The Graduate School would like to congratulate you on the completion of your doctoral studies! We hope that you will be able to participate in this year’s Commencement activities. Please review the following information carefully, as it includes instructions that you must follow in order to be recognized personally during the VCU Commencement on Saturday, May 11, 2019, at the Greater Richmond Convention Center.

**Before May 6, 2019:**
Please RSVP to the ceremony using this link: [https://goo.gl/forms/P8At8Xx9QiTZ8kUt1](https://goo.gl/forms/P8At8Xx9QiTZ8kUt1)
Responses from this form will be used to create the name cards that are read as students walk across the stage. If you, or a family member, need special accommodations, please contact the Graduate School so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

The Graduate School is located in the Blair House, 408 W. Franklin St. We can be reached via phone at 804-828-2233 or email at graddean@vcu.edu.

**Saturday, May 11, 2019: Arrival and lining up for the Commencement Ceremony**
Report to the Greater Richmond Convention Center at 403 N. 3rd St, Richmond, VA 23219 by **8:45 a.m.**
Graduates should proceed to the line-up area at the Fifth and Marshall entrance of the Ballroom Pavilion of GRCC. Once inside, follow the signs located throughout directing Ph.D. and Ed.D. candidates to the Grand Ballroom on the second floor. Please be sure to check in with Graduate School personnel as soon as you arrive. **You cannot arrive late and place yourself in line. Students who arrive after 9:30 a.m. may not be able to be placed in line properly.**

After checking in, you will receive a numbered card with your name printed on it. Candidates will be presented in alphabetical order by school/department. Place yourself in line according to the number printed on your card. The order of the line will change if advisors have multiple students to hood. Please be patient and plan to stay in line once you have been placed.

**Advisors will be asked to join their advisees on stage.** Please let our office know who your advisor is so we can invite them to attend commencement. If an advisor has more than one student participating in commencement, then all of his/her students will be hooded with the first student in line (this may change your line placement). If your advisor cannot attend commencement with you, please arrange for an alternative advisor such as advisory committee member. If you are alone the honorary marshal will accompany you on stage.

Dr. Mark Schaefermeyer, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, will be your marshal. Please follow his lead at all times!

**NOTE: You MUST be in line with your numbered card by 9 a.m.**

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Marching into the Exhibit Hall and during the Ceremony:
March in with your hood draped over your left arm with the front of the hood pointing. Wear your mortar board centered on your head, **tassel to the left**. Traditionally, men remove their mortar boards for the invocation and keep them off during the address. Follow the lead of your marshals. Mortar boards are put back on when the awarding of the degrees begins.

A faculty marshal will stand, signal you to stand as a group and then lead you to the steps at the stage (student first, advisor follows). Pause at the top of the steps and hand your card to Dr. Schaefermeyer. He will announce your name and you will walk the few steps with your advisor following. Dr. Boudinot will take your hood from your arm and place it over your head. Turn and face the audience while you are being hooded. Walk to the other side of the stage where President Rao will shake your hand. Proceed across the stage, down the steps and return to your seat.

Enter your row as you did when you first entered the Exhibit Hall remain standing at your seat until all doctoral candidates have been hooded. Dr. Schaefermeyer will give the signal to be seated.

At the end of the ceremony Dr. Schaefermeyer will lead you off the floor.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact the Graduate School.

Again, congratulations on the completion of your doctoral program at VCU!

Sincerely,

F. Douglas Boudinot, Dean
Graduate School