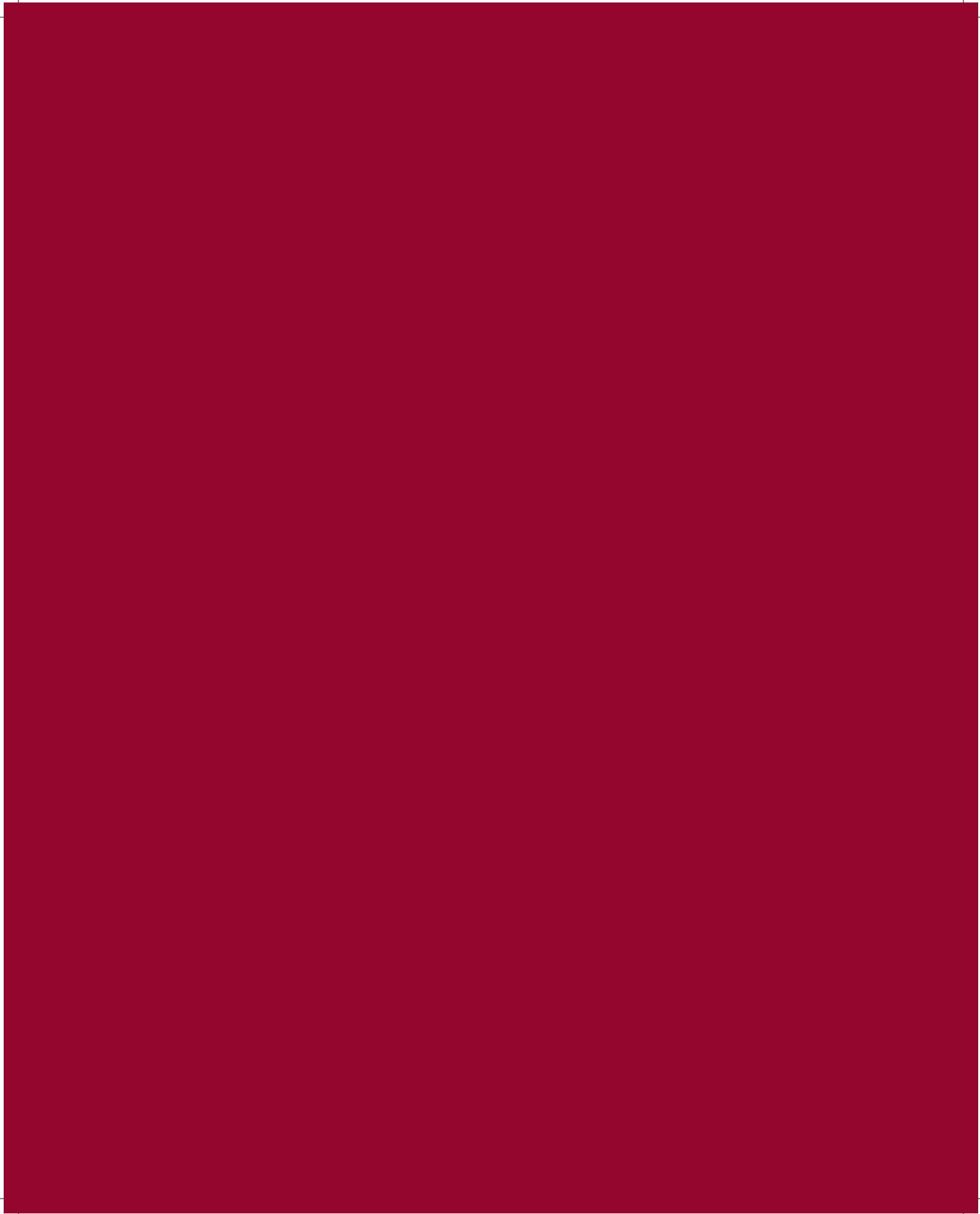




University of South Carolina



Alma Mater

“WE HAIL THEE, CAROLINA”

(Tune: Flow Gently, Sweet Afton)

We hail thee, Carolina, and sing thy high praise;
With loyal devotion, rememb'ring the days,
When proudly we sought thee, thy children to be;
Here's a health, Carolina, forever to thee!

G.A. Wauchope



University of South Carolina

Commencement Exercises
Conferring of Doctoral Degrees

May 7, 2026

Koger Center for the Arts

Today's Ceremony

Welcome to the University of South Carolina on this day of special recognition of our doctoral candidates for graduation. We hope you will find this ceremony — a culmination of the efforts of faculty, administration, our students, and their families — both meaningful and impressive.

