

Academic Traditions and Attire

by Kathleen Barron

Did you ever wonder the meaning behind the regalia used at ceremonial occasions? What was the significance of the "thing" the chief marshal carried in processions and what was the significance of all the different colors? Interestingly enough, the answers to these questions were printed in the commencement program for December. I am including this information for those of you who are as curious as I was.

THE UNIVERSITY MACE is a symbol of authority and was originally modeled after war clubs carried into battle by 12th century officers. It first appeared at FSU in 1986 and was redesigned and used for Commencement for the first time in 1989.

The university's mace is 40" long with a cylinder-shaped head cast in hollow brass and bears the name of the university, the year the university was founded and *Res Non Verba*, the university motto: "Deeds, not words". The University seal, which was commissioned in April 1989 for Chancellor Hackley's inauguration, adorns the head of the mace. The spirit of victory is depicted by the laurels embracing the seal and the Alumni Memorial Gates are immortalized by the spiral rings mounted on the top and sides of the cylinder. The polished brass cylinder is supported by a 13" walnut staff tipped with a 3 1/2" ball of solid brass.

When not in use, the mace is displayed in a base of solid walnut.

THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDALLION is a replica of FSU's newly designed seal made of gold cast in bronze and three-inches in diameter. It bears Chancellor Hackley's name and the date of his installation. It is to worn by the Chancellor at all ceremonial occasions as part of his official academic dress. The founding year of 1867 is prominently displayed above the historic Alumni Memorial Gates which were erected in 1925. Nestled between the gates are a drawing of the original Howard School; an open book depicting the early mission of the University as a teacher preparatory institution, with clasped hands inside the book symbolizing unity; and a banner with the University Motto. Pine cones typifying North Carolina and laurels marking the spirit of victory enclose the bottom of the gates. The outer edges of the seal are adorned by two lamps of learning which represent the University's mission to impact learning to all who enter.

The style of ACADEMIC ATTIRE can be seen in movies featuring students at medieval English universities. At that period, everyone wore robes or gowns to ward off the cold. The custom of specifically designed caps, hoods, and gowns was developed to distinguish lay persons from doctors, licentiates, masters and bachelors.

The square cap design is the same for all degrees. Soft square-topped caps are permitted but, in general, mortarboards are recommended. The field of study is designated on the tassel. A black tassel is correct for all degrees but Doctorates are indicated by gold.

The gowns are designed to designate the specific degree. To indicate a Bachelor's degree, the gown has pointed

sleeves and is to be worn closed. The Master's gown may be worn open or closed and the oblong sleeves hang down in the traditional manner. "The red part of its oblong shape is square cut and the front point has an arc cutaway." The gown worn by those with a Doctorate degree has black velvet down the front and three bars of black velvet across the bell-shaped sleeves. The color of velvet used for the facing and cross-bars may designate the subject to which the degree pertains.

The hoods for the degrees are also distinctive. The hoods are lined with the official colors of the discipline and the colors of the university conferring the degree, in our case blue and white. The hoods differ in length also. The Bachelor's is three feet long, the Master's is three and a half feet long, and the Doctor's degree is indicated by four foot long panels at the sides.

Hood colors indicating fields of study:

Art, Letters, Humanities
White

Business, Administration,
Commerce
Drab

Economics
Copper

Education
Light Blue

Fine Arts/Architecture
Brown

Journalism
Crimson

Law
Purple

Library Science
Lemon

Medicine
Green

Music
Pink

Nursing
Apricot

Oratory(Speech)
Silver Gray

Philosophy
Dark Blue

Physical Education
Sage Green

Public Administration,
Foreign Service
Peacock Blue

Public Health
Salmon Pink

Science
Golden Yellow

Social Science
Cream

Social Work
Citron

Theology
Scarlet

I hope this article has enlightened you about some of the traditions behind the pomp and circumstance in Academia.

