



WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

THE CLASS OF TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE

One Hundred Seventy-Fifth Commencement

*Saturday, the Seventeenth of May,
Two Thousand Twenty-Five*



“This is a lovely spot for the location of a literary institution. It requires some faith to believe that in after years it will be an academic grove, to which hundreds will drink at the pure fountains of knowledge, and go forth into the world to do good, to bless mankind.”

– Ezra Keller, Founder and First President of Wittenberg College (1845–1848)

WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY

One Hundred Seventy-Fifth Commencement

PROCESSIONAL

Pomp and Circumstance, Military March No. 1 by Edward Elgar

INVOCATION

The Rev. Tracy Paschke-Johannes, *The Rev. David P. and Carol Matevia Endowed University Pastor*

Pastor: We gather this morning, speaking the faith of Wittenberg’s historic Christian Lutheran tradition:

In the name of God the creator, who creates time and space, galaxies, stars, and planets; in the name of Jesus Christ, son of God, born on planet Earth, believing He is fully God and fully human. And in the name of the Holy Spirit, who fills the Earth with Her abundant presence.* Today, we gather to celebrate and joyfully sing to our God! Together, let us share our praises and thankfulness. Come, let us enter into this sacred space with praise. Bless these graduates from their diverse faith traditions and belief systems. May we feel the joy and celebration that is clearly with us on this day.**

People: Amen.

LessonPhilippians 4:8-9

Pastor: In his letter to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul writes:

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Responsive Graduation Litany

Pastor: We are gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of our community members.

People: We give you blessings for all that you have achieved and many more achievements yet to come.

Pastor: As you prepare for your next journey, remember those who have loved and supported you throughout the years.

People: We give you blessings of good will and love as you journey forth into the world.

Pastor: We thank you for the laughter, friendship, and memories that you have shared with us. We pray you remember them always.

People: May these memories be a beacon to guide you on your path.

Pastor: Go forth to bless others, as you have blessed us in this community.

People: You are blessed and beloved by God. Amen.

*Adapted from seasonofcreation.com
**© 2011 Joan Stott, “The Timeless Psalms” RCL Psalm Year A, used with permission. Posted on the Geelong City Parish UCA website.

WELCOME AND REMARKS

Dr. Michael L. Frandsen, *President of the University*
Ms. Grace A. Hehman, *Senior Class Representative, Class of 2025*
Ms. Victoria G. Pipinich, *Senior Class Representative, Class of 2025*

REMARKS

Mr. William D. Edwards '89, *Chair of the Wittenberg Board of Directors*

CONFERRING OF HONORARY DEGREES

Ms. Gina Schaefer '93, *Doctorate of Humane Letters*
Presented by Dr. Heather Wright, *Associate Professor of Political Science*

ADDRESS

Ms. Gina Schaefer '93, *Business Leader, Author, and Motivational Speaker*

CONFERRING OF MASTER’S DEGREES

Master of Arts in Education
Master of Arts in Sport Administration
Master of Science in Analytics
Presented by Dr. Brian D. Yontz, *Provost*

CONFERRING OF BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Fine Arts
Bachelor of Music Education
Bachelor of Science
Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Presented by Dr. Brian D. Yontz, *Provost*

TASSEL CEREMONY

Dr. Michael L. Frandsen, *President of the University*

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WELCOME

Mrs. Kelly A. Sumption '01, *President of the Wittenberg University Alumni Association*

SINGING OF THE ALMA MATER

Ms. Victoria G. Pipinich,
Alma Mater of the Class of 2025

Mr. Naevon L. Boykin,
Alma Lux of the Class of 2025

Alma Mater, the Spirit of Wittenberg, is a traditional honor that began in June 1920. It is the highest honor bestowed upon a junior student who exemplifies the qualities of leadership, scholarship, and service during four years at the University.

Alma Mater Lyrics

Wittenberg, dear Wittenberg,
Once again to thee
We, thy grateful children, pledge
Love and loyalty.
We shall always love thy groves
And thy classic halls;
Mem’ry, like the ivy twines
Round thy hallowed walls.

Wittenberg, dear Wittenberg,
Time flies fast away;
Soon our happy college days
Will be gone for aye;
But in all life’s storm and stress,
Whate’er we may do,
To our Alma Mater dear
We will e’er be true.

– Robert H. Hiller, *Class of 1889*
and *Professor of Greek*

Alma Lux is a traditional honor that was established in 2003. It is the highest honor bestowed upon a junior student who exemplifies the qualities of leadership, scholarship, and service during four years at the University.

