

COMMENCEMENT ETIQUETTE

By tradition, the Commencement ceremony is a formal, dignified event to honor the academic achievement of scholars. To help preserve the decorum of the event, it is requested that graduates and their families exercise etiquette appropriate to the occasion. We ask that you please observe the following:

Prior to the ceremony:

- **Be on time:** Please be on time for the rehearsal which begins at 9:00. The rehearsal will take place in the commencement space, so it must be held early enough for us to be out of the space prior to the seating of family and friends. If you arrive after the procession has begun, you will not be allowed to march.
- **Rehearse stage behavior:** During the rehearsal, you will learn the appropriate way to receive your diploma. If you are receiving a graduate degree, you will learn how to carry your hood and the process for being hooded on stage by your dean. Although we realize you may feel like dancing, we ask that you be respectful of the solemnity of the ceremony and refrain from doing so. You will not be allowed to take another person, such as a child, across the stage with you.
- **Give personal items to family members:** Once you enter the auditorium for rehearsal, you will not be allowed to see your family until after the commencement ceremony. Please make the necessary arrangements to give valuables such as purses or cameras to a family member *prior* to rehearsal.
- **Remain in the cafeteria after rehearsal:** Immediately following rehearsal, you will be escorted to the cafeteria where you line up, have your regalia checked, and confirm the pronunciation of your name. It is critical that you remain in the cafeteria during this time as we prepare you for the procession.
- **Do not alter the appearance of your robe:** The cut and color of robes are determined by the specific degree received by each individual, similar to religious vestment, and should not be altered or modified to reflect personal taste, style, or interests. Your ankles and feet will be visible below your robe, so please dress appropriately; no blue jeans, flip-flops, or tennis shoes.

Seating:

- **Family arrive early:** Please be sure your family and guests arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.
- **Special seating arrangements:** Family members with mobility issues will have special seating arrangements and should arrive at least 45 minutes prior to the door's opening for the ceremony. Tusculum does not provide wheelchairs.

- **Young children:** As a courtesy to other attendees, please consider making alternative arrangements for very young children. Due to fire marshal regulations, no baby carriers or strollers will be allowed in the auditorium.

During the ceremony:

- **No cell phones:** Cell phones are to be turned off or on silent mode. Please be respectful of your peers; do not use your cell phone or carry on a conversation during the ceremony.
- **Be respectful:** Commencement is both a joyous and solemn event. Please express your excitement in ways that will not prevent others from hearing the speaker and enjoying the ceremony.
- **Photo opportunities:** Family members and friends are limited to taking photos from wherever they are seated during the ceremony. Close-up photos can be taken after the ceremony.
- **Remain in the auditorium through the full ceremony:** As a courtesy to and out of respect for your fellow graduates, you and your family are requested to remain in the auditorium until the conclusion of the ceremony.

At the Conclusion of the Ceremony:

- Faculty traditionally form a gauntlet to applaud and celebrate the graduates as they recess from the auditorium. We ask that your family and friends be respectful of this tradition and remain in the auditorium until the graduates have exited the auditorium.

We appreciate you and your family and friends observing these etiquette guidelines, and we look forward to a memorable and dignified Commencement ceremony.