72nd Commencement

Class of 2022 Graduates

Friday, May 20, 2022
ACADEMIC PROCESSION

CHIEF MARSHAL AND MACE BEARER
Laura Moore Pruett, Ph.D.
Faculty Senate President and Associate Professor, Music

CROSS BEARER
Allison Gill, Ed.D.
Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students

THE GRADUATES
Led by Rev. Raymond Dlugos, O.S.A., Ph.D.
Vice President for Mission and Ministry

MASTER’S STUDENTS

THE FACULTY

THE DISTINGUISHED ASSEMBLY
Academic Deans
The Honorary Degree Recipients
The Board of Trustees
Vice Provosts
Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost
President

The audience is requested to stand if they are able during the Academic Procession, Invocation and National Anthem, and to remain in place until the Academic Procession leaves at the end of the exercises.
PROGRAM

PRESIDING
Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D., President

PROCESSIONAL
Pomp and Circumstance (Elgar)
Merrimack College Band

OPENING OF THE EXERCISES
Laura Moore Pruett, Ph.D., Faculty Senate
President and Associate Professor, Music

INVOCATION
Alvin M. Chapital, Ill, ’86
Member, Board of Trustees

NATIONAL ANTHEM
Leanne Santerre ’23

WELCOME
Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D., President

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
STUDENT SPEAKER
Isabel Marie Fernandes ’21, M’22

ADDRESS TO GRADUATES
Rev. Raymond Dlugos, O.S.A., Ph.D.,
Vice President for Mission and Ministry

HONORARY DEGREES
Doctor of Education
M. Lee Pelton

Doctor of Business and Commerce
James T. Brett

DEGREES IN COURSE
Presentation for Degrees
John “Sean” Condon, Ph.D., Senior Vice President
of Academic Affairs and Provost

Conferral of Degrees
Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D., President

CLOSING REMARKS
Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D., President

MERRIMACK COLLEGE ANTHEM
Leanne Santerre ’23

BENEDICTION
Rev. Raymond Dlugos, O.S.A., Ph.D.,
Vice President for Mission and Ministry

CLOSING OF THE EXERCISES
Laura Moore Pruett, Ph.D., Faculty Senate
President and Associate Professor, Music

RECESSIONAL
Trumpet Tune, Merrimack College Band
GIRARD SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Alyssa Marie Ardai
Ashley Augulewicz
Molly Elizabeth Aviles
Walter Aviles, Jr.
Emma Gardner Bagin
Erin Catherine Batherwich
Lauren Megan Bender
Christine Nicole Bixby
Sean Black
Leah Catherine Bonin
Cleyon Brown
Peter William Brown
Andrew Thomas Brown
Daniel R Burke
Shane William Cassidy
Alyssa Meghan Chamberlain
Jamie Alexandria Clinton
David Colardeau
Naffie Johnetta Collins
Fabrice Content
Lauren Crepeau
William DeHaven
Kelsabeth Domond
Jake Durflinger
Amy E. Efstratios
Maureen A. Ezzo
Janelle Meris Favuzza
Anthony Ferretti
Courtney Rose Fitzgerald
Marissa Leigh Foti
Katherine Rose Furrier
Maverick Gamble II
Jason W. Golub