While awaiting the start of the ceremony, you may wish to read the historical note on South Carolina's oldest university on the following pages. Founded on December 19, 1801, to promote state unity following the American Revolution, South Carolina College endured a complex history to become the University of South Carolina for good in 1906. This fall, we will commemorate 225 years of resilience, spirit and success, celebrating our continued leadership as the University FOR South Carolina and our enduring community, including each new graduate presented today. There follows a brief description of the Carolina Mace, symbol of the university's immortal dignity and of the combined endeavors of the university community, as well as a detailed description of the academic costumes worn by members of the processions and our candidates for graduation.

The exercises will begin with a series of academic processions. They are headed by the university mace, followed by doctoral candidates and faculty escorts, representatives of the university faculties, deans, members of the university Board of Trustees and distinguished guests, and the university president.

When the president closes the ceremony following the awarding of all degrees, the audience is asked to rise for the singing of the Alma Mater, after which the platform party will recess. The words of the song were penned by Professor George Wauchope of the English Department in 1911 and were adopted in 1912. The tune is that of "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton." "Here's a health, Carolina!" is a phrase which is repeated in Carolina's Alma Mater. Over the years, the custom has arisen of raising the right hand, with the fingers cupped, when the phrase "Here's a health, Carolina!" occurs, as if offering a toast. The Alma Mater is always sung with heads uncovered.

Following the conclusion of the ceremony a reception for doctoral candidates, their guests, and the faculty will be held in the lobby.

Once again, welcome to the Spring 2026 Doctoral Commencement Exercises of the University of South Carolina.

Order of Exercises

PRESIDING

Dr. Michael D. Amiridis
President

PRELUDE

University of South Carolina Faculty Brass Quintet

PROCESSIONS

The University Mace
The Doctoral Candidates and Faculty Escorts
The University Faculty
The University Deans
The University Board of Trustees
The President

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Ms. Laura Kay Hutchins
Master's Degree Candidate in Music Performance, School of Music

INVOCATION

Ms. Rachel Walton
Baptist Collegiate Ministry

OPENING REMARKS

The President

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

Dr. Lara Lomicka Anderson
*Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Interim Vice Provost for Graduate Education,
& Dean of the Graduate School*

REMARKS

Dr. Julie Hubbert

LaDare Robinson Memorial Professor of Music, School of Music

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

Dr. Mary Anne Fitzpatrick

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

The President

HOODING AND RECOGNITION OF CANDIDATES

Dr. Anderson

and

The Major Professor Escorting Each Candidate

Music by University of South Carolina Graduate String Quartet

CLOSING REMARKS

The President

ALMA MATER

Ms. Christine Powell-Thomas

Master's Degree Candidate in Music Performance, School of Music

RECESSIONAL

University of South Carolina Faculty Brass Quintet

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The university is governed on behalf of the people of South Carolina by a Board of Trustees. Sixteen trustees are elected by the General Assembly, one from each judicial circuit. There are three ex officio members, including the governor of South Carolina or a designee, the state superintendent of education

and the president of the University of South Carolina Alumni Association. There is also one at-large gubernatorial appointee. The president of the Student Government and the chair of the Faculty Senate serve as nonvoting members of the board.

The current composition of the board is as follows:

Henry D. McMaster
Governor of South Carolina
ex officio Chair

W. Michael Bond
USC Alumni Association

Henry L. Jolly Jr., D.M.D.
7th Judicial Circuit

J. Strom Thurmond Jr.
2nd Judicial Circuit

Thad H. Westbrook
11th Judicial Circuit
Chair

Richard M. Bonnoitt
4th Judicial Circuit

Richard A. Jones Jr.
Gubernatorial Appointee

John C. von Lehe Jr.
9th Judicial Circuit

Rose Buyck Newton
14th Judicial Circuit
Vice Chair

Coleman Floyd Buckhouse, M.D.
12th Judicial Circuit

Hubert F. Mobley
6th Judicial Circuit

Ellen E. Weaver
Superintendent of Education

C. Dorn Smith III, M.D.
3rd Judicial Circuit
Chair Emeritus

Alex English
5th Judicial Circuit

Leah B. Moody
16th Judicial Circuit

Charles H. Williams II
1st Judicial Circuit

C. Dan Adams
Gubernatorial Designee

F. Schipman Johnston
15th Judicial Circuit

Reid T. Sherard
13th Judicial Circuit

Stacey Bradley
Interim Secretary

Liam Hein
Faculty Senate Chair

Cole Rotondo
Student Body President

COMMITTEE ON COMMENCEMENT

Elaine Belesky
Pamela Bowman
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Ashley Dantzler
Curt Derrick
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Valerie Gerfin
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Courtney Buzan and Dana Woodward, *Co-Chairs*

Eric Grabski Sr.
Cary Graham
Liam Hein
Doug Helms
Marissa James
Sidney Kenyon
Karen Magradey
Aaron Marterer

Kimberley Massey
Dale Moore
Diane Parham
Garrick Queen
Kirk Randazzo
Cole Rotondo
Joe Sasso
Megan Seiner

Alec Shettle
Elizabeth Suddeth
Marie Spell
CJ Tamasco
Nate Terracio
J. Rex Tolliver
Brett Williams
Eric Williams
Kamirah Williams

