Commencement 2012

Commencement clearly marks new beginnings. It provides an excellent opportunity to gather as a member of the Boston College community and participate in a ceremony steeped in tradition. We enthusiastically invite you to celebrate the realization of a long awaited goal in a ceremony especially designed for just that purpose.

The following pages detail the ceremony and the tradition of which you are now a part. Whether you graduate in May, August or December, your commencement is in May; a day to be fully enjoyed by family, friends, relatives and especially you, THE GRADUATE.

Seniors may invite as many guests to attend the Baccalaureate and Graduation ceremonies as they wish. No tickets are needed.

Formal Graduation Announcements

Formal graduation announcements are offered on-line only. A link to the announcement was emailed to you. They are not tickets; they merely announce the general commencement ceremony. They may serve as an announcement of graduation to relatives or friends who will not be attending. The Boston College Bookstore offers personalized announcements for purchase. Contact the Bookstore at 617-552-3520 or www.bc.edu/bookstore

Baccalaureate Ceremony

The Baccalaureate Ceremony will be held Sunday, May 20, 2012, at 12:00 noon in Conte Forum. Seniors, family and friends are encouraged to participate in this Mass and religious observance. It is a memorable ceremony of thanksgiving and jubilation. I strongly encourage you and those close to you to attend. Commencement robes (no hood) may be worn by those graduating. Immediately following the ceremony there will be light refreshments available on the O’Neill Library Plaza.
Commencement Day

The following details concerning your Commencement on Monday, May 21, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. will be helpful to you and your guests. The enclosed booklet provides additional information.

Candidates and their guests may use the parking area on lower campus. Allow adequate time to access campus and parking. Upon arrival, guests should go immediately to Alumni Stadium, the scene of the Commencement exercises. Even in a light rain or drizzle the ceremony will be held there. No tickets are required.

In the event of heavy rain, the formal Commencement exercises will be held in Conte Forum and will begin at 9:30 a.m. Graduates and two of their guests go directly to Conte Forum; two rain tickets will be included with your commencement gown for these two guests. Everyone else may watch the general exercises over closed circuit television in the Flynn Recreation Complex. As at Alumni Stadium, no tickets are necessary for entrance to Flynn Recreation Complex. The announcement, if necessary, will be broadcast on the radio on stations WBZ (1030 AM) and WRKO (650 AM) from 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. It will also be recorded on the Boston College Information Line, 617-552-INFO.

College of Advancing Studies seniors assemble by 8:15 a.m. in the North side of Conte Forum, Gate C, attired in cap and gown, carrying your hood over your left arm. It seems advisable to note that male candidates will find the best appearance is effected if a dress shirt and dark tie are worn. Women graduates should be aware that decorative jewelry or flowers should not be worn on the academic gown.

Procedure to be followed during the exercises

Following the academic procession and upon reaching your place at Alumni Stadium you should be seated until the Cardinal’s entrance is announced. You should then stand. Males should remove their caps. You should remain standing for the National Anthem and Invocation. Males should replace their caps when the Invocation is concluded. You sit after the Cardinal sits. The undergraduates capping ceremony is followed immediately by the graduate representative being called forward for the graduate student capping. When the representative of the College of Advancing Studies goes to the platform to receive the degree you should stand. As the degree recipient reaches the top step, all males of the College of Advancing Studies should remove their caps and place them on the seat behind them.

When, after having received the degree, the representative is hooded by the President, you should put on your hood. Males then replace caps when the recipient does. Turn your tassel when the representative does. All should sit when the representative has returned and is seated.

At the conclusion of the exercises, you should stand for the Benediction and males remove their caps. After the Benediction, all should remain standing for the singing of the Alma Mater. At the end of the Alma Mater, males should replace their caps.

College of Advancing Studies Presentation of Degrees

Presentation of degrees to individual candidates of the College of Advancing Studies will take place in St. Ignatius Church immediately after the general university exercises; this will be about 11:45 a.m. (In the event of extreme weather, the College of Advancing Studies’ ceremony will begin at approximately 11:30 a.m. in St. Ignatius Church.) Candidates should arrange to accompany their guests to St. Ignatius Church. There will be a professional photography service available at St. Ignatius Church capturing the moment you receive your degree. You will be contacted by Commencement Photos with the opportunity to purchase prints. The Dean will also be happy to pose with any graduate immediately following the ceremony. Light refreshments will be available to the graduates and their guests. A representative from the rental company will collect caps and gowns at St. Ignatius; hood and tassel may be retained.
A Great and Proud Tradition

As a graduate of the Woods College of Advancing Studies, you are now a part of a great and proud tradition. It should be a source of pride to you for the rest of your life.

