

Newcomb-Tulane College Grads Walk Together

May 09, 2008 12:45 PM Mary Ann Travis
mtravis@tulane.edu

Expect a friendly, high-energy ceremony: For the first time, all bachelor's degree recipients of Tulane University's schools of Liberal Arts, Science and Engineering, Business, Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and Continuing Studies will join together in the Newcomb-Tulane College diploma ceremony on Saturday (May 17).



Five schools and nearly 1,400 recipients of bachelor's degrees will gather for the Newcomb-Tulane College diploma ceremony on Saturday afternoon (May 17) in the Louisiana Superdome. (Photo by Neil Alexander)

Nearly 1,400 graduates are eligible to participate in the diploma ceremony that follows [University Commencement](#) in the Louisiana Superdome.

"It's wonderful to have a diploma-granting ceremony together," says James MacLaren, dean of Newcomb-Tulane College.

MacLaren, who also is a professor of physics, is looking forward to seeing students he's taught receive recognition for their achievements. "I'm delighted to celebrate with them," he says. "They've worked hard for four years, and they should have a sense of accomplishment. It's always an exciting time."

MacLaren, along with Tulane President Scott Cowen and deans of the schools, will congratulate the graduates as they walk across the stage.

Actual diplomas will be ready for picking up backstage immediately after the ceremony. Staff members from the registrar's office will be on hand to do the honors.

Like the creation of Newcomb-Tulane College itself, the diploma ceremony is a result of Tulane University's reinvention through the 2005 [Renewal Plan](#) in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Newcomb-Tulane College is the academic home for all of Tulane's fulltime undergraduate students. The college provides academic services, including advising, the honors program, study abroad and other student programs.

Students are admitted to a school at Tulane when they decide what their academic major is. For example, a history major is in the School of Liberal Arts; a chemistry major is enrolled in the School of Science and Engineering.

Trina Beck, director of Newcomb-Tulane College programs, is part of the committee that is organizing commencement events. "It's obviously going to be new and different," she says.

Beck says that most students are happy about seeing friends in other schools graduate in the same ceremony. Also, graduates earning dual bachelor's degrees have only one ceremony to attend.

The degree recipients will sit in random order — something students have long asked for — with classmates from their respective schools. Prior to the ceremony, they will receive cards with their names on them. As each one approaches the stage, the graduate will hand the card to an announcer.

"Students are excited about sitting with their friends, not having to line up in alphabetical order," says Beck.

The diploma ceremony is scheduled to begin a half-hour after the conclusion of University Commencement, which begins at 9 a.m., also in the Superdome.

MacLaren anticipates the diploma ceremony will last one and a half to two hours. "We want the ceremony to have academic gravitas," says MacLaren, "but we also want it to move along at a reasonable pace."