

Hail to the Chief

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Tulane University seniors aren't the only ones who will be receiving degrees during commencement season. President Scott Cowen will travel to the University of Notre Dame and the University of Connecticut this month to accept honorary degrees.

On Saturday (May 8), the president will give the keynote address for the Graduate School of the University of Connecticut and will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters. An alumnus of the University of Connecticut, he earned a bachelor's degree there in 1968.

After he leads the 2010 Tulane Commencement Ceremony on May 15 in the Louisiana Superdome, Cowen will head to Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. He will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree on May 16 at the commencement ceremony in Notre Dame Stadium.

[Cowen](#), recently named by *TIME* magazine as one of the nation's top 10 university presidents, is being honored for his leadership at Tulane especially in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

At Notre Dame, he will be among eight distinguished figures in education, engineering, law, philanthropy, science and the church who will join principal speaker Brian Williams as honorary degree recipients at Notre Dame's 165th University Commencement Ceremony.

Williams, anchor of NBC Nightly News, served as Tulane commencement speaker in 2007.

The Notre Dame commencement website includes the following description of Cowen: "The 14th president of Tulane University, Cowen has led the New Orleans institution to major growth in donations and student applications since his arrival in 1998. He also crafted a Tulane renewal plan after Hurricane Katrina flooded 70 percent of the university's uptown campus and dispersed all of its students for the first semester of the 2005-2006 academic year.

"After this effort rebuilt Tulane facilities and refocused the academic mission, 87 percent of the students returned for classes in January 2006. Cowen also took a leadership role in the wider rebirth of New Orleans, chairing a committee to reform and rebuild the city's failing public school system and joining other efforts to bring residents back to the city."