Class of 2018 Graduation Student Speaker and Vocalist
Information and Guidelines

Auditions at 5:00 pm
Wednesday, April 4, 2018, in the Moot Court Room

Commencement Information

• The Student Speaker and Vocalist must be December 2017, May 2018, or December
2018 JD graduates in good academic standing.
• The Student Speaker must take part in the pre-ceremony assembly in Fromm Hall and
process into the Church with the members of the Board of Governors, the University
President, the Dean, the faculty, and other honored guests. He or she has the option of
sitting on the platform or with his or her classmates during the ceremony.
• The Vocalist must take part in the pre-ceremony assembly in Gleeson Hall and process
into the Church with his or fellow classmates. He or she will sit with his or her
classmates in a reserved seat at the front of the Church before and after the singing.
During the ceremony, an organist will play the music for the Star-Spangled Banner, and
the Vocalist will lead everyone in singing the Star Spangled Banner.
• The Student Speaker & Vocalist will get in line with their classmates to have their names
announced, walk across the platform, receive a graduation scroll, and shake hands with
the University President and the Dean.
• The names of the Student Speaker and Vocalist will be listed in the graduation program.

General Audition Information

• You must sign up to audition as the Student Speaker or the Vocalist. The sign-up sheet
will be on the counter in the Deans’ Office (Kendrick 328) from March 12-March 30. The
deadline to sign up for an audition is March 30 at noon.
• If you have questions or need further information about the audition process or the
commencement ceremony, please email lawstudentaffairs@usfca.edu.
• The order of auditions will be determined by lottery, and the Office of Student Affairs
will notify students of their audition time via their USF email account on April 2.
• The audition room will include the auditioning student and a selection committee
comprising the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and any graduating student that is
present for every audition. The selection committee will select the winner, and the
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs will notify the auditioning students of the outcome via
their USF email account.
• Be prepared to introduce yourself at the outset of your audition.
**Student Speaker Audition**

One printed copy of the speech must be submitted to the selection committee at the audition. The content of the speech that is delivered at the audition must be identical to the content of the speech that will be delivered at the ceremony.

The maximum allotted time for the student speech is five minutes. A student whose speech reaches five minutes will be given a signal that he or she has 15 seconds to conclude. If a student does not conclude within 15 seconds, the auditioning student will be told to stop and will be disqualified immediately.

The following criteria will be used to select the Student Speaker.

**Content**

- The speech should be intelligent, eloquent, witty, and original. Clichés should be avoided.
- The purpose of the ceremony is to honor our graduating students and for them to celebrate this momentous achievement with their classmates, friends, and family. The speech should be fitting for the occasion, respectful of all attendees, and congratulatory in nature.
- The speaker should have something relevant and significant to say to his or her classmates and attendees.
- The speech should be accessible and easy to understand by those inside and outside of the University. While the primary audience is the students, it is imperative to connect the speech to families and friends in attendance.

**Effectiveness of Delivery**

- Connection with the audience, stage presence, eye contact
- Articulate and energetic delivery
- Appropriate tone and volume
- Formal, yet conversational delivery style
- Proper grammar and use of vocabulary

**Vocalist Audition**

Students auditioning to be the Vocalist must sing the Star-Spangled Banner either a capella or with an instrumental track. Each auditioning student is responsible for providing his or her own instrumental track and the means to play the track.

The following criteria will be used to select the Vocalist.

- Vocal range: good variation from low to medium to high notes
- Vocal quality: appropriate vocal texture
- Subtext: a connection between the vocalist’s singing and his or her emotions
- Stage presence: appropriate non-verbal communication and connection with the audience