ANNOUNCER

Brett Williams
*Department of Student Life
Division of Student Affairs*

MUSICIANS

USC Faculty Brass Quintet
Prelude and Recessional

USC Graduate String Quartet
Hooding Ceremony Accompaniment

USC Jazz Strings
Reception Accompaniment

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA UNIVERSITY OFFICERS

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Caroline Agardy, M.P.A., *Vice President for Human Resources*
John Bible Jr., M.B.A., *Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer*
Walter P. Collins III, Ph.D., *Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs & Associate Provost, USC Palmetto College*
Stephen J. Cutler, Ph.D., *Vice President for Economic Development*
Michelle Dodenhoff, M.A., *Vice President for Development*
Jeremiah Donati, J.D., *Director of Athletics*
Anna Edwards, Ph.D., *Chief of Staff*
Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., *Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost*
Tiffany Foxworth, B.A., P.M.P., *Interim Vice President for Marketing*
Julius Fridriksson, Ph.D., *Vice President for Research*
Bennie L. Harris, Ph.D., *Chancellor, USC Upstate*
Daniel J. Heimmermann, Ph.D., *Chancellor, USC Aiken*
Al M. Panu, Ph.D., *Chancellor, USC Beaufort*
Walter H. Parham, J.D., *General Counsel and Executive Director of Compliance Programs*
J. Rex Tolliver, J.D., *Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support*
Scott Verzyl, Ph.D., *Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Undergraduate Admissions*
Edward L. Walton, B.A., *Executive Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer*
Julian R. Williams, J.D., *Vice President for System Affairs and Community Engagement*
Craig Wilson, Ph.D., J.D., *Chancellor, Palmetto College*

UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC OFFICIALS

Lara Lomicka Anderson, Ph.D., *Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies, and The Graduate School*
Jeannette O. Andrews, Ph.D., *Dean, College of Nursing*
David Banush, M.L.I.S., *Dean, University Libraries*
Angela C. Baum, Ph.D., *Interim Dean, College of Education*
Teri Browne, Ph.D., *Dean, College of Social Work*
Courtney Catledge, D.N.P., *Palmetto College Campus Dean, USC Lancaster*
April R. Cone, D.N.P., *Palmetto College Campus Dean, USC Salkehatchie*
M. Ron Cox Jr., Ph.D., *Executive Director of Palmetto Programs*
Stephen J. Cutler, Ph.D., *Dean, College of Pharmacy*
Hossein Haj-Hariri, Ph.D., *Dean, Molinaroli College of Engineering and Computing*
C. Tayloe Harding Jr., D.Mus., *Dean, School of Music*
Gerald Harmon, M.D., *Interim Dean, School of Medicine Columbia*
Thomas E. Hodges, Ph.D., *Interim Dean, McCausland College of Arts and Sciences*
William C. Hubbard, J.D., *Dean, Joseph F. Rice School of Law*
Randy Lowell, Ph.D., *Palmetto College Campus Dean, USC Union*
Steven Lynn, Ph.D., *Dean, South Carolina Honors College*
Phyllis MacGilvray, M.D., *Dean, School of Medicine Greenville*
Shannon Means, M.P.A., *Vice Provost for Academic Administration*
Jennifer Ng, Ph.D., *Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Dean of the Faculty*
Gregory R. Niehaus, Ph.D., *Interim Dean, Darla Moore School of Business*
Tom Reichert, Ph.D., *Dean, College of Information and Communications*
Eric Reisenauer, Ph.D., *Palmetto College Campus Dean, USC Sumter*
Tara Sabo-Attwood, Ph.D., *Dean, Arnold School of Public Health*
Michael Sagas, Ed.D., *Dean, College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management*
Samuel Y. Todd, Ph.D., *Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Global Affairs*

CAROLINA — A HISTORICAL NOTE

“FAITHFUL INDEX TO THE AMBITIONS AND FORTUNES OF THE STATE”

The Palmetto State established South Carolina College on December 19, 1801, as part of an effort to unite South Carolinians in the wake of the American Revolution, promoting “the good order and harmony” of the state. The founding of South Carolina’s state college was also part of the Southern public college movement spurred by Thomas Jefferson. Within 20 years of one another, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia established state-supported colleges.

In the antebellum era, the Palmetto State generously supported South Carolina College. Its faculty included noted European scholars, such as Francis Lieber and Thomas Cooper, as well as renowned American scholars John and Joseph LeConte. Offering a classical curriculum, South Carolina College became one of the South’s most influential colleges, earning a reputation as the training ground for South Carolina’s antebellum elite.

South Carolina’s secession from the Union unleashed the devastation of the American Civil War, and the state and South Carolina College paid dearly. The institution closed for want of students, and in the ensuing decades, it struggled to regain its former status.

