

Dressed for Success

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The 2008 Tulane University graduates heading out with a world-class education are dressing the part with newly designed commencement robes to commemorate several ceremony "firsts" and to promote university identity.



The new master's degree robe, which will debut at Saturday's (May 17) commencement ceremony, is black with two tabs on the front embroidered with the Tulane logo. (Photos by Alicia Duplessis)

This year's commencement ceremony marks the return to the Superdome for the first time since Hurricane Katrina and the inauguration of a diploma ceremony for all undergraduate degree candidates.

Graduates who received their new, custom-designed robes during [Grad Fest](#) and those who have been trickling into the university [bookstore](#), which doubles as a secondary pick-up location for regalia, seem pleased with the new design, says Larry Jones, Tulane University bookstore manager.

GradFest, held in the Lavin-Bernick Center on the uptown campus, was a one-stop event for degree candidates to purchase caps and gowns, order personalized graduation announcements, take a formal cap and gown photo and meet with accounts receivable, career services and the financial aid office. This year's GradFest was held March 6â€”7.

"GradFest is so crazy and so crowded that many students choose to wait until they get home to pull the gowns out of the pack," Jones says. "It's hard to tell whether their excitement is because of the gown's new look or due to the fact that they were simply receiving the gown that they worked so hard for."



Samantha Shinsato, a bachelor's degree candidate and Tulane University Bookstore employee, models the newly customized PhD robe. Bachelor's, master's and doctorate degree recipients all will wear new robes that promote the university's identity.

Bachelor's and master's robes were redesigned to make them more easily identifiable from each other. Though subtle, the changes add a bit of flair to the basic black robes worn at previous commencement ceremonies.

"For instance, the green color on the master's hood is a more appealing shade," says Jones. "The changes make each set a little more special, a little more unique and little more Tulane."

Robes for bachelor's degree candidates are black with a green Tulane University shield printed on the yoke of the garment. Master's degree candidates will wear black gowns with two-inch tabs embroidered with university shields at the front.

And PhD robes, completely different this year, are hunter green with black velvet trim and Tulane shields on the front.

Debbie Grant, vice president for university communications, says, "Our commencement committee has tried each year to add something new to make our graduation celebration more special. This year we turned our attention to regalia and I think the new gowns showcase our pride in Tulane."