Griffon Commencement Traditions – May 2015

**Banners** – Each college is represented by a banner, carried by a Marshall representing the college. Graduates from that college proceed into the ceremony behind their college banner.

**Regalia** – Students wear gowns and a mortarboard with tassel to commencement. The tassel represents the colors of the university from which the student is earning a degree. Bachelor degree-level students begin the commencement ceremony with their tassels on the right, and move it to the left when their degree is conferred.

There is a slightly different gown for those graduating with their Master’s degree. Master’s students are “hooded” as part of the commencement ceremony. The colors on the hood signify the colors of the institution from which the wearer received the degree.

**University Medallion**—The University President wears the University seal on a medallion, as a symbol of his University ranking.

**Honor Stoles**—Students receiving high academic honors of Cum Laude (with honor), Magna Cum Laude (with great honor), and Summa Cum Laude (with highest honor) wear the gold University stole. Congratulations on your academic excellence!

**Honor Cords** – Many University students excel in and outside the classroom, and are proud of their co-curricular experience. Collegiate honor societies may recognize their members for their academic accomplishments with the awarding of academic honor cords. The various colored cords are representative of the many honor societies at Missouri Western State University.

**Diploma Cover** – As graduates’ names are called, they will be presented with the official MWSU diploma cover, featuring two key Missouri Western landmarks: the Glenn E. Marion Memorial Clock Tower and the Griffon Plaza Fountain.

**Commencement Speaker** – Typically, spring commencement features a nominated graduating student to provide the address; a faculty member provides the address at winter commencement. This year during the 100th Anniversary of Missouri Western, honored alums will be the guest speakers. Esther George will speak at the May ceremonies and Obie Austin will speak in December.

**March to Commencement** – Students may participate in a march into the Looney complex, led by a musical escort. Students will walk past the faculty who have helped them achieve their degree, as they take their seats in the fieldhouse arena.

**University Seal/Griffon**- To disrespect the seal means academic failure. Those who have earned their degree have earned the right to step onto the Griffon or the University Seal as they step into their future.

**Griffon for Luck** – It is said that those who ask for the mighty Griffon’s protection will be watched over on their quest for education. When students first come to the Missouri Western Admissions office as prospective students, they are told they can ask the Griffon for his protection by rubbing his head. On commencement, students can leave the university as they came in; with one last ask for protection and luck on their next quest.