Genna Iola Grasso
Michael Donovan Green
Paula Finnegan Green
Tasha Hayden
Hansel Heredia
Shih-Feng Hsu
Megan Sara Jewell
Justin Edward Jones
Carlin Steinmetz Joyal
Timothy William Kalantzakos
Jayne Minigell Kearney
Orla Sinead Kelly
Rachel Ellen Kersey
Philip Hercules Ketrelakes III
Penny C. King
Hannah A. Kloiber-Bravo
Karen A. Korpinnen
Elias Lagesse
Elisabeth Ann Lane
Samuel Lichter
Alexander MacLellan
Catherine Elizabeth Mahanna
Mandi Maloney
Bridgete McAuley
Colby McCay
Connor McDonough
Shannon Justine McHugh
Dylan M Mengel
Jessica Meyers
Maira Irene Montes
Lindsey Monti
Willie Morales
Gillian Rose Murphy
Shannon Elizabeth Murphy
Christopher P. Nagle
Suhani Nandwana
Erica J. Nicholas
James Francis Niosi
Tristen Novak
Magen Caroline O'Connor
Nolan Patrick O'Hara
Emma Nicole Patterson
Bradley E. Perron
Molly Ruth Pfordresher
Marie Guilda Pszenny
Laura Jane Quadros
Amanda Racca
Cameron Richards
Alanis Sadlowski
Ara Richard Sarajian
Laura Coger-Savio
Karen A. Serafino
Mike Simari
Henry B. Steers
Numan Suleman
Nicole Switalska
Elilia Teixeira
Isabella Tersoni
Leah V. Terzian
Kristin Travers
Katherine Elizabeth Nessen
Lauren Rose Witzgall
Sanjay Yeleswaram
Mirang Yoon
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Kristina Lynne Albano-Amabile
Joseph Dennis Amundson
Zachary Andrade
Ann Marie J. Arcidi
Emily Kala Arguello
Brian C. Armstrong
Mallory Elizabeth Armstrong
Kelly Arsenault
Sean Anthony Atkinson
Richard D. Austin Jr.
Meryl Motourayo Bantefa
Ethan Kirk Bare
Cassandra A. Brussard
Isabella Burrola
Erin Butrynk
Isabel Callen
Kaitlin Carson
Skolle S. Charles
Devon Choi
Lorenzo Colbert Jr.
Chiara E. Corazzini
Krysta Cruz
Bailey Sebastian Curcio
Joseph R. Curit
Ian Curtin
Laura Elizabeth de Rosales
Lauri Tebbetts De Witt
Ashley Marie Desko
Alyssa Rae Drouin
Conner Erickson
Peter Salvatore Ferretti
Janyl Ann Finnerty
David J. Ford
Nicole Ann Frontiero
Benjamin Fry
Bianca Rose Gallotto
Ian Angus Ganley
Sydney Ellen Garrabrant
Corey Elizabeth Giarrusso
Ashlyn Gonzales
Bryan Guetens
Carl F. Hampe V
Natasha J. Hawkins
R. Kyle Hazekamp
Ashley Hernandez
Emily Ann Hoar
Alexandria Fall Itasaka
Kathy Jaracz
Mikita Karasik
Lawrence Joseph Keating Jr.
Hannah Elizabeth Keller
Mayson Rose Kimball
Kelcy Lamphere
Dominika Laskova
Arnold Lee
Kristina MacLure
Samuel Adam MacNicoll
Michael Joseph Magner Jr
Timary Malley
Kimberly Anne Mankus
Jarrod Martin
Lauren Rose Martuscello
Megan M. Mattox
Courtney Marie Maud
Paige Elizabeth McCormick
Maria Theresa McHugh
Andrew McLaughlin
Andrea Alicia Melgarejo
Rivero
Sophia Mellen
Lisa Michelle Mendez
Elise Catherine Murphy
Natasha LaNae Nichols
Mirko Nufi
Timothy Edward O'Connor Jr.
Samantha Ann O'Hearn
Nicholas Constantine
Parianos
Sydney Jordan Pignone
Stephanie Lynn Pirger
Joseph Patrick Qualter
Mateus Ribeiro
Katelyn Charlotte
Richardson-Miller
Aimee Renée Rivard
Juliette Rodriguez
Daniel J. Rosen
Serena Marie Rousseau
Jimmy Hout Saab
Allyson I. Sauter
William A. Schoolcraft
Noah Sellers
Torin Pierce Shanahan
Olivia Marie Shapiro
Angela Cristina Skarpelis
Kyle Edward Smith
Donna John Sniffen
Mary Holly Spierto
Katharine M. Stasalovich
Caleb Robert Stott
Nicole M. Sullivan
Evelyn R. Sylla
Jessica Tarbox
Danielle Angela Torossi
Shannon Tucker
Hope Lily Tula
Ryder Oakman Valinski
Kendal Louise Vaughan
Danny Wang
Ariana Marie Wentworth
Austin Whaley
Meaghan Marie Wile
Stephanie Rose Wilson
Shai Elizabeth Woodman
Trevor G. Woodman
Vincenzo Zappulla
Christopher Zodda
CONTINUED

