

A FIELD GUIDE TO COMMENCEMENT

. . . TERRAS IRRADIANT



PHOTOS BY SAMUEL MASINTER '04

Objects to watch for on the big day



TASSEL

Gold is the usual tassel color for Ph.D.s. Sometimes, though, tassels are color-coded to indicate the academic discipline of the wearers.

CAP

A velvet doctoral tam is the head-topper of choice for most faculty members.

CHEVRONS

Some of these velvet bands are black; others are colored to indicate the wearer's field of study.

Philosophy's color is dark blue, which is why, regardless of discipline, Ph.D.s are often spotted with dark blue chevrons.

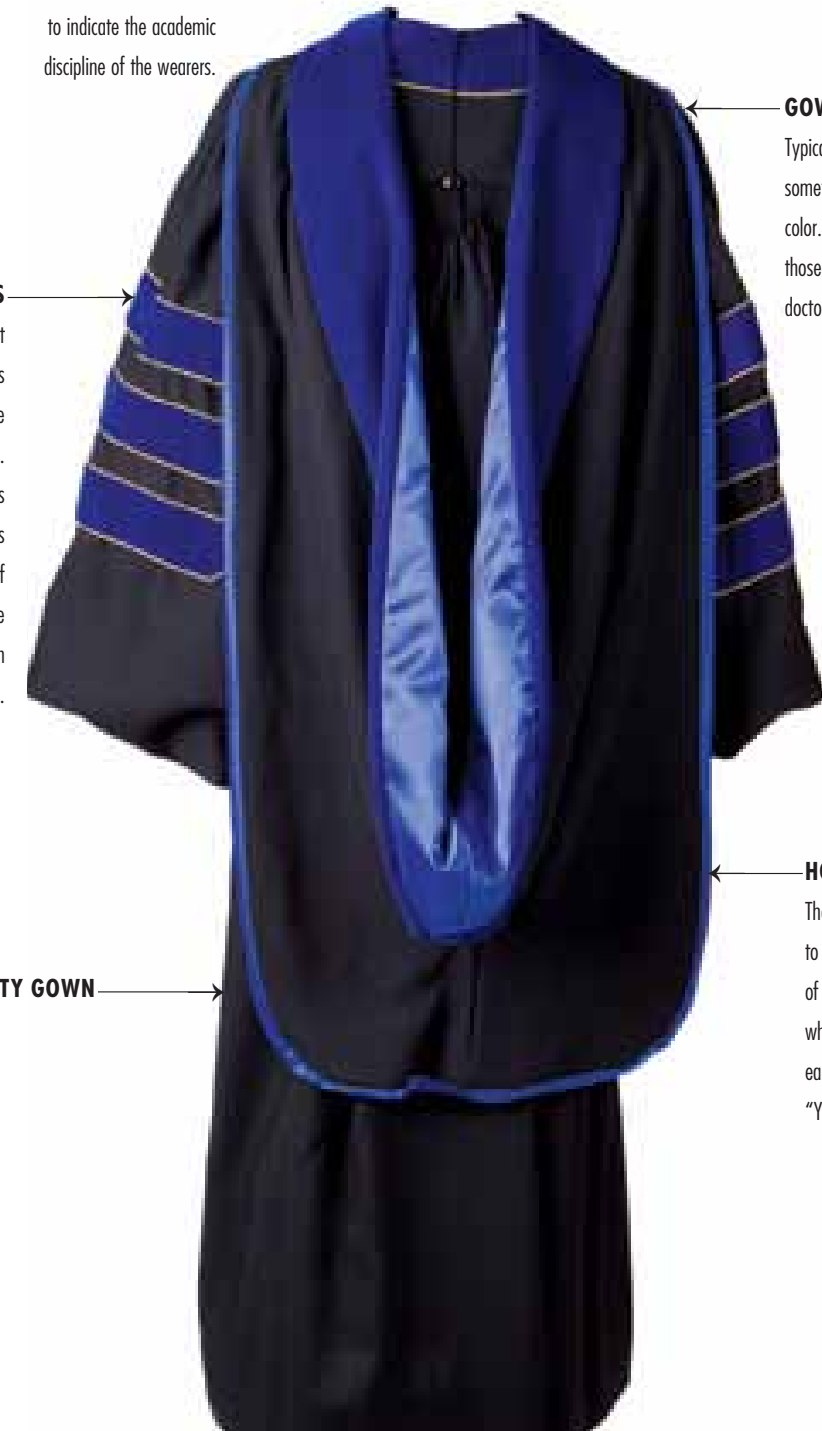
GOWN

Typically black, but sometimes a school color. For example, those with Harvard doctorates wear red.

HOOD

The velvet is dark blue to signify a Ph.D. The color of the lining indicates where that degree was earned. In this case, it's "Yale blue."

A FACULTY GOWN





HALBERD

Ever since Zephaniah Swift Moore said, "I am not myself fond of . . . unnecessary ceremonies," Amherst has accessorized Commencement only moderately. This pole weapon is one of the few ornaments. The county sheriff carries it as he leads the procession.



RIBBON

Staffers in the registrar's office spend an estimated 25 hours each spring rolling and hand-tying a similar ribbon around each diploma

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STUDENT MACE

Student marshals—graduating seniors who lead their class in the procession—each carry a ceremonial mace. Off-season, this \$850 staff lies in storage.



FACULTY MACE

As faculty marshal, Wako Tawa carries this (deceptively heavy) mace in the academic procession. The engraving near the top lists her five predecessors, beginning with William K. Green, who served from 1924 to 1956.



HONORARY MARSHAL'S MACE

The honorary marshal is usually an alum and often the parent of a graduating senior. This mace is engraved with the names of the 69 honorary marshals who served from 1918 to 1986.