As Reconstruction from the Civil War proceeded, the state’s General Assembly chose the first African Americans to serve on the university’s Board of Trustees in 1868, and in 1873 the first Black students enrolled. While politically controversial, this development was an extraordinary opportunity at a time when opportunities for higher education were rare. The University of South Carolina became the only Southern state university to admit and grant degrees to African American students during the Reconstruction era.

Following the end of Reconstruction in 1877, South Carolina’s conservative leaders closed the university. They reopened it in 1880 as an all-white agricultural college, and during the next 25 years, the institution became enmeshed in the state’s political upheaval. South Carolina went through several reorganizations in which the curriculum changed and its status shifted from college to university and back again. The university also struggled to adjust to the arrival of intercollegiate athletics in 1892 and the admission of white women in 1894.

In 1906, the institution was rechartered for the final time as the University of South Carolina. In 1917, it became South Carolina’s first state-supported college or university to earn regional accreditation, and the 1920s brought the introduction of new colleges and degree programs, including the doctorate.

The Great Depression temporarily stalled progress, but the outbreak of World War II launched an era that transformed the university. South Carolina hosted

naval training programs during the war, and enrollment more than doubled in the postwar era as veterans took advantage of the G.I. Bill. In the 1950s, the university began recruiting national-caliber faculty members and expanded its footprint with the establishment of campuses across South Carolina.

In 1963, the University of South Carolina became desegregated. As the result of a federal court order, Henrie D. Monteith, Robert Anderson and James Solomon became the first Black students to enroll at the university in the 20th century. Minority enrollment would continue to grow in their wake and was complemented by a substantial international student population in subsequent decades.

At the same time, the university was undergoing explosive growth as the baby-boom generation entered college. Enrollment stood at 5,660 in 1960 but nearly quadrupled 20 years later. That increase in the student body was accompanied by the introduction of many new programs, including three that would prove to be momentous.

University 101 became a national model for cultivating freshman-year success; the accompanying National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition is based at the university. The international Master of Business Administration program, also launched in the 1970s, has consistently ranked among the country’s top three such programs. The honors program blossomed into the South Carolina Honors College and is hailed among the nation’s finest.

As the result of concerted efforts to expand its research capabilities, the university in 2006 was designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a research institution of “very high research activity,” the foundation’s highest classification. The university is one of a select number of public universities to receive both the Carnegie Foundation’s top-tier research designation and community engagement designation.

South Carolina’s Bicentennial Campaign helped usher in the 21st century as the university celebrated a 200-year legacy of educating leaders for the state, the nation and the world. In recent years, the University of South Carolina system has launched an online degree-completion program through Palmetto College. Together with the college’s four campuses across the state, the online program offers students greater flexibility to complete coursework and speeds bachelor’s degree completion. These comprehensive programs have helped the university secure its place as a first-choice destination for students seeking the lifelong value of a quality higher education experience.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Graduate School was established in 1906 by an act of the General Assembly. The act transformed the South Carolina College, which had celebrated its centennial in 1905, into the University of South Carolina. During its first century the institution had awarded more than 100 master's degrees and one Ph.D., but graduate study had been highly individualized rather than systematic. The new Graduate School began its work in fall 1906 under the direction of a Graduate Committee chaired by Dr. George Wauchope, the beloved author of the USC Alma Mater. Only the master of arts degree was offered during the next 17 years as enrollments increased and degree requirements were refined.

In 1922 President W. S. Currell resigned to accept the newly created position of Dean of The Graduate School. During the next six years Dean Currell gave The Graduate School the boost it needed. Graduate student head count during the academic year tripled, averaging around 150 in the latter part of the decade; and hundreds of teachers attended the summer schools that began in 1923. Ph.D. programs were established

in English, history, and education. When Dean Currell stepped down and the highly respected English Professor Reed Smith succeeded him in 1929, the future of The Graduate School seemed assured. But in the early 1930s the Great Depression turned back the clock. Enrollments declined, and only 11 Ph.D. degrees were awarded before inadequate funding in 1934 necessitated a moratorium on Ph.D. admissions that lasted for 10 years.

After the Second World War, The Graduate School entered a growth phase that lasted more than four decades. The number of students increased steadily until enrollment leveled off around 10,000. The number of doctoral programs (excluding the purely professional J.D., M.D. and Pharm.D.) grew to 56, and the master's to 156. Degrees awarded annually in the late 1990s and later have averaged around 1,600 master's and 275 doctorates. Much of this growth has taken place in the science departments and the various professional colleges and schools that developed over the years.

ACADEMIC COSTUMES

The academic costumes worn in today's procession and at other formal university occasions trace their origins to those worn by faculty members and students at medieval European universities. With only minor modifications, these costumes have remained largely unchanged since the 16th century. Standards for colleges and universities in the United States were established in 1895 with the adoption of an intercollegiate code that specifies design and color appropriate for various degrees. As in medieval times, the costumes worn on formal academic occasions denote the wearer's academic heritage.

