The practice of wearing caps and gowns to signify a graduate’s educational passage from one level to the next extends back to medieval universities. Since then, generations of students have continued the tradition and in modern times found ways of adding unique touches to the tradition. Use this guide, designed by Tulane University graphic designer Kim Rainey, to help identify the regalia you’ll see graduates don in Yulman Stadium during the 2023 Unified Commencement Ceremony.
Decoding Commencement

The Tassel

The tassel worn at graduation ceremony is a symbol of academic achievement. The color and design of the tassel vary based on the college or school the graduate has attended. Tulane University students receive a gold, black, or gold tassel based on their college or school.

The Gown

Tulane University gowns are designed to be worn at the graduate’s discretion. The gown is typically black or black and gold, with Tulane University’s logo and colors prominently displayed.

The Academic Mace

The mace is carried by the Academic Procession leader, who is usually the President of Tulane University. The mace is a ceremonial staff used to symbolize the authority of the university. It is often gold and adorned with the university’s insignia.

The Mortarboard

The mortarboard is a traditional graduation cap, often referred to as a "cap." Tulane University students wear a black or black and gold mortarboard, depending on their college or school. The cap is worn on the head to cover the head and is typically decorated with the university’s logo.