

Mortar board decoration *do's and don'ts*

University commencements are solemn and at the same time joyful events for participants who have worked so hard to earn a college degree.

You are about to follow in the footsteps of generations of proud graduates of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore who are bound by its traditions and decorum, and where graduation regalia serves to unify not only your graduating class one final time, but the university as well.

Please take into consideration the following if you decide to decorate your graduation cap. Failure to comply will result in the confiscation of the cap at the ceremony. Students are precluded from participating in the ceremony without a cap (or gown).

It is appropriate to adorn it with:

- Your graduation year.
- An expression of “thanks” to family, a teacher, a friend
- A symbol of the branch of the military you belong to or may be joining.
- Acknowledgment of an institution where you plan to continue your studies.
- Your home country's flag.
- A logo or shield of your Greek social or honorary affiliation
- A symbol or message highlighting your major or student organization affiliation.

The following expressions are off limits and will result in confiscation of the cap and forfeiture of participation in the ceremony that your family and friends have traveled to campus to witness:

- Advertisements, symbols, abbreviations, initials, words, slogans or pictures that refer to drugs or controlled substances, tobacco, alcohol or weapons or are of a sexual nature.
- Symbols that denote an affiliation with gangs or advocate drug use, violence, illegal activity, or disruptive behavior detrimental to the safety and welfare of others.
- Messages that are obscene, profane, vulgar or lewd, or threaten the safety and welfare of any person.
- Numbers other than the graduation year.

Only the flat, top area of the cap may be decorated. Nothing should hang down from any of the sides. Decorations must be flat on the surface of the cap. Three-dimensional creations and lighting are prohibited.

Graduation caps will be reviewed and approved before the ceremony. Reach out to faculty and commencement day ushers with questions about your cap.

Keep in mind that in the social media age, images of you from graduation may be seen by future employers or those who can help you in the future as a proud graduate of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Let's show the world UMES is world class.