Cap Decoration Guidelines

The Academic Costume Code prohibits the decoration of caps (mortarboards) in recognition that commencement is a formal occasion. As such, the university strongly discourages the decoration of caps. While the university recognizes that this is an important activity for some students, students choosing to wear a decorated cap during the ceremony must adhere to these guidelines. In addition to ensuring ceremony decorum, these guidelines exist:

- To ensure the safety of degree candidates when negotiating stairs and routes; and
- To ensure that ceremony participants and guests have unobstructed views

Decorations must adhere to the following rules:

- Decorations may only be affixed to the flat, top area of the mortarboard.
- No modification of or decoration of the area under the mortarboard and/or skullcap is permitted.
- Decorations must lay flat on the surface of the cap.
- Decorations cannot extend beyond the border of the cap or fall below the perimeter.
- Decorations may not adorn or impede the operation of the tassel or skullcap.
- Decorations may not include lighted objects, electronic devices or cameras, flower crowns, leis, bows, ribbon, and tulle

Cap decorations that are motivated by animosity against a person or group because of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, national origin, or homelessness, or which infringe on the rights and freedom of others will not be tolerated. Examples include:

- Profanity
- Symbols for or references to alcohol or controlled substances
- Hate speech

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Degree candidates are encouraged to review examples of prohibited decorations (also in the app) for additional guidance.

The university reserves the right to request that degree candidates change inappropriate attire, including but not limited to caps, before they participate in the commencement ceremony. Egregious violations of the decoration guidelines or refusal to comply with staff enforcement of the guidelines on ceremony day may result in a disciplinary referral to the Office of Student Conduct & Civility Education.