This tradition dates back to the mid-1500s in Europe, when the Society of Jesus was founded and began its work of education. It was not long at all before the Jesuits established their first university in the United States in the 19th century, to what was known as the Young Men's Catholic Association of Boston College. Father Robert Fulton, S.J., realized attending college full-time was an unaffordable luxury for most immigrant children. Evening courses represented the best opportunity for ambitious individuals to prepare for civil service examinations or enter the professions and executive ranks. The Irish and other ethnic groups improved their economic situation and established their position in the community quickly because of the fine education they worked so hard to attain evenings.

With the elevation of Father Thomas Gasson, S.J., to the presidency in the early years of this century, Boston College gained a person of unique vision. A native of England and an admirer of Oxford University, Father Gasson dreamed of combining the excellence of the Jesuit academic tradition with the style of Oxford. It was he who selected the Chestnut Hill land that had formerly been the Lawrence family's farm, enabling Boston College to move to the stunning landscape now known as the Heights. The beautiful Gothic towers of the original three buildings -- Gasson Hall, the Bapst Library, and Saint Mary's Hall -- are due mainly to Father Gasson's desire to create a new Oxford in America. There is hardly a visitor to our campus who does not come away impressed and inspired by the physical beauty of Boston College, which is only further enhanced by our newer campus construction.

The roots of the Woods College of Advancing Studies go back to the 19th century, when the potatoes rotted in the ground in Ireland. A horrendous famine devastated the population. Many who were somehow able to survive sailed across the Atlantic to the United States and Canada. This was no mere trickle, but a flood of the disposed. By the mid-1880s Boston had become a principle gateway into America for the Irish. Father John McElroy, S.J., who had as the first official Catholic chaplain of the United States Army, determined that success for these new immigrants depended on access to higher education of the finest quality. Father McElroy raised money and bought land for a new college in the South End of Boston. Boston College was chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1863.

The first president of the new college was Father John Bapst, S.J., a native of Switzerland and a person who had previously shown uncommon courage in missionary work among the Indians and white settlers of rural Maine. In the early days of Boston College, a Mr. Andrew Carney kept the fledgling Jesuit institution alive during hard financial times with numerous large financial grants.

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A Great and Proud Tradition

In 1935, the James A. Woods, S.J., College of Advancing Studies moved from Beacon Street to Newbury Street in the Back Bay, and became known as Boston College Intown. Its programs were expanded, and thousands were able to receive a high quality education at times convenient for them. In the early 1960s, the Woods College of Advancing Studies moved to the Heights. One reason for the move was the desire to give the Advancing Studies students access to the faculty and facilities available on the Heights and make them feel an integral part of the total Boston College community. It was felt that if the academic environment of the Heights inspired excellence, then Advancing Studies students should be able to take advantage of that atmosphere and have the same learning experience as full-time students.

Since its founding in 1863, Boston College has grown magnificently in faculty, students, alumni programs, and properties. We were once known as that local Catholic college of the children of immigrants. We will always be proud of that part of our history. Today, because of the occupational prominence and financial generosity of these sons and daughters of immigrants and their succeeding generations, Boston College has prestige throughout North America and in many foreign countries. Graduates from all the colleges of the university have become distinguished leaders in politics, the professions, the military, the Church, the arts and sciences, in industry, and in many other walks of life. Boston College started its life as a Catholic school and although this link with our ancient faith is as strong as ever, the excellence of our programs and our ecumenical spirit attract outstanding students from many other religious and ethnic backgrounds. This pluralism of intellectual exploration and experience is, no less than the majestic architecture of Bapst Library, part of what we think of as our heritage at Boston College.

Throughout the history of Boston College, excellence has been our overarching standard. Excellence was the standard the first Jesuits adopted over four hundred years ago and the one they carried to so many lands around the world. This standard of excellence and the Jesuit heritage make Boston College and its tradition unique. As of commencement day, you are a part and a permanent member of this great and proud tradition.

Seal of Boston College

The Presidential Medallion, a symbol of authority which originated in medieval times, is worn by the President of the University on ceremonial occasions such as commencement. The medallion bears the official seal.