BENEDICTION

The Rev. Tracy Paschke-Johannes, *The Rev. David P. and Carol Matevia Endowed University Pastor*

Pastor: As you go from here, may you have grace, mercy, and peace. Remember what you have been taught and what you have experienced. Live in such a way that all who know you may see the light of God reflected in you. And may the grace of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit be with you and among you in the days ahead.
(Adapted from 2 Timothy 1)

People: Amen.

RECESSIONAL

Please remain seated until recessional ends.

COMMENCEMENT MARSHALS

Dr. Stefne L. Broz, <i>Associate Provost for Undergraduate Student Success, Associate Professor of Communication & Digital Media</i>	Dr. Alyssa M. Hoofnagle, <i>Chair and Associate Professor of Mathematics & Computer Science</i>	Dr. Richard S. Phillips, <i>Associate Professor of Biological & Environmental Sciences</i>
Dr. Kunal Chatterjee, <i>Assistant Professor of Biological & Environmental Sciences</i>	Dr. Daniel R. Marous, <i>Associate Professor of Chemistry, Director of Biochemistry/ Molecular Biology</i>	Dr. John Thistlethwaite, <i>Associate Professor of Health & Sport Studies</i>
Dr. Kristin K. Cline, <i>John W. Barker Professor of Chemistry, Director of General Education</i>	Dr. Michelle L. McWhorter, <i>Associate Professor of Biological & Environmental Sciences, Director of Neuroscience</i>	
Dr. Ray C. Dudek, <i>Grand Marshal, Chair and Professor of Chemistry</i>	Dr. Jen C. Parsons, <i>Chair and Associate Professor of Health & Sport Studies</i>	

TORCH, BANNER, AND FLAG BEARERS

The Wittenberg Torch is carried by Ms. Victoria G. Pipinich, *Senior Class Representative, Class of 2025.*
The United States flag is carried by Ms. Grace A. Hehman, *Senior Class Representative, Class of 2025.*
The Wittenberg banner is carried by Ms. Katherine A. Lowry, *Student Senate President, Class of 2026.*
The City of Wittenberg banner is carried by Mr. Neil H. Boyles, *Alma Lux, Class of 2026.*
The banner of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is carried by Mr. Taylor J. H. Harper, *Alma Lux, Class of 2026.*

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER



Gina Schaefer

Gina Schaefer, Wittenberg class of 1993 and founder of 13 ACE Hardware stores, is a visionary entrepreneur and dynamic keynote speaker, best known as the founder of a chain of highly successful Ace Hardware stores. Over the course of her 22 years in business, she transformed a single hardware store in a neglected neighborhood into a thriving enterprise with 13 locations across Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

Her business not only provides essential services, but it daily empowers the community, including the recovery

community, by fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace. Schaefer's passion for business ownership as a tool to combat inequality recently led her to sell her business to her employees, creating more than 130 co-owners. Her incredible journey is chronicled in her book *Recovery Hardware*, which highlights the power of second chances and community revitalization.

As a sought-after speaker, Schaefer captivates audiences with her compelling stories and practical insights. Her talks focus on key areas such as creating positive corporate cultures, effective succession planning, and empowering women in business. Each presentation is designed to inspire and equip her audience with actionable strategies to drive change and achieve success.

Honored by several organizations for her leadership and contributions to business and community development, Schaefer has routinely delivered a message that resonates strongly with those who defy the odds in the pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavors, especially women. In addition to her speaking engagements, she enjoys making greeting cards, kayaking, traveling, reading, and mentoring other small business owners.

Schaefer has also served her alma mater repeatedly, including as a member of the steering committee for the successful \$100-million Having Light: The Campaign for Wittenberg and as a guest speaker for a special business-focused Tiger Talk on campus in 2023.

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

This program contains the names of candidates for Commencement. Degree certification is subject to the completion of all degree requirements and is validated by the Office of the Registrar. All academic honors noted below are based on cumulative grade-point averages calculated at the end of the 2024 fall semester, which do not take spring semester grades into account. Honors awarded at Commencement will be determined by each student’s final cumulative grade-point average, calculated at the end of the 2025 spring semester. The degrees are awarded within the fields of major concentration. The second major concentration, if any, is shown under the candidate’s name.

Degrees are awarded upon successful completion of all degree requirements. Participation at Commencement or listing of student’s name in the program does not guarantee degree conferral.