MASTER'S DEGREES IN COURSE

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Lisa Allen
Stephen Almeida
Kendra Anne Augusta
Ashley Auguste
Christian A. Baldino
Rachel Erin Barnard
Susan Frances Breton
Cara Jeanne Cahill
Jill A. Chisholm
Janet Doris Clarke
Michael Calareso Conrad
Alyssa Corrado
Sheila M. Corsaro
Samantha Leigh Davis
Karina DeAndrade
Dominique Marlina DelBene
Tess Ann Dunham
James Michael Ennis
Sabella Maria Fabiano
Claire Marie Foley
Kathryn Laura Forina
Kristy Forrest
Adriana Barbosa de Melo Goncalves
Tessa M. Gonsalves
Joshua Goulet
Lara Guvelioglu
Trinh Nguyen Ho
Carolyn Patricia Hughes
Allison Jenkins
Sara Elisabeth Jeowski
Lantz William Kilburn
Tumo Amogelang Koontse
Margaret Cecelia Larouche
Joseph Thomas LeBlanc
Geena Marie Levine
Nico Limone
Ashley LoPresti
Devyn Marie Mangrum
Maria Alejandra Martinez Amador
Meagan Charlotte McDonough
Colleen Nicole Mearon
MacKenzie J. Miller
Stephanie Rose Modrak
Paul Nason
Maxwell Newton
Adam R Nicholson
Jordan Anthony
Normandia
Patricia Oduah
Nicholas E. Paolino
Kaila Lynne Philbrook
Robert Picardi
Connor Rafael Powell
Samantha Michelle Puleo
Joshly Ramos Rodriguez
David Andrew Robertson
Meghan Julia Sampson
Gabrielle Ariana Scheff
Rebecca Scott
Rachel Carrie Scribner
James Stanford
Lisbeth Valdez Maldonado
MaryJane Wheeler
Emily Nicole Wise
Aaron Wolfe

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Temiloluwa Ajulo
Joseph Almeida
Lordinia Ewurafua Anderson
Avnish A. Bhatt
Ashton Joseph Bourbonnais
Michael Burczynski
Griffin Joseph Burkey
Amy Byrnes
John Sergey Campbell
Diana Castro
Ryan James Connolly
Brian J. Cullinan
Basiel Demessie
Bhagyashree Anil Dere
Kyle Roy Durand
Hisham Elhassan
Helen Eng
Owen Richard Evans
Jake Foley
Logan Alexander Halladay
Steven Jandric
Justine Jesse
Mohammed Faiz Khan
Amie T. Lemay
Shannon Leigh Long
Melissa Patricia Lovato Bisgrove
Khang Dinh Lu
Pedro Alejandro Martinez Lopez
Thomas Emmett McCarthy
Morgan Murray
Asjah Nero
Khanh Ngoc Nguyen
Enrique A. Ortiz
Brianna Nichole Pekala
Jennifer Pereira Badji
Matthew David Purvis
Elaini Sahtouris
Rapkat Shakir
Christina Shoushani
Salahuddin Sal Siddiq
Carlos Jorge Silva Spinola
Alex Thelusma
Jacob Matthew Thibault
Michael Joseph Thompson
Cameron Edward Viola
Bryan Waruhiu
Riley Elizabeth Williams
Maria Ann Louise Zonfrillo
WINSTON SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY

