



# D.C. AREA COMMENCEMENT

**SPRING 2024 | MAY 12 | 1:00 P.M.**

GMU Center for the Arts  
4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax, VA 22030



## PRELUDE

Quintessential Brass Repertoire

## ACADEMIC PROCESSIONAL

## POSTING OF COLORS

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets

## NATIONAL ANTHEM

DC Washington

## WELCOME

Chontrese Hayes

*Graduate School Assistant Dean*

## REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Timothy D. Sands

*University President*

## REMARKS FROM THE PROVOST

Don Taylor

*Executive Vice Provost*

## REMARKS FROM THE GRADUATE SCHOOL DEAN AND INTRODUCTION OF GRADUATE STUDENT SPEAKERS

Aimée Surprenant

*Graduate School Dean*

## GRADUATE STUDENT SPEAKERS

Cameron Simmons

*Master's Degree Candidate in Business  
Administration*

Patricia Grace

*Master's Degree Candidate in Urban and  
Regional Planning*

## INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Timothy D. Sands

*University President*

## GRADUATION ADDRESS

Nicole DuPuis

*Policy and Advocacy Lead, May Mobility*

## PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES AND CONFERRAL OF DEGREES

Aimée Surprenant  
and Timothy D. Sands

*Reading of names: Alexis Snyder*

## ALUMNI REMARKS

Deseria Creighton-Barney

## CLOSING REMARKS

Aimée Surprenant

## RECESSIONAL

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Nicole DuPuis is a 2018 doctoral graduate of Virginia Tech's School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA). She currently works for May Mobility, an autonomous vehicle company that focuses on accessible, equitable and shared rides. At May, she serves as the Policy and Advocacy Lead, working with legislators, regulators and policy decision makers at the federal, state and local levels.



Over the course of her career, her work and research has focused on the role technology plays in impacting various facets of human life, including mobility/travel behavior, professional/industrial shifts, and policy-making/governance tendencies. Areas of expertise and interest include automation/autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications, smart city applications, artificial intelligence and machine learning. Throughout her career she has published articles in both peer-reviewed and policy-oriented outlets and authored numerous research reports on these and other topics. Her writing and work has been featured in Cities Today, Tech Crunch, Governing, Route 50, and City Lab, among other outlets. Prior to joining May Mobility, she worked for the Intelligent Transportation Society of America, the American Public Transportation Association, Gartner, and the National League of Cities. She lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband, her two sons, and her yellow lab.





# THE ACADEMIC PROCESSION

*The following information, digested from “An Academic Costume Code and Ceremony Guide” prepared by the American Council on Education, may prove helpful in identifying the costumes you will see in the Commencement Procession.*

When American colleges and universities desired to adopt some suitable system of academic apparel many years ago, a conference held at Columbia University in 1895 made up of representatives from various institutions drew up a “By-Law Regulation, or Statute” for the establishment of a suitable code of academic dress for colleges and universities in the United States. This code, with modifications made in 1959, is still in force; the costumes and colors, trimmings, and patterns you will see are all traditional and interpret both degree and the field of learning. The bachelor’s gown, designed to be worn closed, has pointed sleeves; the master’s gown, which may be worn open or closed, has an oblong sleeve open at the wrist which hangs down in traditional manner. The rear part of its oblong shape is square cut and the front part has the arc cut away. The doctor’s gown has bell-shaped sleeves. It may be worn open or closed. Bachelor’s and master’s gowns are untrimmed. Doctor’s gowns are faced with black velvet with three bars across the sleeves; or the color of velvet may be that which is distinctive of the degree, agreeing with that of the edging of the hood. The colors you will see in the hoods and gowns of our faculty represent the various fields in which the degrees were taken.

A few are:

**ACCOUNTANCY, COMMERCE,**

**BUSINESS:** Drab (Yellow-Brown)

**AGRICULTURE:** Maize (Pale Yellow)

**ARCHITECTURE:** Blue-Violet (Purple)

**ARTS, LETTERS, HUMANITIES:** White

**ECONOMICS:** Copper

**EDUCATION:** Light Blue

**ENGINEERING:** Orange Natural

**RESOURCES:** Russet (Rust)

**PHILOSOPHY:** Dark Blue

**VETERINARY MEDICINE:** Gray

**SCIENCE:** Bright Gold (Golden Yellow)

The hoods, differing in length for the three degrees (bachelor’s, master’s, and doctor’s), are lined with the official colors of the university or college conferring the degree, usually with one color forming a chevron pattern over the other (for example, orange and maroon for Virginia Tech). Hoods are edged and bound with velvet of the color appropriate for the degree. You will see in our procession many edged with dark blue for doctor of philosophy. Mortarboards are the approved headgear. Tassels are worn on the right side prior to receiving a degree and on the left side after the degree has been conferred. The tassel may be of gold if the holder has a doctor’s degree.