Master Of Arts In Education

**Associate Professor
Kristin Farley**
*Director of Graduate Studies
in Education*

Kelsey Amber Ellis
Springfield, OH

Carrie Susan Foley
Springfield, OH

Zachary Allen Miller
Delaware, OH

Grayson Quentin Timms
Columbus, OH

Mellanie Kay Toles
Springfield, OH

Jessica Nicole Young
Orient, OH

Master Of Arts In Sport Administration

**Associate Professor
Alan Ledford**
*Director of the Sport
Administration Program*

Morgan H. Adams
Dublin, OH

Bryce I. Anderson
Indianapolis, IN

McKenna Grace Baker
Brownsburg, IN

Jordan Michael Baker
Dayton, OH

Samantha Williams
Benedict
Dayton, OH

Katelyn Lee Hammond
Springfield, OH

Brice Colby Hill
Cincinnati, OH

Darnell L. Ishman
Springfield, OH

Grant Michael Martin
Marysville, OH

Kaci L. Morin
Amanda, OH

Caleb P. Severance
Columbus, OH

Master Of Science In Analytics

**Associate Professor
Tim Bode**

*Chair of Business &
Economics*

Julia Mei Burch
Dublin, OH

Matthew Melvin Drovdlc
Hilliard, OH

Andrew Jacob Garofoli
Springboro, OH

Parker John Gryskevich
Brownsburg, IN

Emma Kate Lindsey
Powell, OH

Art

Professor Scott Dooley
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Miles Azububike Amadi
Indianapolis, IN

Annelise Elisabeth Colaizzi
Sandusky, OH

Abigail Gabriella Eckman
Kettering, OH
(German)

Hanna Jean Haddix
Springfield, OH
Magna Cum Laude

Olivia Joy Hamilton
Cleveland, OH

Nathan Thomas Pratt
Hamilton, OH

Madison Elizabeth Rose
Springfield, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Sydney Ann Striker
Toledo, OH
Summa Cum Laude

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS

Ashley Nicole James
Glenford, OH

Biochemistry/ Molecular Biology

**Associate Professor
Danny Marous**

*Director of the Biochemistry/
Molecular Biology Program*

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Adam Robert Lowell Arndt
Connersville, IN

Grace Marie Frances Ralston
Georgetown, OH

Abby Elizabeth Sphar
Lebanon, OH
Magna Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Caroline E. Sproule
Lewis Center, OH
Cum Laude

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Justin T. Katona
Liberty Township, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Annie Maria Miloser
Saline, MI
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Paige Alexandra Rudolf
Saint Paris, OH
Summa Cum Laude
Departmental Honors

Biological & Environmental Sciences

BIOLOGY

**Professor Margaret
Goodman**

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Assabir Ali-Oumar
Columbus, OH

Caitlin Michelle
Archdeacon
San Jose, CA
(Sociology)

Alexis Renee Bailey
Sidney, OH

Charity Maria Perry
Cleveland, OH

Sydney Pierce
Navarre, FL
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Sheccid J. Rivas Castillo
Pickerington, OH
(Spanish)

Sarah Elizabeth Trisel
Jamestown, OH

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Emily E. Baker
Dallas, TX

Julia Elizabeth Balent
Pittsburgh, PA
Summa Cum Laude

Kendall Alexandra Black
Defiance, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Abigail Marie Brioli
Lynchburg, OH
Cum Laude

Shannon Grace Csordos
South Plainfield, NJ

Meghan Frazier
Alliance, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Dimitri Alexander Gonzalez
Bridgeville, PA
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Madysen E. Frazee Hall
Washington, PA
Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Luke Elijah Harper
Marysville, OH
Cum Laude

Caleb Steven Hazelbaker
Friendship, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Grace Koperna
Macedonia, OH
Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Addyson L. Moore
Beavercreek, OH

Morgan Blue Powell
Mechanicsburg, OH

Sidney Ann Purks
Oakwood, OH

Parker Riley Roach
Berrien Springs, MI
Cum Laude

Haley Alexis Scott
Russiaville, IN

Carly Ann Shiplett
Cincinnati, OH

Etthan Tedros
Springfield, OH

Owen William Treece
Van Wert, OH
(Bachelor of Arts - Economics)
Summa Cum Laude

Caden Robert Zellner
Columbus, OH

Samantha Marie Zungri
Canal Winchester, OH

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Associate Professor
Richard Phillips

*Director of the Environmental
Science Program*

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Grace Katherine Kennedy
Dublin, OH

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Sarah Ellen Fitterer
Newark, OH
Cum Laude

Shayne Katherine Harris
Canfield, OH
(Biology)
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Kelsey Jayne Ragan
Whitehouse, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Dylan Thomas Rice
Indian Lake, OH

Claire Elizabeth Sullivan
Springboro, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Business & Economics

ACCOUNTING

Associate Professor
Tim Bode

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Cole Cambron Allen
Springfield, OH

Taylor N. Bender
Mansfield, OH
(Finance)

Joshua Paul Bobey
Medina, OH

Travis Demsher
Santa Clarita, CA
(Finance)

