March 23, 2016

Dear Graduate,

We are pleased to invite you and your family to attend the Commencement Exercises of the Department of History on Tuesday, May 17th at 9:30 a.m. in Zellerbach Auditorium.

A reception for graduates and their guests will be held in Ishi Courtyard immediately following the ceremony. I hope very much that you and your friends and family will attend this special celebration. Please refer to the following page for many details about the ceremony.

Cordially,

Margaret Chowning
Vice Chair of Graduate Studies
History Commencement Ceremony  
Tuesday May 17th, 2016, 9:30am  
Zellerbach Auditorium

http://history.berkeley.edu/commencement  
Speaker: Professor Martin Jay, Department of History, UC Berkeley

The Event: 8:30 am: Doors open for Guest Seating, followed by musical interlude from 8:30-9:30 a.m.  
8:30-9:00 a.m.: Graduating MA and PhD students assemble backstage for processional. Ceremony begins promptly at 9:30 a.m.

The Aftermath: The ceremony itself should end at around 11:30 a.m. A reception for graduates and their guests will immediately follow the ceremony in Ishi Courtyard. Refreshments will be served.

We hope that the following additional details will answer most of your questions about the graduation proceedings; if not, please contact Mabel at mabel@berkeley.edu. Additionally, check the department website for updates.

Simple Instructions: Arrive by 9:00am at the absolute latest. If you wish to have a headshot taken by the photographer, you will need to arrive no later than 8:45am (note that there is no obligation to purchase the photo and you get a free proof). Find Mabel in the backstage area on the left side of the stage as you enter the auditorium. There is nowhere to store personal belongings backstage, so be sure to leave any purses, umbrellas or other items with family or friends. Resist the urge to go the right (faculty side) of the stage area, even if you are directed there by the ushers. You now look like faculty, but really still do belong on the left (student side) of the stage a bit longer. Mabel will direct you to your position in line, giving you a card with a number on it, and a map with a diagram of the stage showing how you will process. Please line up according to the number on your card. Despite the temptation to look for family and friends, don’t veer too far from the procession line.

The Processional: You will then “process” from the backstage into the seating area on stage when directed to do so. Each seat on stage will have a name card taped to it, and it also corresponds to the same order as the numbered cards that Mabel handed to you. In order to avoid problems, please remain in the processional order and do not deviate from your assigned seat. Proper placement of the doctoral hood is draped over your arm. You will carry it this same way when you later walk across the stage to be hooded by the Department Chair.

Order of Events: The first order of the day will be the speeches. Next is the announcement of awards and prizes. After that comes your moment in the limelight... the PhDs will be first up to receive their “diplomas.” The Vice Chair of Graduate Studies will be announcing the names of all graduate degree participants, and the Department Chair will offer a handshake and do the honor of hooding each graduate. There is a photographer positioned to capture the moment, so exhale, and try to look relaxed.

Notice of Intention to Attend: Register online at history.berkeley.edu/commencement. To get your four (4) free tickets, you must register online by Thursday, April 7th. Please be certain to use the Graduate Student Sign Up form.

If you miss the early deadline, the online registration form will be available until May 6th, so that you can still register to participate. Any notification after May 6th should be directed to Anne at history-ssc@berkeley.edu and we’ll see what we can do.

In order to keep the ceremony lively and your loved ones awake, the Department Chair includes a few student stories in his speech. When registering for commencement, you will be asked to list your notable accomplishments and activities, and to provide a brief anecdote that might help the audience understand what the process of earning your degree in history has been like.
Tickets: Tickets are required of all guests (not you). There are two ways to get tickets:

1. Register for the History Commencement online and get 4 FREE tickets. Grads are entitled to 4 FREE tickets if you register online at history.berkeley.edu/commencement by April 7th.

2. Buy tickets through Cal Performances beginning April 12th. Commencement tickets may be purchased through Cal Performances in person at the Zellerbach Hall Ticket Office, by phone, and online. Tickets are $6 each.

We do not expect tickets to sell out for this event, but we still recommend that you purchase in advance to ensure that you secure the extra seats for your guests; if tickets are still available, they will be sold at the venue on Commencement Day.

No tickets will be sold through the History department.

Graduating students who sign up for our commencement ceremony online by the April 7th deadline are eligible to pick up four free tickets. The distribution of comp tickets will be handled directly through Mabel throughout April.

Friends, Lovers, Relatives, and Crashers: Although we will be in the lovely (and weatherproof) Zellerbach Auditorium, space is at a premium. Rather than limit your guest list however, we suggest you plan to purchase enough tickets sooner rather than later. Since there will NOT be reserved seating, tell your adoring public to get there early for the best view. Please direct your family and invited guests to our website for more details.

Accessibility: The ceremony and reception are wheelchair-accessible. Individuals who wish to request disability-related accommodations, including special parking arrangements, should contact the department at history-events@berkeley.edu. Please request accommodations as soon as possible since some types of accommodations take several weeks to arrange. In most cases, the University can respond to requests for accommodations up to a week prior to the event.

The Speeches: Would you like to share the stage with our featured speaker? Submit a draft of a five-minute speech to Mabel Lee in 3310 Dwinelle by Thursday April 7th. A committee will select the most brilliant and appropriate from among this stellar group. If it’s yours, you give the graduate address to your graduating class. If you intend to submit a draft, please notify Mabel at mabel@berkeley.edu by March 31st.

The Costume: Caps and gowns are optional, but 99% of participants wear the gear. You have three options for your regalia. There are no rental options through the bookstores. There are two custom, higher quality options and one recycled fabric one-time use option. NOTE: Custom orders take 6-8 weeks for processing, so it’s important to place your orders immediately!

1. Students can order custom gowns from a non-campus vendor such as Cap and Gowns for approximately $400. Students often choose to ‘group order’ which can further reduce the costs. Check the website http://capandgowns.com for details.

2. Go to the Cal Student Store to purchase your one time use apparel. The ASUC & the Cal Student Store will hold a “MyGrad” event March 30-April 1, 10am to 4pm, in Lower Sproul where you should be able to view the options. Online cap and gown orders will open on March 30th. The Doctoral Package that includes Tam, Tassel, Gown and Hood is $125.

3. You may purchase a higher quality, custom version the regalia through the Cal student Store beginning March 30th, 2016 and the cost is approximately $925. If you wish to custom order higher quality regalia you must get your order in by April 4th, as they are custom made and will take six-eight weeks to arrive.
Whichever kind of regalia you choose, remember if you wear a cap/tam your tassel goes on the left. And since you presumably already have the BA, you won’t be moving it during the ceremony.

The Gift Hint: You can purchase Invitations or Announcements of Graduation at The Cal Student Store. Contact them and ask about their “Grad Packs” which bundle cap and gown purchase with personalized announcements. You can also order them online through Jostens at: http://college.jostens.com/jostens/?affiliateId=1003200

Diplomas and Other Pieces of Paper: You will receive only a souvenir certificate at graduation. Diplomas will be mailed to your permanent address approximately 4 months after graduation. Make sure you update bearfacts with your future address. If you need proof of graduation before then you can obtain a Certificate of Completion from Graduate Division (in Sproul Hall), though note it may take up to three weeks to process.

Congratulations,

Mabel Lee
Graduate Advisor