

2011 Grads to Hear Prize-winning Journalist

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newwave@tulane.edu

Continuing a tradition of having award-winning journalists and authors address its graduates, Tulane University has chosen *New York Times* columnist and Pulitzer Prize-winner Thomas Friedman to serve as keynote speaker for its 2011 Unified Commencement Ceremony.



The Tulane Class of 2011 will hear *New York Times* journalist Thomas Friedman speak at the commencement ceremony on May 12, 2011. (Photo by Fred R. Conrad, *New York Times*)

Friedman, the author of five bestselling books, has been the *New York Times* foreign affairs columnist since 1995. He is the recipient of three Pulitzer Prizes ? in 1983 and 1988 for international reporting (from Lebanon and Israel, respectively) and in 2002 for distinguished commentary.

Prospective graduates, joined by their families and friends, will gather for the [ceremony](#) on May 12, 2011, at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in downtown New Orleans.

The annual universitywide commencement ceremony normally has been held at the Louisiana Superdome on a Saturday morning, but construction at the Superdome caused Tulane to make logistical changes, said Debbie Grant, vice president of university communications and marketing.

Next year's event will be held on a Thursday, starting at 4 p.m. at the convention center venue, followed immediately by the Newcomb-Tulane College ceremony. Graduate and professional school [ceremonies](#) will take place on May 13 and 14 on the uptown campus and at other locations.

In choosing [Friedman](#) as 2011 speaker, Tulane President Scott Cowen adds to the group of acclaimed journalists and writers who have been in that role, including Anderson Cooper, Brian Williams, Michael Lewis, James Carville, Mary Matalin, David Halberstam and William Safire.

During his lengthy *Times* career, Friedman has served as bureau chief in Beirut, chief diplomatic correspondent, chief White House correspondent and international economics correspondent. His most recent bestseller is *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America*.

"We are fortunate to have such an influential, respected and independent thinker for this year's commencement speaker," said Tulane President Scott Cowen.