The modern academic costume consists of three parts: the gown or robe, a headpiece and a hood. The gown denotes the wearer's level of education.

The baccalaureate gown is the simplest in design. Usually black, it is distinguished by a wide yoke with shirring in front and back and by open, flowing sleeves that end in a point. The baccalaureate gown is worn closed.

The master's gown is similar to the baccalaureate gown except that it has a closed or glove sleeve that is open at the wrist. The master's gown has no other trim and may be worn either open or closed.

The doctoral gown is full-flowing and has large, bell-shaped sleeves. It is trimmed with velvet panels down the front and has velvet bars on the sleeves. While black is still the predominant color for doctoral gowns, the trim may be in a color that denotes the wearer's discipline, or the color of the gown may denote the wearer's university. The University of South Carolina's doctoral gown is garnet with black velvet panels and bars. The university seal is embroidered on the panels. In today's procession, this gown is worn by the members of the Board of Trustees and university officers, chancellors, deans, faculty members and administrators.

The mortar board is the headpiece most often worn at American universities for formal occasions. It is appropriately worn with the board flat on the top of the head and with the tassel falling from the left quarter of the board. Tassel colors denote the field or discipline in which the wearer's degree was earned. Doctoral tassels are often gold. The soft velvet Tudor cap is also worn by many who hold the doctorate.

While the gown and headpiece denote the wearer's level of education, it is the hood that adds meaning and dimension to the academic costume. Changed little since medieval times, the hood is worn falling from the shoulders, down the back of the gown in a display of vivid color. It is edged in velvet, which by its color denotes the field or discipline in which the wearer's degree was earned, and it is lined in two colors of silk that represent the college or university from which the degree was earned. Hence, the University of South Carolina hood is lined in garnet and black and edged with the appropriate discipline color.

The USC president's ceremonial gown is black with four garnet velvet bars on the sleeves and garnet velvet panels down the front, all trimmed with antique-gold cording. The university seal is embroidered on the panels. Presidents are the only academics entitled to wear the fourth bar on their sleeves. The president's regalia is completed by a black velvet doctoral tam with an antique-gold tassel. The ceremonial hood is edged in garnet velvet and lined with garnet-and-black silk, representative of the University of South Carolina.

A partial listing from the Intercollegiate Code for colors signifying disciplines follows:

Arts, Letters, Humanities: white
Accountancy, Business, Commerce: drab
Education: light blue
Engineering: orange
Fine Arts: brown
Journalism: crimson
Law: purple
Library Science: lemon
Medicine: green
Music: pink
Nursing: apricot
Pharmacy: olive green
Philosophy: dark blue
Physical Education: sage green
Physical Therapy: teal
Public Health: salmon pink
Public Service: peacock blue
Science: golden yellow
Social Science: cream
Social Work: citron

THE UNIVERSITY MACE AND PRESIDENT'S MEDALLION

The University Mace was designed and fashioned by Leslie Durbin, distinguished silversmith of London, England. Academic maces are historically regarded as manifestations of the "immortal dignity" of universities and thus represent the past, present and future. Officially adopted in 1967, the mace was presented to the university as a memorial to Susan Richardson Guignard by an alumnus, Dr. George Curry.

The brilliantly gleaming silver-and-gilt mace is nearly four feet long. Mounted on the head are the seal of the university, the seal of the State of South Carolina and the Great Seal of the United States. From the middle of these arises a stylistic representation of the State Tree, the palmetto, the fronds of which are formed by a group of 13 stars representing the founding colonies, which include South Carolina. The shaft is decorated with eight stars, reminding us that South Carolina was the eighth state to enter the Union.

The University Mace is carried in procession on occasions of outstanding importance, such as commencements, convocations and formal dedications. The placement of the mace on its stand signals that the proceedings are about to come to order; its retirement indicates the conclusion of the exercises. The mace is carried in procession by the president of Student Government and escorted by the university chaplain and representatives of the faculty, emeriti, alumni, the Board of Trustees and the university community at large.

The significance of the mace is mirrored in the Presidential Medallion and Chain of Office, which designate the wearer as the temporary embodiment of the institution's power and authority. The gift of the medallion accompanied the gift of the mace, and the linked silver Chain of Office was commissioned in 1991 by the Presidential Candidate Search Committee.

THE CAROLINIAN CREED

The community of scholars at
the University of South Carolina is dedicated to
personal and academic excellence.

Choosing to join the community obligates each member
to a code of civilized behavior.

As a Carolinian...

I will practice
personal and academic integrity;

I will respect
the dignity of all persons;

I will respect
the rights and property of others;

I will discourage
bigotry, while striving to learn from
differences in people, ideas, and opinions;

I will demonstrate
concern for others, their feelings, and their need for
conditions which support their work and development.

Allegiance to these ideals requires each Carolinian
to refrain from and discourage behaviors which threaten
the freedom and respect every individual deserves.

PRESIDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Jonathan Maxcy <i>President, 1804-1820</i>	William Spenser Currell <i>President, 1914-1922</i>
Thomas Cooper <i>President pro tem, 1820</i> <i>President, 1821-1834</i>	William D. Melton <i>President, 1922-1926</i>
Robert Henry <i>President pro tem, 1834</i> <i>President, 1841-1845</i>	Leonard T. Baker <i>Acting President, 1926</i> <i>President, 1931-1936</i> <i>Acting President, 1944-1945</i>
Henry Junius Nott <i>Chairman of the Faculty, 1834-1835</i>	Davison M. Douglas <i>President, 1927-1931</i>
Robert W. Barnwell <i>President, 1835-1841</i> <i>Chairman of the Faculty, 1865-1873</i>	J. Rion McKissick <i>President, 1936-1944</i>
William C. Preston <i>President, 1845-1851</i>	Admiral Norman M. Smith <i>President, 1945-1952</i>
Francis Lieber <i>President pro tem, 1851</i>	Francis W. Bradley <i>Acting President, 1952</i>
James H. Thornwell <i>President, 1851-1855</i>	Donald S. Russell <i>President, 1952-1957</i>
Charles F. McCay <i>President, 1855-1857</i>	Robert L. Sumwalt <i>Acting President, 1957-1959</i> <i>President, 1959-1962</i>
Augustus B. Longstreet <i>President, 1857-1861</i>	Thomas F. Jones <i>President, 1962-1974</i>
Maximilian LaBorde <i>Chairman of the Faculty, 1861-1865</i>	William H. Patterson <i>President, 1974-1977</i>
Benjamin B. Babbitt <i>Chairman of the Faculty, 1873-1875</i>	James B. Holderman <i>President, 1977-1990</i>
Anson W. Cummings <i>Chairman of the Faculty, 1875-1877</i>	Arthur K. Smith <i>Interim President, 1990-1991</i>
William Porcher Miles <i>President, 1880-1882</i>	John M. Palms <i>President, 1991-2002</i>
John M. McBryde <i>Chairman of the Faculty, 1883-1891</i> <i>President, 1883-1891</i>	Andrew A. Sorensen <i>President, 2002-2008</i>
James Woodrow <i>President, 1891-1897</i>	Harris Pastides <i>President, 2008-2019</i> <i>Interim President, 2021-2022</i>
Frank C. Woodward <i>President, 1897-1902</i>	Robert L. Caslen Jr. <i>President, 2019-2021</i>
Benjamin Sloan <i>Acting President, 1902-1903</i> <i>President, 1903-1908</i>	Michael D. Amiridis <i>President, 2022-present</i>
Andrew C. Moore <i>Acting President, 1908-1909</i> <i>Acting President, 1913-1914</i>	
Samuel Chiles Mitchell <i>President, 1909-1913</i>	

Degrees in Course

The following list of candidates for graduation was prepared before final grades were reported and inclusion herein does not constitute evidence of graduation. The listing of a name in this program should not be construed as an indication that the person will in fact receive a degree from the University of South Carolina at this commence-

ment. Conversely, the absence of a student's name from this list does not necessarily mean that the person will not be awarded a degree.

An asterisk (*) following a candidate's name indicates the student is a graduate from a previous term.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Manuel De Jesus Acuna
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., M.Ed., San Diego State University
"Not Being Classified (English Proficient), Only Limits How Much I Can Learn": An Action Research Examination of the ELPAC
Director: Dr. Rebecca Morgan

Angelia Jean Blas-Lizama
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.S., University of California
M.A., University of Guam
I Fina'na' Guen I Famaqu'on Put I Tãsi: The Impact of Phenomena-Based Learning on Explaining and Conceptualizing Ocean Acidification in the Pacific
Director: Dr. Christie Martin

Arianne' Aleece Booker
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., University of South Carolina
M.Ed., Coastal Carolina University
Beyond the Binary: Examining the Impact of a Restorative Justice Intervention on Administrator Perceptions and Disciplinary Disparities for Black Male Students
Director: Dr. Yasha Becton

Julie Elizabeth Broad
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.S., Jacksonville State University
M.Ed., Western Carolina University
When One Size Does Not Fit All: Helping Teachers Adapt Scripted Curricula for Students with Disabilities
Director: Dr. Elizabeth Currin

Elizabeth Ellen Caulder
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., M.P.A., University of South Carolina
Role of University Staff in Fostering Graduate Student Engagement
Director: Dr. Chas Thompson

Whitney Jennings Colley
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.M., Eastern Michigan University
M.A., University of Colorado Denver
Increasing Equity in Technology
Director: Dr. Suha Tamim

Stephanie Aaron Doyle
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., Roanoke College
M.Ed., Walden University
Examining the Impact of Active Learning Strategies on Self-Efficacy, Attitude, and Perceptions of Social Studies Students
Director: Dr. Leigh D'Amico