Aidan William Kruse
Loveland, OH
(Finance)
Cum Laude

Sidney Nicole Sheridan
Blacklick, OH

Sage Addison Wilke
Springfield, OH

ECONOMICS

Associate Professor
Tim Bode

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Matthew Edmund
Doerger
Cincinnati, OH

Cameron Sarah Stevovich
Rocky River, OH
Magna Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

FINANCE

Associate Professor
Tim Bode

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Garrett A. Becker
Marietta, OH
(Accounting)

Max Brougher Benincasa
Shaker Heights, OH
(Marketing)

Wylie Bills
Marietta, OH

Zachary Charles Busby
Cedarburg, WI
(Accounting)

Colby Daniel Kerns
Marysville, OH

Kyle J. Mahon
Centerville, OH

Ryan Lee Miller
Dublin, OH
Cum Laude

Charles Richard Zboril
Morawski
Glen Ellyn, IL

Cole Rocco Royer
Lake Bluff, IL
(Economics)

Gazelle Rudakubana
Kigali, Rwanda
(Economics)
Cum Laude

Joshua Edmund Wright
Wadsworth, OH
(Economics)
Cum Laude

**INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS**

**Associate Professor
Sunny Jeong**

*Director of the International
Business Program*

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Kees Patrick Ciric
Loveland, OH

Tai-Hsin Huang
Taipei, Taiwan
(Marketing)
Summa Cum Laude

MANAGEMENT

**Associate Professor
Tim Bode**

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Daniel Reed Asher
Indianapolis, IN

Robert Andrew Barnett
Springfield, OH

Nathan Gabriel Berger
Cincinnati, OH
Cum Laude

Angel Frutoso Bravo
Esparto, CA

Landon Kekoa Briggs
Phoenix, AZ
(Economics)
Magna Cum Laude

Jacob Cade Brooks
Miamisburg, OH

Nathan Daniel Brown
Dublin, OH

Logan Michael Emnett
Portsmouth, OH
Cum Laude

Juan I. Gomez
San Gabriel Valley, CA

Mustapha Kinteh
Columbus, OH
(Sport Management)

Lucas Aidan Mattison
Springfield, OH
Cum Laude

McKibben Anne Miller
New Carlise, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Maxwell William Milton
Carmel, IN

Lauren M. Neutzling
Columbus, OH
*(Communication & Digital
Media)*
Cum Laude

Wyatt Linus Osterhage
Centerville, OH

Maci G. Pierson
New Carlisle, OH
Cum Laude

Brycen Todd Rogers
Pickerington, OH
*(Communication & Digital
Media)*

Jackson Kenneth Storrs
Downers Grove, IL
Cum Laude

Tyler Douglas VanMeter
New Albany, OH

MARKETING

**Associate Professor
Tim Bode**

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Camryn Taylor Colahan
Vermilion, OH

Nicole Ann Contenza
Rocky River, OH
*(Communication & Digital
Media)*
Summa Cum Laude

Gavin James Darner
Tipp City, OH
(International Business)
Summa Cum Laude

Austin Georger
Appleton, WI

Hannah Madison Heald
Westerville, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Jack Thomas Houck
Stow, OH
Cum Laude

Kurt Everett Klamfoth
Gahanna, OH
Cum Laude

Ryan Joseph Kravitz
Dublin, OH
Cum Laude

Nicholas Daniel
Langenderfer
Cincinnati, OH

Norbert George O'Brien
Hudson, OH
*(Communication & Digital
Media)*

DuPree Saryan Phillips
Cincinnati, OH

Diana Isabella Quevedo
La Quinta, CA
Cum Laude

Landon Alexander Rose
Springfield, OH
Cum Laude

Zoey Lynen Aldine Schmitz
Blanchester, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Benjamin Michael Seibert
Cincinnati, OH
Cum Laude

Julissa Tatyanna Williams
Lorain, OH

Chemistry

Professor Ray Dudek

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Alexander Wyatt Callahan
Beavercreek, OH

Victoria Grace Pipinich
Fort Worth, TX
Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Luke W. Teters
Waterford, OH

Communication & Digital Media

Professor Sheryl Cunningham

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Ethan Fox Archer
Worthington, OH

Kaden Blackmon Bryan
Yellow Springs, OH

Abigail K. Hogsett
South Vienna, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Kiana Lanaya Holder
Springfield, OH

Javaughn Scott Neal
Cincinnati, OH

Olivia Madison Peña
San Dimas, CA

Zora Genesis Shakhan
Columbus, OH

Aleksandra Slenk
Niles, IL
Summa Cum Laude

Molly Erin Specht
Newark, OH
Cum Laude

Maria Stelea
Skokie, IL

Tiffany Ann Suttles
Urbana, OH

East Asian Studies

Associate Professor Nona Moskowitz

*Chair of Sociology and
Director of the East Asian
Studies Program*

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Emmani M. Young
Lexington, KY

