

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

# Commencement Exercises

OFFICIAL PROGRAM



MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM  
MAY 10, 1980  
8:00 A.M.



LUBBOCK, TEXAS

## THIS CEREMONY: SOME BACKGROUND NOTES

In medieval Europe, the ceremony for initiating new university teachers into the guild of Masters of Arts was called *Inceptio*, the English translation of which is "Commencement." In the ceremony, the new Master signified his new status by performing some public act (such as an oration); this was the origin of student participation in commencements.

By the 17th Century, English universities (in which many of Colonial America's leaders were educated) offered what we now know as the Bachelor's degree before the Master's degree. The first American bachelors' degrees were awarded by Harvard College at its first commencement in 1642. In those days, the graduates went on to take the Master of Arts degree under an arrangement that today we would call "independent study." Since one did not have to remain on campus, in residence, between the two degrees, the return to Harvard's campus for the commencement ceremonies took on the nature of a festival reunion with old friends and classmates. Because Colonial New England offered very little in the way of occasions for public fun, the commencement attracted people from miles around to share in the enjoyment as well as in the intellectual portions of the program.

Classes were small, which made it possible for each degree candidate to "perform a public act," for example, to defend a thesis or to orate in Latin or Hebrew. As other colleges and universities were established, they tended to follow many of the same practices as Harvard's; and over some three hundred years such practices also became part of the tradition in public secondary schools.

Also of interest is that the early Harvard commencements were held at the end, rather than the beginning, of the summer. After the ceremony, candidates for the incoming freshman class were examined, and if they were successful, they were admitted immediately. Thus the term "commencement" acquired a double meaning: the beginning of teaching careers for the graduates, and the start of collegiate studies for the neophytes.

### *Regalia*

The history of academic regalia is equally interesting, and there are many meanings in the design, the color, patterns, and even the materials used in the ceremonial clothing that professors and graduates are entitled to wear. In medieval times, nearly all scholars were also priests, ministers, monks, or other ecclesiastical persons. Most of them were poor, and unable (even if willing) to wear stylish and expensive garments. The gown or robe, which was worn as a symbol of professional status, also served usefully as a topcoat or cloak, and the cowl part of the academic hood (which itself was something like a knapsack for carrying things) served as a headcover to keep the wearer warm. The typical medieval academic gown was made of "stuff," a cheap woven material of the sort used by poor people for clothing. Even today, though the designs and colors are fancier, most gowns are of spun rayon or cord, with linings of taffeta. It is probably even symbolic that many of today's bachelor gowns are inexpensive, wear-once throwaways!

The gowns worn by today's baccalaureate candidates are of simple design, falling in straight lines from an elaborate yoke. The masters' robes have longer sleeves. Doctoral robes have full sleeves, are the most elaborate, and are easily recognized by the three velvet stripes or bars on each arm plus velvet panels down the front. Sometimes the stripes, instead of black, are in the color that represents the type of doctorate one holds, e.g., pale blue for Education, drab brown for Business, purple for Law, maize for Agriculture, green for Medicine, pink for Music, dark blue for Philosophy, and maroon for Home Economics. Most gowns are in traditional black, although some universities authorize the gown to be of the school's official color (as in Harvard's bright crimson, Yale's blue, the University of Chicago's maroon, and Columbia's white with blue trimming). Texas Tech permits only its Regents to wear the ceremonial scarlet gown with black trim.

The doctoral hood has trimming in the color representing the discipline, and a lining in the color(s) of the university that granted the degree. Texas Tech's hood colors are scarlet and black.

Finally, a word about academic headgear. Most popular is the (Oxford University) mortarboard, which includes the academic cap topped by a flat cloth-covered square. This type of cap was first developed at the University of Paris in the 16th Century, and its shape was caused by the way it was made, by sewing four pieces of material together. An alternative is the soft six-sided cap, resembling a beret, as developed by Cambridge University. In all cases, the cap is provided with a tassel (black for bachelor's and master's, and either black or gold for doctorates), which traditionally is worn on the left side only after the degree has been conferred.

### *The Processional and the Recessional*

As in so many other ways, academic ceremonies remain essentially religious in format and atmosphere; and this is symbolized by the ritual coming in, and the going out, of the official participants in their colorful garb to the accompaniment of strong, uplifting music. Of interest is that keeping in military step is not seen as necessary or even desirable, except as the cadence of the music tends to inspire it; what is important (in the minds of certain scholars of this topic) is for every marcher to proceed with appropriate dignity. Exuberance sometimes makes this more difficult during the recessional, with the prized diploma in hand.

R. H. A.

College of Education

# COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM

Municipal Auditorium

Saturday May 10, 1980

8:00 A.M.

Master of Ceremonies

Ms. Dorothy Filgo, Associate Professor, College of Education  
Chairperson, Student Affairs Committee

Processional of Graduating Class and Faculty ..... Audience Seated  
"Trumpet Voluntary" ..... Purcell  
Musical Selection by Dr. James Watt, Organ

Invocation ..... Ms. Vicki Richmond  
President, Nu Sigma Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi

Welcome ..... Dr. Robert H. Anderson  
Dean, College of Education

Address ..... Mr. Linus Wright  
Superintendent, Dallas Independent School District

Recognition of Highest Ranking Honor Graduates ..... Dr. Robert H. Anderson  
Dean, College of Education

Scholarship Award Presentation ..... Representative of Texas Tech  
Ex-Student Association

Introduction of Graduates  
Baccalaureate Degrees ..... Dr. Panze Kimmel  
Associate Professor, College of Education  
Higher Degrees ..... Dr. Shamus Mehaffie  
Associate Dean for Programs, College of Education

Presentation of Diplomas ..... Dr. Robert H. Anderson  
Dean, College of Education

Benediction ..... Ms. Christina Luckey  
President, Texas Tech Chapter of Texas Student Education Association

Recessional ..... Audience Standing  
"Trumpet Tune" ..... Purcell  
Musical Selection by Dr. James Watt, Organ

Reception (Immediately following Commencement)  
Foyer of Second Floor, College of Education, Administration Building

