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July 29, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

To: President Peterson

From: Pat McKenna

Re: Commencement Regalia Policy

The attached policy establishing standards related to the academic regalia worn at Institute commencement ceremonies by students, as well as the process by which student organizations and Institute programs may seek approval to add adornment to the regalia to signify a student's membership or association, was developed by the Office of the Provost and the Registrar.

Following review by the Policy Steering Committee it went through a campus comment period and was forwarded by the Policy Steering Committee to Cabinet for initial review at its meeting on June 14, 2016.

Questions raised by members of Cabinet have been addressed and the final policy will be posted in the Institute Policy Library (<http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/>), effective August 1, 2016.

Pc: Cabinet  
Reta Pikowsky  
Tiffany Watson



## Commencement Regalia

Type of Policy: Administrative

Effective Date: August 1, 2016

Last Revised: August 1, 2016

External Requirement for Review: N/A

Compliance Reporting: N/A

**Policy Owner:** Office of the Provost and Registrar's Office

**Policy Contact:** Jennifer Herazy, Assistant Provost, [herazy@gatech.edu](mailto:herazy@gatech.edu)

Reta Pikowsky, Registrar, [reta.pikowsky@registrar.gatech.edu](mailto:reta.pikowsky@registrar.gatech.edu)

### 1. Reason for Policy

As an official function of the Institute, Institute Commencement ceremonies convey the scholarly tradition and formal tone befitting of an academic ceremony. This policy sets forth standards related to the academic regalia worn at Institute commencement ceremonies by students, as well as the process by which student organizations and Institute programs may seek approval to add adornment to the regalia to signify a student's membership or association. Adornments include any addition to the issued traditional academic regalia and may include, but are not limited to: cords, stoles, torus, medallion, pins, and other decorations.

### 2. Policy Statement

Traditional academic regalia will be worn by all graduating students and faculty in commencement ceremonies (as described in section 4). The Institute welcomes students, academic programs, and student organizations to express their identity and values through the addition of appropriate adornment to the standard Institute regalia. Any adornments added to the regalia should not obstruct the view of others at the ceremony or interfere with another's participation in the ceremony.

Georgia Tech Student Organizations (as registered with the Division of Student Life) and other Institute-approved programs or organizations wishing to provide student members or participants with organization or program recognition regalia adornment to be worn at commencement must seek prior approval from the Office of the Provost through the Registrar. The cost of the adornments will be borne by the organization or student members. A list of all pre-approved regalia adornments including the requesting person or organization, description, and meaning of the adornment will be maintained by the Registrar's Office.

Students not in compliance with the requirements of this policy may be asked to remove and/or conceal any unapproved regalia adornment.

### 3. Scope

This policy pertains to the regalia and adornments worn by students participating in any Institute undergraduate commencement, graduate commencement, or PhD hooding ceremonies.

### 4. Definitions

<b>Academic Regalia – Doctoral Candidates</b>	Doctoral candidates traditionally wear customized gold regalia with full rounded sleeves, velvet facings on the front and velvet bars on the sleeves. Hoods are lined with Georgia Tech colors. Doctoral candidates also wear a six-pointed tam.
<b>Academic Regalia – Master’s Candidates</b>	Master’s degree candidates traditionally wear the traditional black gown with full-length square sleeves with a crescent piece hanging from each sleeve. The gowns are adorned with the Georgia Tech seal. The master’s hoods are lined in white and gold and colors appropriate to their major. Caps are traditional mortar boards and tassels are white and gold.
<b>Academic Regalia – Bachelor’s Candidates</b>	Bachelor’s degree candidates traditionally wear the traditional black gown but with no hood and no additional material at the bottom of the sleeves. Caps are traditional mortar boards and tassels are white and gold.
<b>Regalia Adornments</b>	Any décor or embellishment added to the regalia which may include, but is not limited to cords, stoles, tassel décor, medallions, and patches.
<b>Honor Cords</b>	<p>A cord worn by undergraduate students who have earned the designation of academic honors as based on their GPA at the start of the graduating semester. Cords may not be used for any other designation unless by specific permission of the Office of the Provost through the Registrar. Exceptions <u>may</u> be granted for academic (GPA-based), distinguished national honor societies that may issue cords to their graduates. Recognizing the considerable effort of the students who earn honors, the color of the cord will signify the level of honors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• white for honors,</li><li>• gold for high honors, and</li><li>• white and gold braided for highest honors.</li></ul> <p>The determination of honors would be preliminary and based on the students' GPA at the start of the graduating semester. The distribution of cords will be managed by the Registrar’s Office.</p>
<b>Medallions or pins</b>	A piece of jewelry worn around the neck or pinned to the regalia signifying participation in a specific Institute recognized organization or program.
<b>Stoles</b>	A long band of cloth, usually silk, worn around the neck signifying participation in a specific Institute recognized organization or program.
<b>Tassel Décor or Torus</b>	Academic programs and departments may wish to signify participation in academic-based options with a torus – beads worn on the tassel of the mortar board. This would be determined by individual programs and departments and must be limited to academic options that are included on the students' transcripts or documented in some other consistent manner, such as co-op, threads, international plan, minors, or undergraduate research option.

## 5. Procedures

Student organizations or Institute-approved programs must submit stole designs for approval to the Registrar's office. The following chart details the process:

Requests for approval of Academic Regalia Adornments	
<b>Request Form</b>	A form to submit for approval will be available on the Registrar's office web site. Forms submitted must include a photo of the stole.
<b>Approval</b>	Any regalia adornment or exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Office of the Provost through the Registrar prior to display at commencement. A list of all approved regalia adornments will be kept by the Registrar's office and posted on the Institute Commencement website.
<b>Deadline</b>	All submissions for approval must be submitted to the Registrar's office by the dates designated on the Registrar's web site.

## 6. Responsibilities

- 6.1. **Office of the Provost** – Oversee the implementation of this policy and approve any exceptions to the terms of the policy.
- 6.2. **Registrar** – Manage the approval and registry of regalia adornments as well as the distribution of honor cords.
- 6.3. **Student Organizations, academic departments, and Institute approved programs** – Seek approval and register any regalia adornments prior to commencement.

## 7. Related Information

Resource	Link
Institute Commencement Website	<a href="http://www.commencement.gatech.edu/students/regalia">http://www.commencement.gatech.edu/students/regalia</a>
Degree Candidate Website	<a href="http://www.registrar.gatech.edu/students/deginfo/degcandfaq.php">http://www.registrar.gatech.edu/students/deginfo/degcandfaq.php</a>

## Academic Regalia Adornment Approval Form

Student organizations or Institute-approved programs must seek approval to issue adornments to the academic regalia for their student members or participants.

*Note: The Institute will use cords to designate undergraduate students who graduate with academic honors. Cords may not be used for any other designation unless by specific permission of the Office of the Provost through the Registrar. Exceptions may be granted for academic (GPA-based), distinguished national honor societies that may issue cords to their graduates.*

Organization or program name: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief purpose/description of organization or program: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List Faculty/Staff advisor or sponsor (include name, email, and departmental affiliation):

\_\_\_\_\_

Students who will wear the adornment (state how qualifications are determined, approx. number):

\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed adornment and brief description (include color, materials, size, any wording or symbols on the item). Attach a photo or representative image of the proposed adornment:

\_\_\_\_\_

Meaning of the proposed adornment within the academic ceremony:

\_\_\_\_\_

Faculty/Staff advisor signature of approval:

\_\_\_\_\_