Education

Professor of Practice Layla Besson

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Bryna Danielle Adams
Springfield, OH

Erin Elizabeth Baldwin
Mechanicsburg, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Arington Amanda Cordell
South Solon, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Macy Elizabeth DeHart
Springfield, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Anthony D. Fritts
Springfield, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Ava Sue Hampton
Westerville, OH
Cum Laude

Cameron Dale Harrison
Eaton, OH
Cum Laude

Mackenzie Elizabeth Hessick
Hilliard, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Gracie L. Hower
Urbana, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Emily Ann Jones
Pataskala, OH

Megan Kathleen Keys
Dublin, OH
Cum Laude

Conor Philliben Kolka
Dexter, MI

Lauren Marie Legate
Germantown, OH

Nicholas David Liebler
Massillon, OH

Lindsey Elaine Magoteaux
Sidney, OH

Madison Danielle Manley
Columbus, OH

Colin M. Maynard
Pickerington, OH

Halley F. McNair
Cincinnati, OH

Lauren Elizabeth Miller
Cleveland, OH

Gabriel Alec Porter
Columbus, OH
(Sport Management)
Cum Laude

Riley Catherine Schweikert
Waterford, OH

Anthony James Sexton
West Chester, OH
Cum Laude

Kendra Ann Skrlac
Beavercreek, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Michele Lee Starner
Delaware, OH

Josselyn R. Terpenning
Beavercreek, OH

Rachael Elizabeth Webb
Hartford, OH
Cum Laude

Katherine Lynne Webber
Powell, OH

Elizabeth-Anne Margaret
Wegman
Columbus, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Darien J. Williams
Massillon, OH

EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Professor of Practice
Layla Besson

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Naevon Lucas Boykin
Bowie, MD
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Jasmine Sue Evans
New Carlisle, OH

Claire Nancy Hall
Cleveland Heights, OH

Anneke Truus Keesing
Blacklick, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Autumn Christine
Kriegbaum
Springfield, OH

Lisa Christine Mateo
Ashland, OH

Asuka Yoshinaga
Kagoshima, Japan

English
Professor Cynthia
Richards

Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Riane M. Burton
Houston, TX

DeLaney Ellen Jordan
Wapakoneta, OH
Summa Cum Laude
Departmental Honors

Christian De Nicewaner
Springfield, OH
(Computer Science)
Summa Cum Laude

Reagan Marie Simpson
Springfield, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Health &
Sport Studies

EXERCISE SCIENCE
Associate Professor
John Thistlethwaite

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Logan Dunlap
Loveland, OH

Shannon Nicole Flaherty
Burlington, KY
(Educational Studies)
Magna Cum Laude

Kierra Morgan Krohmer
Kenton, OH

Jaida Ashanti Malone
Cleveland, OH

Mattie Renee Robinette
Springfield, OH

Charles John Schafer
Beavercreek, OH

Benjamin E. Sipos
Vandalia, OH

Harrison Douglas Waltz
Carmel, IN

Gabrielle Ann Weckerly
Delaware, OH

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Caleb D. Fogarty
Troy, OH

Carlo David Gaither
Cleveland, OH

Sarah Ruth Johnson
Vandalia, OH

Ryan W. Leonard
Dayton, OH

Anna Bridget Longbrake
Canal Fulton, OH

Abigail Isabella Moore
Chesterland, OH
(Theatre and Dance)

Reese Ann Neumeyer
Whitehouse, OH
Cum Laude

Joshua Thomas Pawlicki
Sylvania, OH

Ashlynn Dawn Stamper
Yellow Springs, OH
Summa Cum Laude

SPORT MANAGEMENT
Associate Professor
Jennifer Parsons
Department Chair of Health
& Sport Studies

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Zachary Emanuel Addie
Pickerington, OH

Taryn R. Cash
Cincinnati, OH

Logan Neil Brooks Caudill
Kokomo, IN

Kyngston La'micah Collins
Dayton, OH

Lucia Marie DeVita
Columbus, OH
(Communication & Digital
Media)
Summa Cum Laude

Terry Deleon Killens
Cincinnati, OH

Meghan Carrie McCans
Arcanum, OH
Cum Laude

Kaitlyn Elisabeth Miller
Phoenix, AZ
(Communication & Digital
Media, Marketing)
Summa Cum Laude

Tayler Elyse Pierce
Grandview Heights, OH
(Marketing)
Summa Cum Laude

Braden Alexander Ramsey
Lewis Center, OH

Blake Edmond Roller
New Albany, OH

Mason Michael Saurers
Galion, OH
(Communication & Digital
Media)
Cum Laude

Nicholas William Henry
Wadsworth
Mason, OH
(Management)

