

Congratulating the 2020 graduating class from a computer screen in Bethesda, Maryland, the nation's top infectious disease expert and White House coronavirus task force member recognized that the pandemic has disappointed students looking forward to traditional commencement ceremonies.

“I am profoundly aware that celebrating your gradation virtually, without the in-person support of your professors, fellow students and friends is extremely disappointing at best,” he said. “However, we must adapt to this extraordinary situation, as you have done so well, and unite in overcoming this COVID-19 challenge. Please hang in there. We need your talent, your energy, your resolve and your character to get through this difficult time.”

COVID-19, and protective stay-at-home rules meant to slow the spread of the virus, caused the university to host the first digital ceremony in its 55-year history, handing out 9,907 undergraduate degrees, 886 master's degrees and 299 doctoral degrees virtually. About 47% of undergraduates in the 2020 class are first-generation college students, the university said.

Fauci told the biological science graduates that their education uniquely positions them to be part of the solution as the world continues to grapple with the virus.

“In the next phase of your lives, whether you help patients, conduct research on medical solutions -- or more likely contribute simply as caring and connected members of society -- all of you will be doing your part, together with the rest of us, to come out from under the shadow of this pandemic,” he said. “Your school's mission of transforming human health through life science has imbued you with valuable training to become leaders in the biomedical response to the this and the many other public health and medical challenges to come.”

View Dr. Anthony Fauci's UCI BioSci commencement speech here!  
[https://youtube.com/watch?v=u5Ob5IW8u1Y&feature=youtu.be ...](https://youtube.com/watch?v=u5Ob5IW8u1Y&feature=youtu.be)

He concluded his speech stating, “Congratulations on your graduation and the incredible hard work that brought you here. Stay safe, and I wish you all the best.”

UC Irvine's various graduation ceremonies, including commencement for the School of Biological Sciences, can be viewed at [commencement.uci.edu](https://commencement.uci.edu).