Kara Lynne Abate
Hana Abualragheb
Lillie Acoff
Patrick Michael Adams
Kanyinsola Adedeji
Jack Pasquale Alberici
Alice Albuja
Maegan Monaghan Allen
Marie Alvernaz
Katelyn Anderson
Colleen Andrews
Benares Narayana Angeley
Tess McCann Anketell
Cameron Richard
Applegate
Ketene S. Arante
Emily Archibald
Taylor M. Arcuri
Alexa Arsenault
Jessica Arsenault
Ugo Nina Igwe
Kristen Allyn Ascii
Shawna Auger
Olivia Avery
Olivia Victoria Bachry
Dominique A. Bailey
Caileigh Baker
Bruno Barbuto
Michael Barresi
Megan Bartleman
Colin Batchelder
Stephanie Bazinet
Summer Alice Beals
Quinn Beattie
Brandon Beaudry
Caitlyn Michelle Bellezza
Mikayla Benoit
Lindsey Xiao Hui Berke
Evelyn Rose Bernard
Meaghan E. Bertini
Laura Bishop
Michael Joseph Blando Jr.
Elena Evanthia Btatus
Nicole Elizabeth Bockus

Ashley Marie Botelho
Ryan Michael Botto
Sarah Kimberley Boutotte
Justin Anders Bowen
Anna Boyle
Elizabeth Mary Boyle
Marie A. Brenker
Allison Brooks
Kristen M. Buccelli
Sarah Buckley
Bridget Burns
Kathleen Mulgrew Burns
Kelly Winifred Byrne
Olivia Maria Cabrera
Mark C. Cafarelli
Alexander Matthias Caissie
Christie Elizabeth Caliendo
Erin Callagy
Emily Calos
Lauren Rebecca Campbell
Paige Julia Campbell
Lauren Marie Capasso
Andrew Card
Eileen Ahearn Cardoso
Charolette Marie Caron
Gabrielle Ruth Carpenter
Ralph Anthony Carrieri Jr.
Mikayla Ann Cassidy
Kathleen Ann Cavanaugh
Ashley Cavicchi
Amanda Chamberlain
Lilian Joy Chang
Kaila Marie Chanthaboun
Kaitlyn Lee Chao
Caitlin Elizabeth Charette
Jeong Woo Choe
Krista Martha Chouinard
Alyssa Cicconi
Carlos Arturo Cid
Erin D. Claflin
Heather L. Clark
Paige Madison Clark
Kyra Elizabeth Clinton
Kalyn Alecia Cochran