Jalen E. Williams
Catonsville, MD
Cum Laude

Jacob Robert Yarbrough
Dublin, OH
Magna Cum Laude

History Professor Thomas Taylor

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Abigail Elizabeth Alcorn
Chillicothe, OH
(English)
Summa Cum Laude

Carter J. Bluvol
Westerville, OH
Cum Laude

Donald Joseph Butz
Saint Paris, OH

Madison Mae Cochran
Springfield, OH

Dwayne Allen Diamond
Springfield, OH

Madeline Marie Diechman
Freeland, MI

Bailey Lynne Drews
New Carlisle, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Trace Hayden Ford
Newark, OH

James Langwell
Pickerington, OH

Alexandra Janine Miller
Grove City, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Madison Lynn Sloan
Marysville, OH
Cum Laude

Sarah Elizabeth Tagg
Enon, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Mathematics & Computer Science

MATHEMATICS
Associate Professor
Alyssa Hoofnagle
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Abrianna Nicole Swartz
Fostoria, OH

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Hillary Zsofia Aliz Humbaugh
Haubstadt, IN
Summa Cum Laude

Derek Logan Stinefield
Alexandria, IN
(Biochemistry & Molecular
Biology)
Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

COMPUTER SCIENCE
Associate Professor
Alyssa Hoofnagle
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Witness Barnett
Springfield, OH

Quinn Helen Ryan Bauer
Phoenix, AZ
Cum Laude

Mario Dante' Getaw Jr.
Macomb, MI
Cum Laude

Tristan Lee Hall
Mechanicsburg, OH
Magna Cum Laude

Nicholas Alexander Jones
Donnelsville, OH
Cum Laude

Aaron J. Miller
West Chester, OH
(*Mathematics*)

Jibril A. Mohamed
Columbus, OH

Joshua Seth Moore
Carroll, OH

Justin Lee Norris
Middletown, OH

Marcus Brett Orton
Knoxville, TN
(*Management*)
Cum Laude

Dominic James Lowry Root
Springfield, OH

Callahan Tipton
Grove City, OH
(*Mathematics*)
Departmental Honors

Jarrett O. Wilson
Springfield, OH
(*Mathematics*)
Summa Cum Laude

DATA SCIENCE
Associate Professor
Alyssa Hoofnagle
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Nathan Thomas Floyd
Akron, OH

Bruce Edward Thompson
London, OH
Cum Laude

INFORMATION SYSTEMS
Associate Professor
Alyssa Hoofnagle
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Clifford Christian Edogun
Richmond Heights, OH

Daylen Scott Fullen
Columbus, OH

Kikubi Tole
Dayton, OH

Matthew Jay Whittemore
Dayton, OH

Music
Professor David Schubert
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Mikayla Lauren Myers
Huron, OH

Aidan R. Orth
Cincinnati, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Addison Payne
Sidney, OH
Cum Laude

Neuroscience
Associate Professor
Michelle McWhorter
Director of the Neuroscience Program

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Alexa Lee Repp Kraska
Franklin, OH
(*Bachelor of Arts - Biochemistry & Molecular Biology*)
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Isabella Thompson
Columbus, OH

Nursing
Professor of Practice
Stacy Gilson

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

Tori Karon Amanda Banks
Groveport, OH
Cum Laude

Rachel Elizabeth Bloom
Troy, OH

Edward Alan Bolden
Cincinnati, OH

Kyle Alexander Fout
Gahanna, OH

Sophia Louise Grossman
Grove City, OH

Jenna Rosemary Hallett
Delta, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Reese Cailyn Hartsaugh
Chillicothe, OH

Grace Azalee Hehman
Cincinnati, OH
Cum Laude

Evelyn Louise Heil
Fort Worth, TX

Jessica Sue Himes
Columbus, OH
Cum Laude

Peyton Bre Isaac
South Charleston, OH

Kelly Victoria Mamula
Dublin, OH

Allyson Grace Miller
Saline, MI

Morgan Olivia Phillips
Navarre, OH

Grace Deborah Brownlee
Ransbottom
DeGraff, OH
Cum Laude

Mazie Kay Reece
Mechanicsburg, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Emma Grace Reeder
Sunbury, OH
Cum Laude

Emily E. Rosenberg
Dayton, OH
Cum Laude

Addeanna Tedros
Springfield, OH
Magna Cum Laude

Jacob Aaron Thiel
Mechanicsburg, OH

Thomas Kix Thiel
Mechanicsburg, OH

Lainee Nicole Valentine
Marion, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Taylor Ranae Weiss
Powell, OH