The colorful and symbolic seal of Boston College contains the University motto in Greek, Ever to Excel. The seal is circular with a maroon border bearing the University's formal Latin name, Collegium Bostoniense, and the year of founding, 1863. Encircling the inside base of the shield on a background of silver is a scroll heralding the College device traced in black: Religioni Et Bonis Artibus – Dedicated to Religion and the Fine Arts. The shield itself contains the "trimount" from Tremont, the old name for Boston; and the motto of the University inscribed in Greek on the open book in the center of the shield above the three hills of Boston. The open book, symbolic of a college, is a frequent emblem on academic shields. On the black band at the top, the sable, are two crowns separated by the badge of the Society of Jesus. The chief is derived from the original arms of old Boston, Lincolnshire, England, on which three crowns were depicted, the third being taken by the badge of the Jesuit Order. The trinctures on the shields, red and gold, are the heraldic equivalents of the College colors, maroon and gold.

At the top of the Presidential Medallion is the badge of the Society of Jesus. On the left side of the sunburst is Christ the Teacher, showing the elders clustering around Christ in the Temple; on the right is the figure of the Jesuit patron, Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom. On the lower portion of the medallion is the Lamp of Knowledge inscribed with the word tutelarius, Protector of Wisdom. Each link of the chain holding the medallion is inscribed with the name of a past president of Boston College and his term in office. Holding together these links and supporting the medallion is the Boston College golden eagle – encrusted with a ruby in its breast.
Attire

Until well after World War I, it was customary for many American college students to wear gowns while in class or at meals. The practice has ceased, and except for some of the British and European schools, few colleges request students wear gowns except at commencement exercises.

Most of the early gowns varied widely in design and color. In 1893 the American Intercollegiate Commission standardized the style of gowns for the major degree ranks recognized in America. All Boston College graduates participate in the ceremony attired in the standard black gown, but with varying styles and hoods depending on the degree which they have earned and the school from which they are graduating.

Each of the three academic degrees – bachelor, master and doctor – has its own unique gown and hood. The bachelor's gown is distinguished by its long pointed sleeve. The master's gown has a longer, closed sleeve, extending below the knee, the arm passes through a slit at the elbow. The doctor's gown has a full bell-shaped sleeve with three bars of velvet. The opening of all the gowns is faced with wide velvet bands which may be black or may be colored indicating the general field of learning of the wearer such as golden yellow for science.

The most colorful and distinctive item of the academic costume is the hood which passes around the neck and extends down the back. The length of the hood varies from three feet (the bachelor's) to four feet (the doctor's). The colors of the silk which line the center of the hood are those of the school which confers the degree. The color of the velvet on the hood denotes the academic discipline in which the degree is earned. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts, Letters, Humanities</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business and Management</td>
<td>Nugget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Light Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Apricot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Golden Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Citron</td>
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Since the hood no longer serves as a head covering, the mortarboard, which originated at the British universities, is used. A long black tassel or other appropriate color is fastened to the middle of the top of the cap and hangs down the right side. A doctor of philosophy's cap frequently hosts a tassel of gold thread, while lawyers often wear purple tassels. In recent years, soft velvet tams instead of the traditional mortarboards have become popular for holders of advanced graduate degrees.

Boston College Colors

How and why the maroon and gold became the colors of Boston College is a matter of speculation. The colors were adopted in the infancy of the college after a lively contest between students and faculty. After much deliberation, maroon and gold, the papal colors were adopted.

The first written mention of these colors occurred in 1894 when an appeal was made for a song to credit the maroon and gold. Another reference indicated that the ladies of the New England Conservatory of Music sewed a maroon and gold banner to honor the baseball team.

Congratulations to
The Class of 2012
Graduation

Graduation activities consist of two ceremonies, baccalaureate and commencement. The baccalaureate is traditionally a religious ceremony of thanksgiving and jubilation. At Boston College this memorable ritual is highlighted by a concelebrated Mass on Sunday, May 20.

Immediately preceding the entry of the undergraduate candidates is the University Mace Bearer who presides as the Grand Marshal of the commencement exercises. The Office of Mace Bearer is purely ceremonial and derives from medieval times in England when an official taking office or opening court needed a bodyguard. In those days, the mace, a formidable weapon, was held ready to protect the important personage. It has now become a symbol of office and authority and is carried in the procession to dignify the ceremony. It is marked at the head by a sphere representing the world, at the top of which rests the symbol of the cross.