Gabrielle O. Coe
Lauren Cohen
Ashley Angelina Colarusso
Kimberly Cole
Ellen Elizabeth Kelly
Contin
Katherine Cooney
Patricia Ann Cooney
Emelia Rose Cooper
Jillian R. Cooper
Kristina Lynne Copelas
Jennifer Cordes
Eben Robblee Cottrelle
Chantal Marie Couture
Catherine Eliese Creane
Gina Creedon
Sarelle Elizabeth Creesy
Nicole Alyse Cronin
Thomas C. Crowley
Julia Crugnale
Gabriella Cuddy
Meredith Rafferty Curtin
Ryan Cutillo
Carl Robert Cyr
Kyra Lane D’Entremont
Lauren D’Intino
Taylor Jordan D’Urso
Ally Catherine DaCosta
Alison Marie Daigle
Kelsey Susan Daly
Aaron Dame
Erika Martha Damiani
Kamila Dealey
Francesca M. DeCaro
Brooke Gail Delahunty
Charlotte Elizabeth Delasin
Rachel Arleen Deloia
Roby Ambrose Deschenes
Shyann S. DiGiovanni
Thomas Clayton
DiPasquale
Juliana Bella DiRamio
Norway Olivia Dolan
Nicole Ann Douglass
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<td>Andrew Lindsey</td>
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<td>Hayden</td>
<td>Elena Jane Lizotte</td>
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<td>Tracie Lord</td>
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<td>Hayward</td>
<td>Daniel James Lordan</td>
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<td>Kimberley Heghinian</td>
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<td>Amanda L Lurvey</td>
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<td>Sophie Hoag</td>
<td>Amanda Lynn Mainville</td>
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<td>Carmen Hogan</td>
<td>Heather Marie Malone</td>
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<td>Katherine M. Holmes</td>
<td>Justin Jude Maloney</td>
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<td>Madison Maniatis</td>
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Rebecca Lynn Martin
Colby Lynn Massa
Derek Michael Matthews
Allison Melissa Maynard
Cristen McCarthy
Margaret McCarthy
Meghan Elizabeth McCarthy
Reilly McComb
Patrick Mccormick
Megan Elizabeth
McGunigle
Tina McNeil
Kaleigh Marie McNicholas
Julia Mary McNiff
Jessica Leigh Melanson
Norimar Mercado-Machado
Christina Messore
Victoria Elizabeth Mirabito
Stephanie Mixon
Yanira Molina-Gonzalez
Tevin Jordan Monroe
Cesar Moran
Taylor Lorraine Morash
Joseph Morin
Macy L. Morrison
Amanda Kate Moser-Shick
Jillian Elizabeth Moulaison
Fiona Christine Moynihan
Brenna Mullin
Samantha King Mullin
Claire Murphy
Caitlin Murray
Eman Najjar
Brittani Christine Napoli
Madison Napoli
Zacin Nash
Fabiola Nazeire
Devin Neal
Leeann Newcomb
Emily Arline Nichols
Sarah Noone
Kaela Darby Noyes
Julia Ann Marie O'Brien
Katherine O'Brien
Kristen O'Connor
Shawna Cecile O'Leary
Matthew O'Sullivan
Suzanna Oliveira
Amanda Olsavsky
Anna Olson
Casey Ondrus
Tylan J. Onorato
Julielys Ortiz-Leger
Courtney Otero
Margaux Irene Pace
Giuseppe Palladino Jr.
Isabella Anne Palmeira
Jacob Davidson Palmer
Natalie Ann Paquin
Eleanor Grace Parravano
Kristal L. Pastore
Drew Arthur Patrick
Tianna Pellerin
Veronica Alexis Peña
Dylan Perry
Katarina Picano
Kendall M. Pieri
Sara R. Pimental
Heath Lawrence Pitt, Jr.
Samantha Elizabeth Pitzi
Samantha Ann Plumley
Andrew Poland
Alexa Elizabeth Popp
Abby Ellen Pratt
Tara Elizabeth Price
Marissa N. Puccio
Cameron Pugliese
Austin Pyne
Mia Nicole Quirini
Emma Lloyd Randazza
Chaya Natasha Rangaraj
Mackenzie Reardon
Shelalyn Marie Redmond
Caileigh Jane Reming
Christopher Reusch
Alexandra Reynolds
Anna Fortunato Rhodes
Joseph Ricci
Meaghan Rickard
Katherine Riffle
Emma Louise Roca
Allison Rodenbush
Tara Rodrigues
Alexis Rodriguez
Kathleen Rosa Romano
Olivia Paola Rosa
Zinha Rosa-Andrade
Dina Maria Roumeliotis
Ashley Royer
Amanda Nicole Rudereman
Mary Rose Elias Saad
Elizabeth Saltus
Natalie Elizabeth San
Martin
Salina Catherine Santone
Alexa Savvas
Caroline Rose Scannell
Joshua Schimeister
Erika Rose Scott
Amanda Leigh Semler
Noor Shams
Julia Shangraw
Caitlin Shea
Corey Mark Shepherd
Andrea Sherbakov
Elizabeth Simic
Anina Theroux Sinclair
Emily M. Small
Cameron J. Smith
Darla Lynn Snyder-Rilling
Michelle Soel
Bridget Elizabeth
Soraghan
Elisabeth Sorens
Katherine Clara Sorens
Elizabeth Corey Sousa
Perocchi
Samantha Jean Souza
Christine Ann Spinale
Hannah Marjorie Springer
David Stack
Emma Irene Stalker
Jessica Stanton
Shannon Stewart
Samantha N. Stilian
Karthika Streb
Brooke Colleen Sturtevant
Katherine Sullivan
CONTINUED