Erica Leshawn Edwards
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.S., Oakwood University
M.Ed., Columbia College
M.Ed., M.Ed., Grand Canyon University
Comprehensive, Targeted, and Reflective Job-Embedded Training: The Key to Creating and Sustaining High Quality Online Learning Environments
Director: Dr. Leigh D'Amico

Landon Lee Kekoa Fielder
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., Liberty University
M.A., Randolph College
Teaching the Teachers: A Solution to Legal Illiteracy in Education
Director: Dr. Rhonda Jeffries

Sarah Alden Foster
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., The College of New Jersey
M.A., Rider University
Instructional Design to Support Math Identity Growth in Middle School
Director: Dr. Suha Tamim

Amber Nicole Gant
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., M.A.T., University of South Carolina
Fostering High Achievement for Students within and beyond the Classroom – Building in Students' Academic Language and Literacy Skills to Improve Standardized Test Scores in United States History and the Constitution: An Action Research Study
Director: Dr. Rhonda Jeffries

Sara Garrett
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., Bluefield State University
M.Ed., Concord University
Reading between the Lines: A Comparative Study of 3rd Grade Reading Achievement and Professional Development in Demographically Diverse Schools
Director: Dr. Rhonda Jeffries

Phillip Brock Gilliam
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., Appalachian State University
B.S., High Point University
Implementing a Learning Community for First-Year Male University Students to Improve Academic and Retention Outcomes
Director: Dr. Jamil Johnson

Nikki Giovanni Gilmore
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., University of South Carolina
M.Ed., Ed.S., Columbia College
Reimagining Math Instruction: An Improvement Science Study on Student Choice and Teacher Support Systems in 5th Grade
Director: Dr. Suzanne Hardie

















Mary Glymph
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., Presbyterian College
M.A., University of Tennessee
Getting Poked (Lovingly) with a Stick: A Study of Parental Involvement during First-Year Students' College Transitions
Director: Dr. Leigh D'Amico

Anna Ruth Graham
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., M.Ed., College of William and Mary
Financial Incentives and Substitute Teacher Job Fill Rates
Director: Dr. Henry Tran

Samantha Lynn Graves
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., Converse College
M.Ed., Anderson University
The Metacognitive Shift: Reshaping Student Attitudes and Adaptive Reasoning through Error Analysis in Eighth-Grade Mathematics
Director: Dr. Leigh D'Amico

Stasha Rene Grooms
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., University of South Carolina
M.Ed., University of Cincinnati
Teacher Self-Confidence and Cultural Responsiveness with Multilingual Students: A Mixed Methods Study
Director: Dr. Suha Tamim

Adriana Caicedo Hart
Educational Practice and Innovation
B.A., University of Valle
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DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

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M.S., University of Maryland Baltimore
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Director: Dr. Suzanne Sutton

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B.A., University of Mississippi
B.S.N., University of Tennessee
Improving Discharge Communication and Readmission Rates through Follow-Up Phone Calls in the Spine Surgical Population
Director: Dr. Victoria Davis

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Family Nurse Practitioner
B.S., University of New Hampshire
B.S.N., Southern New Hampshire University
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Director: Dr. Kathryn Bernheisel

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B.S.N., University of South Carolina
M.S.N., Gardner-Webb University
Automated Reminders to Impact Cervical Cancer Screenings among Hispanic Women
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B.S.N., University of Central Florida
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B.S.N., South University
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Director: Dr. Nakita Barnes

De'Aaricka De'Shay Wilkes
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B.S.N., University of South Carolina
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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M.S.N., University of Phoenix
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Nursing Science
M.S.N., Walden University
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Kartina Williams Harrison
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B.S.N., University of South Carolina
M.S.N., Charleston Southern University
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COLLEGE OF HOSPITALITY, RETAIL, AND SPORT MANAGEMENT DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Sport and Entertainment Management
B.E., Qatar University
M.S., University of Florida
The Legacy of Hosting Sport Mega-Events on Local Consumers' Consumption Behavior: The Case of the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup
Director: Dr. Stephen Shapiro

Alex Kweku Arhin*
Hospitality Management
B.S., University of Cape Coast
M.T.P., University of Girona
Organizational Resilience beyond Recovery: A Study of Transformative Resilience in Small Hospitality and Tourism Businesses
Co-Director: Drs. Robin DiPietro and David Cardenas

Lali Odosashvili
Hospitality Management
B.S., M.S., Ilia State University
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From Soviet Legacy to Sustainable Tourism: Evolutionary Economic Geography Perspectives on Tourism Development in Post-Soviet States
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Environmental Health Sciences
B.S., M.S., Jahangirnagar University
M.S., Istanbul Technical University
Characterization and Transformation of Incidental Nanomaterials and Environmentally Persistent Free Radicals in Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Ashes
Director: Dr. Mohammed Baalousha

