

SIUE  
Department of Social Work  
Masters in Social Work (MSW) Program

Annual Hooding Ceremony

The Hooding Ceremony is a special recognition ceremony for individuals who attain higher order degrees in academia, such as the Master's or Doctoral degree.

<sup>1</sup>The ceremony dates back to academic traditions of Medieval European scholars and students of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. During this time, many universities were aligned with cleric orders and the garbs worn were symbolic of religious callings. It is believed long gowns were worn in honor of religious order and for purposes of warmth. Early academic institutions were housed in buildings (primarily monasteries) with limited warmth and faulty structure, the long gown was meant to keep the body warm and the hood was originally meant to cover the head for both warmth and safety during inclement weather. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, A number of American Universities organized the American Intercollegiate Commission, a conglomeration of universities charged with establishing an agreed upon code for academic dress that denotes the wearer's degree, discipline, and academic affiliation. Consequently, the tradition of academic dress and regalia was standardized in America in 1894. Since this time, University graduates, administrators, and faculty have donned this traditional dress to mark their accomplishments in higher education.

**Parts of the Academic Regalia**



**Graduate Gown/Robe**

The basic design has stayed the same over the years. There are a few symbolic alterations depending on the degree attained.

- Bachelor's Degree –open, pointed sleeves
- Master's Degree –sleeves that close at the wrist
- Doctoral Degree – velvet stripes across bell-shaped sleeves, velvet trim down front



**Hood**

Over time, the hood has evolved from being an attached head covering to being more of a small unattached cape that is draped over the shoulders with the lining turned inside out displayed down the back

- The color of the front of the hood denotes the wearer's discipline of study (e.g. Social work – citron )
- The width/length denotes the level of the degree
- The lining of the hood identifies the institution (e.g. Red – SIUE)



**Head Covering (The Cap)**

Originally a skull cap and then a bunched up square cap worn by Medieval laity, the head covering has now evolved to either a:

- Mortar Board – rigid, square cap –OR-
- Tam – a 4-, 6-, or 8- sided velvet cap (worn by PhD's)
- Tassel – attached to either cap. Designates the institution seal and colors. Flicked from right to left when degree is conferred.

*SIUE's Colors are red, white, and black, hence these colors are on the hood. MSW Discipline color is citron thus the velvet trim of the hood*

## **What happens at the ceremony?**

The Hooding Ceremony does not replace the University Commencement (Graduation) Exercises. The ceremony typically occurs separate from the formal graduation (or commencement exercises), holds equal significance, has similar activities and yet is a bit different. Similar to commencement exercises, the Hooding Ceremony may include a processional and recessional. Moreover, attendees at the Hooding Ceremony dress in formal academic regalia and their accomplishments are recognized. Unique to the Hooding, graduates get donned with a ceremonial hood that recognizes their high level accomplishment in higher education. Thus the HOOD should not be worn into the ceremony, but should be draped across the arm of the graduate until the actual hooding process begins. The placement of the hood symbolizes the graduate from being a 'student' to a 'master' of knowledge in a core area. Once the hood has been placed on the student by the designated family or faculty, the student should continue to wear the hood until the ceremony ends.

### **Outline of Proposed Ceremony Schedule**

- The Program chair and/or assigned faculty representative gives an opening address
- Graduate student group leader and/or other assigned graduate offers brief remarks
- [Optional] Other speakers, chosen by the graduating class or department offer congratulatory commentary
- Graduate students are recognized and asked to come forward to be hooded. Once students have been hooded, they remain standing in a designated area until all graduates are recognized.
- After all Graduates are Hooded, closing remarks are made by departmental administrators or faculty
- Opportunity for group pictures
- A ceremonial reception closes the event

### **Getting 'Hooded'**

Traditionally the person who places the hood on the graduate is their academic advisor, faculty mentor, department administrator, or department chair. To allow students a chance to honor the contributions and support that their loved ones have played in their academic successes, The SIUE Department of Social Work started the unique tradition of encouraging students to have their family members or close friends hood them. Thus the ceremony becomes a special recognition of not only the student's accomplishment but of also their family's enduring support during their years of school. Thus, students may choose to be HOODED by either family members (or close friends) or a departmental faculty member of their choice.

The student can choose up to 2 people to Hood them. These individuals will approach the staging area with the student and when designated will proceed to place the hood over the student's head and shoulders.

## **Hooding Ceremony FAQ's**

### **How do I order regalia?**

Regalia should be ordered from the SIUE bookstore in early Spring. The MSW Director and/or the SIUE bookstore will send out email notifications noting when regalia can be ordered. This email typically comes in February or March. This email will tell you how to order regalia for the May commencement or graduation and when and where to pick it up. This is the same regalia you will use for the August Hooding. There is a deadline for ordering this regalia, so pay special attention to these dates. There is no guarantee that you will be able to receive regalia if you order after this date

### **Who can I invite?**

Your family and friends are most definitely invited and encouraged to attend. But, sometimes due to the space constraints of the chosen venue for the ceremony, restrictions are placed on the number of invitees that a student may make and/or on the ticketing method. Detailed information on the date, time, location, and ticketing are provided in late Spring.

### **Can children attend?**

Most definitely, children are welcome to attend the ceremony. And if the graduate so desires, children who are old enough to take instruction may also hood their loved ones.

### **When does the hooding ceremony usually occur?**

Students do not officially finish the MSW program until they have turned in their MSW Portfolios. Portfolios are usually due in early August and the hooding ceremony is usually 1-2 weeks after this date.

### **How long does the ceremony last?**

The formal portion of the ceremony last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours depending on the number of graduates. The reception or party that occurs after the formal hooding ceremony can lasts much longer, it depends on venue.