MASTER’S DEGREES IN COURSE

Alex Surro
Allison Taylor
Meaghan Elizabeth Teehan
Sadie Elizabeth Terramare
Kathryn Vittoria Elizabeth Terranova
Alyson Rose Testa
Christina Esther Theodore
Krystle Thomaszewski
Brendel Tine
Autumn Truesdale
Bethany Tsiaras
Alexander Joseph Turanski
Cassidy B. Tyros
Paul Steven Valley
Alexa Winifred van der Burg
Taylor Vanaria
Alicia Varraso
Ashley Veloz
Carolyne Ventricelli
Michaela Verrette
Rachael E. Vokey
Martha Vosnak
Tabatha R Walker
Craig Edward Weatherbee
Lindsay A. Weatherbee
Brian Weiner
Caitlin West
Michelle Susan White
Nathaniel Stefan Wiech
Kasey Marie Williams
Kelley Williams
Molly Katherine Wilmot
Olivia Wise
Emily Rae Wood
Brent Thomas Wright
Prisca Yangambi
Laura Maria Yepes
Patti-Ann Young
Rachel Elana Zabar
Joseph Van Zannoni Jr
Jessica F. Zeyger
HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENTS

M. Lee Pelton

After decades in higher education, Lee Pelton in 2021 took the reins as president and CEO of the Boston Foundation, one of the nation’s leading philanthropic organizations. He oversees one of the oldest community foundations in the country. Since its founding in 1915, the Boston Foundation has given more than $2 billion in grants.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pelton announced “Our New Pathway,” a strategy for the foundation that, among other key areas, will aim to repair the harm caused by systemic and structural economic, social, gender and racial disparities, close racial wealth gaps and establish programs that contribute to an equitable and just society for marginalized communities.

Prior to The Boston Foundation, Pelton served as president of Emerson College from 2011 to 2021. He was inducted by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce into its Academy of Distinguished Bostonians, received the Governor’s Award from MassHumanities in 2020 and the Robert Coard Distinguished Leadership Medal in 2021.

James T. Brett

James T. Brett has led The New England Council, a non-partisan alliance of businesses, academic and health institutions, and public and private organizations to promote economic growth and a high quality of life in the New England region, since 1996.

Under his leadership, the Council has made successful impacts on federal policy including energy, financial services, healthcare, education and workforce development.

Brett is also a lifelong advocate for people with disabilities. He has served on the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities for three of the past four administrations, and is vice chair of the National Council on Disability.
DIPLOMA TRANSLATION

The translation of the Merrimack College diploma from Latin to English is as follows:

Merrimack College

To all reading this document

Greetings in the Lord

The President, Faculty and Trustees of Merrimack College

by virtue of properly completing required studies on the recommendation of the faculty

and by the authority vested in us

by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts confer on

name of student

the degree of

name of degree

and grant freely all rights, privileges and honors pertaining to that degree.

In witness thereof we place the seal of the College.

Given in North Andover in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

date of degree
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ABOUT MERRIMACK COLLEGE

One of only two Catholic Augustinian colleges in the U.S., Merrimack College is a coeducational institution with approximately 5,500 undergraduate, continuing education and graduate students from 34 states and 36 countries, comprising schools of liberal arts, science and engineering, health sciences, education and social policy, and business.

The College's 220-acre campus is approximately 25 miles north of Boston in North Andover and Andover, Massachusetts. Merrimack is a Master's Colleges & Universities/Medium Programs institution in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION IS TO ENLIGHTEN MINDS, ENGAGE HEARTS, AND EMPOWER LIVES.

Inspired by the Catholic faith and the Augustinian tradition of seeking truth through inquiry and dialogue, our vision is to:

• Prepare students to adapt creatively to tomorrow's realities through excellence in the liberal arts, sciences, and the professions;
• Build a community of scholars welcoming and respecting a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, and perspectives;
• Cultivate the intellectual, moral, spiritual, physical, and personal awareness needed to make wise choices for life, career, and service;
• Encourage and support scholarly work that contributes to the wisdom on which society bases its decisions;
• Engage other educational institutions, industry, and agencies of social change in collaborative efforts fostering a just, peaceful, and sustainable world.
THE SEAL OF MERRIMACK COLLEGE

Drawing on our rich history, the modern shield of Merrimack College reinterprets elements from the original 1947 college seal.