Ali Abdullah Alshayhan
Epidemiology
B.S., King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences
M.P.H., Eastern Virginia Medical School
Insulin Resistance, Behavioral, and Psychological Pathways to Cognitive Performance in Older U.S. Adults
Director: Dr. Anwar Merchant

Daniel Amobtiwon Amoatika
Epidemiology
B.S., University for Development Studies
M.Phil., University of Ghana
Polypharmacy, Causal Pathways, and Mortality in Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in South Carolina: Causal Inference and Machine Learning Approaches
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Exercise Science
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What Happens after the Program Ends? Maintenance of Physical Performance and Resistance Exercise Participation following Exercise Oncology Interventions
Director: Dr. Ciaran Fiarman

Marren Claire Brooks
Communication Science and Disorders
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M.S., Purdue University
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Director: Dr. Suzanne Adlof

Hamid Reza Esmaili Zand
Environmental Health Sciences
B.S., Islamic Azad University
M.S., Tarbiat Modares University
Employing Functionalized Magnetic Nanoparticles for the Removal of Harmful Algal Cells from Freshwater and Seawater Blooms
Director: Dr. Jamie Lead

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B.M., Hubei University of Science and Technology
M.S., Rutgers University
Exploring the Efficiency of Logistic Models with Opt-Out Designs in Discrete Choice Experiment and Their Applications
Director: Dr. James Hardin

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Health Promotion, Education and Behavior
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Naloxone Sentiments and Policy Considerations Related to the Opioid Epidemic
Director: Dr. Shan Qiao

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Epidemiology
B.S., Albany State University
M.P.H., University of Illinois Chicago
It's Not My Fault: The Underlying Biological and Social Factors Leading to STI Rates among Black Women in South Carolina
Director: Dr. Melissa Nolan

Indira Gutierrez Orozco
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Body Image Experiences among U.S.-Born Mexican Emerging Adult Women with Immigrant Parents: A Qualitative Study Using an Intersectional Lens
Director: Dr. Rachel Davis

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B.A., California State University
M.S., California Baptist University
A Connected Life: Functional Communication, Social Participation, and Real-World Outcomes in Chronic Post-Stroke Aphasia
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Antonika Kiwonda Kadiri
Health Promotion, Education and Behavior
B.A., Agnes Scott College
M.P.H., University of Alabama Birmingham
Examining the Sociocultural Factors that Influence 2nd Generation Nigerian Americans' Response to Their Physical Health Concerns and Their Engagement with the Healthcare System
Co-Directors: Drs. Lucy Ingram and Rachel Davis

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Epidemiology
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HIV and Multimorbidity: Longitudinal Insights from a Cohort of Adults Living with HIV (2004-2024)
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M.S., McMaster University
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Epidemiology
B.S., M.S., University of South Carolina
The Role of the Autonomic Nervous System in Gastrointestinal Inflammation and Colorectal Adenoma Risk
Director: Dr. James Burch

Jessica Sainyo
Epidemiology
B.S., Spelman College
M.S., New York University
Association between Plant-Based and Animal-Based Dietary Indices and Breast Cancer Risk and Mortality
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Sarah Catherine Sellers
Environmental Health Sciences
B.S., University of South Carolina
Assessing the Impacts of Wastewater in Occupational Health Risks and Monitoring Infectious Diseases within Communities
Director: Dr. R. Sean Norman

Jiayang Xiao
Biostatistics
B.S., Hong Kong Baptist University
M.S., Georgetown University
Semiparametric Estimation for Complex Cure Models with Functional Components
Co-Directors: Drs. Jiajia Zhang and Rahul Ghosal

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Biomedical Science
B.S., Rutgers University
M.S., Baylor University
Examining Skeletal Muscle Ultrastructural and Metabolic Alterations with Cancer-Induced Cachexia
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Tori E. Peacock
Biomedical Science
B.S., Columbia College
Biomedical Insights Derived from Applications of Next Generation Flow Cytometry
Director: Dr. Jason Kubinak

Stephanie Ann Wilczynski
Biomedical Science
B.A., Boston University
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SCHOOL OF MUSIC DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

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and the Research Document: *The Art of Dicky Wells: An Analysis of Improvisational Style from 1927-1948*
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Music Performance
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M.M., University of Oklahoma
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and the Research Document: *A Compositional Analysis for Selected Works Featuring Saxophone by Braxton Blake*
Director: Dr. Clifford Leaman

Ziyue Gao
Piano Pedagogy
B.A., Beijing Normal University
M.M., Baylor University
Musculoskeletal Physiology in Piano Pedagogy: Mechanistic Insight, Movement Exploration, and Technique-Building Exercises
Director: Dr. Scott Price

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M.M.P., University of South Florida
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M.M., Colorado State University
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M.M., Indiana University
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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M.M.Ed., Florida State University
The Relationship between Members' Characteristics and Their
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