Haleigh Marie Willison
Crooksville, OH

NURSING RN TO BSN

Lemohang Mokhalinyane
Springfield, OH
Magna Cum Laude

Philosophy & Religion

PHILOSOPHY
Associate Professor
Travis Proctor

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Katianne Michelle Koss
Bay Village, OH

RELIGION
Associate Professor
Travis Proctor

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Aubree Lynn Akers
Colorado Springs, CO
Cum Laude

Morgan Maranell Rainey
Cincinnati, OH

Physics
Professor Elizabeth
George

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Presley Kanoenano'Ualena
Doss
New Albany, OH
Cum Laude

Jourdan Michael Stipe
LaPlace, LA

Political Science
Professor James Allan
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Carter James Binford
Grove City, OH

Zekhi Amarayh Carroll
Cleveland, OH
(Sociology)

Tyler Micheal Gardner
Springfield, OH

Anaiah R. Lightner
West Covina, CA

Erin Grace Reichert
Perrysburg, OH
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

Carissa J. Schroeder
Westerville, OH

Robert Knowlton Smith
Croton On Hudson, NY

Psychology
Associate Professor
Michael Anes
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Molly I. Brengartner
Dublin, OH

Cameron York Elliott
Springfield, OH
Cum Laude

Abigail Grace Fox
Dayton, OH
(Educational Studies)

Jazmyn Faith Gaines-Burns
Prince George's County, MD
(Philosophy)

Avery Saville McClelland
Saline, MI

Brooke Elizabeth Mullis
Lawrenceburg, IN

Noelle Elise Underwood
Dublin, OH
(Art)

Katherine E. Whitaker
Pittsford, NY

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Harper Athena Yannash
Ushi Hanta Crews
Ypsilanti, MI
Summa Cum Laude
Departmental Honors

Aisha Rehman Khan
Pataskala, OH
(Bachelor of Arts - Sociology)

Ethan Michael Libby
Loveland, OH
(Chemistry)
Summa Cum Laude

Avery Ian Livingston
Greer, SC
(Neuroscience)

Carys Elaine Williams
Granville, OH
Cum Laude

Public Health
Professor of Practice
Jessica Johnson

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Chamberlain Rae Browning
Troy, OH

Kahleel Tyrese Trent
Springboro, OH

Self-Designed
Professor Brian Yontz
Provost

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Harrison J. Hamlin
Pittsburgh, PA

Lanai LeShaun Lenora
Stevenson
Dublin, OH

Sociology
Associate Professor
Nona Moskowitz
Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Bryce Matthew Baker
Heath, OH

Jennifer Annai Hernandez
LaGrange, KY

Liam Francis Jennings
Indianapolis, IN

Bailey L. Maloon
Brookville, OH
Cum Laude

Katherine Sinclair Petersen
Cincinnati, OH
(Psychology)

Anthony Alexander Villacis
Rockville, MD

George West
Oakwood, OH

Josie Marie Williams
Cincinnati, OH

Theatre & Dance
Associate Professor
Darin Keesing
Interim Department Chair

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Kaitlyn Elizabeth Brown
Powell, OH
Summa Cum Laude

Emma Ruth Francis
Evansville, IN
Cum Laude

Kaitlyn Elizabeth Wenzel
Norwalk, OH

**World Languages
& Cultures**

GERMAN
Assistant Professor
Vanessa Plumly

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Kyle Logan Bechtol
Fort Thomas, KY
(International Business)
Magna Cum Laude

Allyson Elizabeth Gardner
Berlin Heights, OH
(English)
Summa Cum Laude
University Honors
Departmental Honors

HONORARY ORGANIZATIONS

Class of 2025

Presidential Scholar

Named for each of Wittenberg's 14 former presidents, the Presidential Scholars are the members of the junior class who have maintained the highest academic standing in their class through the preceding five semesters at Wittenberg.

Kendall A. Black
Kaitlyn E. Brown
Harper A. Crews
Bailey L. Drews
Jenna R. Hallett
Mackenzie E. Hessick
Justin T. Katona
Alexa L. Repp Kraska
Kaitlyn E. Miller
Erin G. Reichert
Sydney A. Striker
Sarah E. Tagg
Owen W. Treece

University Honors

University Honors is awarded to graduating students that maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5, complete at least two honors courses, and complete and successfully defend an honors thesis in their major area of study.

Naevon L. Boykin
Allyson E. Gardner
Dimitri A. Gonzalez
Madyson E. Frazee Hall
Shayne K. Harris

Caleb S. Hazelbaker
Mackenzie E. Hessick
Grace Koperna
Alexa L. Repp Kraska
Annie M. Miloser
Sydney M. Pierce
Victoria G. Pipinich
Mazie K. Reece
Erin G. Reichert
Reagan M. Simpson
Kendra A. Skrlac
Abby E. Sphar
Cameron S. Stevovich
Derek L. Stinefield
Sarah E. Tagg

Phi Beta Kappa

Phi Beta Kappa is an international honor society for the liberal arts and sciences founded at the College of William and Mary in 1776. Seniors – and in special cases, juniors – who are majoring in one of the liberal arts or sciences, have a high GPA, excel in courses across the liberal arts, and have demonstrated a knowledge of mathematics and foreign language are eligible.