December Grads Speak

Kenny E. Hooks chose Criminal Justice as his major because of his life experiences living on the streets in Washington D.C. When asked what his plans were after graduation, he stated, "I would like to become a juvenile counselor or a probation officer. I would like to have any job dealing with kids. My reason for attending F.S.U., to better myself in several ways; money, status, and knowledge wise. The most important reason for attending college is to show myself and other black brothers that there are other ways to obtain success."

Paula George is a Sociology major. Paula's "plans for the future are to continue my education and pursue a master's degree in Social Work, hopefully through Eastern Carolina University."

She continues, "Overall, my experience at F.S.U. has been a pleasant but many times stressful one. I've grown very much as a person while I've been at school here."

from *Social Facts*, the Sociology Club newsletter

This month, approximately 250 FSU students walk across the stage at Seabrook auditorium as their names are called for them to be rewarded for all their hard work in earning a degree. Friends, relatives, and classmates will be there to congratulate them and share in their happiness at meeting their goals.

The following are comments made by some of the graduates:

Leo Brown, Sr. is a Sociology major. He re-entered academic studies after retiring with thirty years in the military. Prominent among those to whom he wishes to express appreciation is "my faithful counsellor, Dr. Keller. I thank

her for her attention, guidance, and leadership without which the contribution the other faculty made to the educating of this person may have been fruitless. I have been helped and in some form motivated by everyone I came into contact with here on [the] FSU campus. So please do not stop doing what you do best - helping / supporting us as students so we can do our best. I thank all of you. Lastly, I challenge each and every student at FSU. If you are trying to get an education and you are sincere about it, get yourself a mentor and a counselor and use your counselors religiously. They are a Godsend. I know, it worked for me."

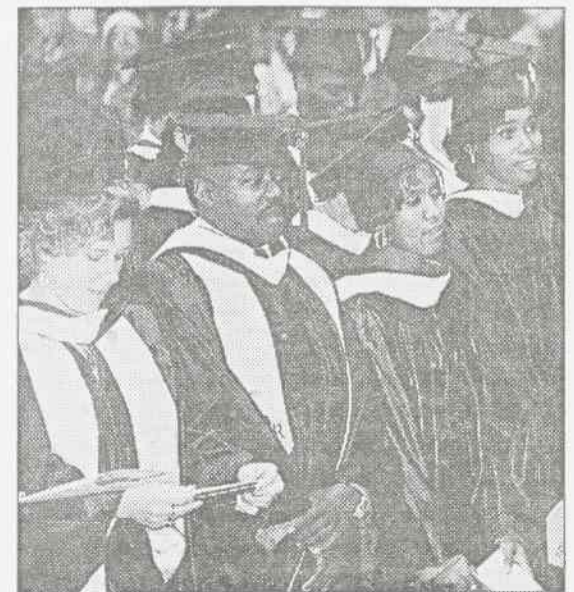
Ms. Vicki Sellars, also a Sociology Major, spoke of experience.

"When I first arrived at FSU, I had low self-esteem, very little confidence in my capabilities, and no idea what I wanted out of life. My first semester was confusing, and stressful, but very enriching. Mrs. Lessie Artis, my first advisor, enveloped me within her 'change agent role' as a social worker and helped me to look at myself and initiate change. Her counseling skills helped me to go within myself and acknowledge the strong, intelligent, African-American female that I am. It has been an upward struggle, but with the help of God, my mother, my son, Dr. Keller, Mrs. Chavis, Dr. Ross, and others my six semesters at FSU has culminated into one of my most successful accomplishments. This is not my last appearance

at FSU. I plan to start graduate classes in the fall."

Ms. Maeronda Banks credits her mother and grandmother as being her greatest inspirations and always being there when on one else was. Her belief in the supreme being 'God' was first and foremost in helping her to obtain strength. This belief was tested during her years at FSU.

"My years at FSU have been quite beneficial to me as a student and as a person. As a student, I realized here more than ever before that if I desired to achieve on the highest level possible for me, I had to first believe I could do it."



Leo Brown Sr. (Center) stands in "ready position," waiting for his diploma.