The shield includes four quadrants:

• The book with the words “Tolle Lege” (“take up and read”), the famous words connected with the conversion of Saint Augustine to Catholicism, proclaiming the College’s founding by the Order of Saint Augustine.

• Wavy pallets, to represent the “swift water” of the Merrimack Valley’s original Native Americans.

• The cross fleurette, from the coat of arms of the Archdiocese of Boston, in which Merrimack College is located. The cross fleurette refers to the French ancestry of Bishop Cheverus, the first Bishop of Boston (1810–1823).

• The symbolism of our colors: blue for loyalty (and the cold, rippling waters of the Merrimack River) and gold for wisdom (also the color of the papacy).
THE CEREMONIAL MACE

The mace carried in academic processions derives from medieval times in England when an official was taking office. At that time, the mace was a formidable weapon and was held ready by the mace bearer to protect the dignitary. From the sixteenth century in England and since colonial days in the United States, the mace has become a symbol of academic office and is carried by a distinguished member of the faculty.

The Merrimack College mace has a young history. It was fashioned for the 1986 Commencement by Cistercian Monks of the Holy Rood Guild at Saint Joseph’s Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts. The monks are renowned craftsmen and designers of ecclesiastical vesture.

The Merrimack College mace is thirty-six inches long and is made of black walnut. The front of the mace carries the College’s hand-painted, gold-leafed seal. From the intricate coat of arms of the Order of Saint Augustine, the back of the mace is hand carved with an open book symbolizing the conversion of Augustine. On the left hand side of the book is a tongue of flame above a heart pierced with “the burning love of God.” An elegantly simple cross adorns the top of the mace.

Since 1986, the Merrimack College mace has been carried by the Chief Marshal at Commencement.

THE CEREMONIAL CROSS

The processional cross is expressive of the Augustinian longing for unity of our minds and hearts in God. It was designed by the Augustinian Contemplative Nuns at the Monastery of Our Holy Savior in Leccetto, Tuscany, Italy. Small replicas of this cross are given to Merrimack students engaged in service to others through Service Learning and the Alternative Break Programs as well as to those who participate in MORE, the Pellegrinaggio en Italia, and other programs that foster self-awareness and spiritual growth.
The origins of academic dress lie in fourteenth century England. The buildings frequented by medieval scholars were often cold and damp; long gowns (particularly with hoods to protect tonsured heads) may have been worn more for warmth than fashion.

The distinctive gown set the student apart from their fellow citizens. As late as the Civil War, students at American universities wore caps and gowns daily while in residence. Whatever the origin, academic regalia grew in diversity and splendor, with scholars displaying distinctive costume for different occasions and achievements. The result was a bewildering variety of designs.

An intercollegiate commission met at Columbia University in 1894 to establish a standard academic costume code, and over the years it has been revised by an official committee of the American Council on Education. The committee’s prescriptions, while regulating, still allow for great pageantry at formal academic events.

From the cap, gown, and hood, it is possible to distinguish the institution from which the wearer was graduated, the field of learning in which the degree was earned, and the level of the degree—bachelor, master, or doctoral.

The distinguishing feature of the black mortarboard cap, standard at most colleges and universities in the United States, is the color of the tassel—black for the holder of a bachelor’s or master’s degree, gold for a doctor’s degree or the governing officers of educational institutions.

The gown is normally black, and the gown’s cut and trim indicate the level of the degree held. The bachelor’s has long, pointed sleeves, while the master’s has oblong sleeves, open at the wrist, with the front part cut in an arc. The doctor’s sleeves are bell-shaped, with three bars of velvet, and the gown is trimmed with velvet down the front as well. The hood tells the most about its wearer. The length of the hood and width of the binding vary according to degree. The hood is lined with the official colors of the college. The color of the hood’s binding indicates the area of study in which the degree was granted. Students also wear other regalia, including cords signifying academic honors and stoles representing countries they studied in during their academic career.

At formal academic occasions, the President of Merrimack College also wears the Presidential Medal which incorporates the College seal.
Words and music by Scott Ness, O.S.A., Michael J. Rossi, and Joseph Farrell, O.S.A.