After the over twenty-five hundred degree candidates have taken their places, the Honorary Degree Recipients are escorted to the platform. Although not necessarily part of the commencement exercise, they are an important part of the ceremony at Boston College. The award of an Honorary Degree from an American college or university dates back to colonial times, when in 1692 Harvard granted the first such degree. It has since been customary for some universities to honor those men and women who have distinguished themselves in the fields of business, social science, law, the humanities, and education. In the past, honorary degrees were given at all levels, but in recent years the doctorate has become the most commonly awarded. These degrees are not awarded indiscriminately. Boston College wishes to preserve the status of earned degrees and enhance the significance of its honorary degrees. Thus candidates are carefully selected. At previous commencements, the university awarded honorary degrees to Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice; David McCullough, author & Medal of Freedom recipient; former Boston Celtic, Bill Russell; Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, president of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace; political analyst, Tim Russert; humanitarian Dr. Paul Farmer; Boston businessman and philanthropist Jack Connors and documentary filmmaker, Ken Burns.

The Dais Group, or platform party, is the last to enter and the first to leave the ceremony. It consists of the honorary degree recipients escorted by university officials, the Deans who present the degree candidates, the Trustees, the Cardinal of Boston, and the President. The entire group is distinguished by their colorful garb, interspersed with the distinctive doctoral gowns of maroon and gold worn by the University Trustees.

Participants

While those graduating are the principal participants in the commencement exercises, there are other individuals who perform a variety of roles during the exercises. A brief description of their various roles may be helpful.

Leading the procession are the silver Jubilarian Marshals formally attired with top hats and tuxedos. These Boston College graduates are followed by marshals who are members of the teaching or professional staff attired in their own academic gowns. They assume various responsibilities during the ceremony. Many are responsible for assembling the candidates and leading them to and from the field, while others serve as field marshals and assure that the 2,500 degree recipients are guided to the correct section. Other marshals are responsible for seating the faculty and the student representing each college who receives the degree for the class.

The annual commencement exercise on Monday, May 21 is the high point of the academic year, a recognition of success for both the institution and its students. The French word "commencement" was the name given to the initiation ceremony reserved for university teachers in medieval Europe as they entered upon their career or office. Much of what we see in today's ceremony reflects those times.
Degrees and Honors

A degree is awarded for the successful completion of a program of study. The first known academic degree, the doctorate (from the Latin “docere”: to teach), was granted by the University of Bologna in the mid-twelfth century. Originally the doctor’s and master’s degrees were virtually synonymous, while the title “bachelor” indicated entrance into a course of study rather than its completion. The first bachelor’s degree awarded in America was at Harvard in 1642.

Today, the most popular degrees in America are the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science. The original diplomas for these academic degrees were elaborately hand lettered in Latin script and parchment. Boston College continues to uphold this fine tradition. Although some institutions add a special designation to the degree, i.e., Bachelor of Science in Biology, Boston College awards undesignated degrees, such as Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science.

Latin honors accompanying the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science are awarded in three grades according to the cumulative average attained by the successful completion of the degree curriculum, as long as at least half of the courses were taken at Boston College. Summa Cum Laude, with Highest Honors, is awarded to the top 4.5 percent of the graduating class; Magna Cum Laude, with High Honors, to the next 9.5 percent; and Cum Laude, with Honors, to the next 15 percent.

The appropriate Latin script is embossed on the diploma in recognition of the achievement. Academic precedent directs that only graduation honors are to be noted on a diploma. Most other honors and distinctions are usually indicated on the official transcript.

Academic awards, such as those given by the professional societies earned by the members of the graduating class, are traditionally recognized and formally presented during the individual college ceremony.

Special awards are presented at the individual college’s graduation. Before the degrees are individually conferred, recognition is given to the graduates who have excelled in specific areas. Recipients are selected on the basis of academic performance and individual excellence.

Honors printed in the Commencement program are based on averages at the end of the second semester, 2011-2012. The degree summa cum laude is awarded to the top 4.5% of the undergraduate graduating class, magna cum laude to the next 9.5% and cum laude to the next 15%.

The following grade point averages were the actual honors for the Class of 2011: summa 4.0-3.943; magna 3.942-3.793; cum 3.792-3.628.

Remember, this provides only a guideline as the ranges change slightly each year.

Alma Mater

Hail! Alma Mater! Thy praise we sing.
Fondly thy mem’ries round our heart still cling.
Guide of our youth, thro’ thee we shall prevail!

Hail! Alma Mater! Hail! All Hail!

Hail! Alma Mater! Lo, on the height.
Proudly thy tow’rs are raised for the Right
God is thy Master, His law thy sole avail!