

Accessorizing a LEGACY

A tradition from the 13th century will get an update as graduates add the Stole of Gratitude to their gowns

BY SAMANTHA BATES
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

The word "graduation" is often synonymous with images of long dark robes and square hats — and a feeling of tradition that dates back centuries.

"Most of it goes back to medieval times," said Stacy Miller, the academic regalia coordinator at the University Bookstore. "That was how someone could identify you as a master of your trade."

According to the Burgon Society, a group that studies academic dress, the gown dates back to the year 1222. In medieval times, churches were the center of education. In 1222, the Oxford Council ordered that all secular clergy wear long, closed robes. This fashion lasted until the 15th century, when costumes began to reflect a more open view of the world. Some universities still support wearing the classic dress.

Different colored tassels represent different disciplines within the University. Tams, hats like mortar boards but with a puffy, beret-like top, should only be worn by Ph.D. graduates, Miller said.

Honor cords are another color-coded garment. Summa Cum Laude has a gold cord, Magna Cum Laude has a

silver cord, and Cum Laude has a white cord. Presidential Honors has a purple cord, Departmental Honors has a green cord, and the Robert D. Clark Honors College has a royal blue cord. Alpha Phi Omega has a blue and white cord.

Master's and Ph.D. graduates wear hoods in addition to gowns. The hood is long and triangular with a pocket at the end. The master's hood is smaller than the Ph.D. hood. Like tassels, hoods have colors that denote the different schools. Most match the color of the tassel, except the School of Journalism and Communication, which has a white hood and a burgundy tassel, and the Lundquist College of Business, which has a tan hood and a brown tassel.

Miller said that in the past, people would throw gifts such as money or food into the hoods.

A new tradition this year is the Stole of Gratitude. The stole is a yellow, scarf-like garment graduates wear over their shoulders during the graduation ceremony and present to someone they wish to thank afterward. The tradition was picked up this year after the University of California, Santa Barbara, started it in 2002. Ken Bowers, former director of the UCSB bookstore, invented the

stole. The Legend of the Stole of Gratitude is included with the garment.

"It is a made-up legend, but hopefully it will become a real one," said UCSB bookstore worker Tammy Streeter.

"It really dresses up our graduates," Miller said. "They've been very popular this year. The most I've sold to a single person is six. Most take one, but there are people who take more than one, and that's perfectly acceptable."

As June 11 draws near, soon-to-be graduates are learning how to wear their regalia.

"The hardest thing is no one knows how to put it on," Miller said. "It freaks out graduates."

The staff at the bookstore will help students with questions about their regalia, and the bookstore will be open at 8 a.m. graduation day.

SCHOOLS AND MORTAR BOARD TASSEL COLORS

- **White, gold or copper:** College of Arts and Sciences
- **Purple:** Law
- **Violet:** Architecture & Allied Arts
- **Brown:** Business
- **Light blue:** Education
- **Burgundy:** Journalism
- **Royal blue:** Philosophy
- **Pink:** Music

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