Reagan M. Simpson
Abby E. Sphar

Alpha Alpha Alpha

Alpha Alpha Alpha is a national honor society that recognizes scholarship and achievement of first-generation college students. The society recognizes students who have earned at least 36 credit hours, achieved an overall GPA of 3.2 or higher, and neither parents nor guardians have completed a bachelor's degree.

Abigail E. Alcorn
Tori K. Banks
Nathan G. Berger
Angel Bravo
Olivia J. Hamilton
Ashley N. James
Bailey L. Maloon
Charity M. Perry
Mazie K. Reece
Aleksandra Slenk
Madison L. Sloan
Maria Stelea
Derek L. Stinefield
Kikubi Tole
Owen W. Treece

Alpha Kappa Delta

Alpha Kappa Delta seeks to acknowledge and promote excellence in scholarship in the study of sociology, the research of social problems, and other social and intellectual activities that will lead to improvement in the human condition. Academically accomplished sociology majors and minors are eligible.

Caitlin M. Archdeacon
Naevon L. Boykin
Aisha R. Khan
Bailey L. Maloon

Alpha Lambda Delta

Alpha Lambda Delta is a national honor society that seeks to recognize and to encourage scholarship among first-year college students. Selection is based entirely on achieving a 3.5 cumulative grade point average for fall semester of the first year.

Abigail E. Alcorn
Quinn H. Bauer
Macy E. DeHart
Lucia M. DeVita
Shayne K. Harris
Alexandra J. Miller
Victoria G. Pipinich
Gazelle G. Rudakubana
Kendra A. Skrlac
Molly E. Specht

Beta Beta Beta

Beta Beta Beta (Tri-Beta) is a society for students dedicated to improving the understanding and appreciation of biological study and extending boundaries of human knowledge through scientific research. A student must have completed a minimum of three courses in biology, have an overall GPA in biology of 3.3 or higher, an overall GPA of 3.0 or better, and be involved with biologically oriented activities.

Shannon G. Csordos
Grace Koperna
Sydney M. Pierce
Paige A. Rudolf
Caroline E. Sproule
Derek L. Stinefield

Chi Alpha Sigma

Chi Alpha Sigma is a national college athletic honor society founded in 1996. Members must be of junior or senior class standing, have a 3.4 or higher cumulative GPA, be of good moral character, and have earned a letter in a varsity intercollegiate sport.

Nathan G. Berger
Kendall A. Black
Edward A. Bolden
Naevon L. Boykin
Zachary C. Busby
Harper A. Crews
Macy E. DeHart
Lucia M. DeVita
Cameron Y. Elliott
Shannon N. Flaherty

Meghan P. Frazier
Austin R. Georger
Mario D. Getaw
Dimitri A. Gonzalez
Sophia L. Grossman
Jenna R. Hallett
Harrison J. Hamlin
Cameron D. Harrison
Hannah M. Heald
Grace A. Hehman
Mackenzie E. Hessick
Hillary Z. Humbaugh
Justin T. Katona
Megan K. Keys
Grace Koperna
Aidan W. Kruse
Ethan M. Libby
Ryan L. Miller
Maxwell W. Milton
Reese A. Neumeyer
Lauren M. Neutzling
Marcus B. Orton
Addison E. Payne
Victoria G. Pipinich
Gabriel A. Porter
Diana I. Quevedo
Kelsey J. Ragan
Mazie K. Reece
Benjamin M. Seibert
Zora G. Shakhan
Abby E. Sphar
Caroline E. Sproule
Derek L. Stinefield
Josselyn R. Terpenning
Owen W. Treece
Lainee N. Valentine
Katherine E. Whitaker
Jalen E. Williams
Joshua E. Wright
Jacob R. Yarbrough

Ivy Ring

Ivy Ring is a junior women's service honorary. Members are chosen on the basis of their contributions to the Wittenberg campus and to the community through the quality of their academic work and their participation in extracurricular activities.

Julia E. Balent
Nicole A. Contenza
Shannon N. Flaherty
Mackenzie E. Hessick
Jessica S. Himes
Annie M. Miloser
Charity M. Perry
Mazie K. Reece
Reagan M. Simpson
Abby E. Sphar
Lainee N. Valentine
Elizabeth-Anne M. Wegman

Lambda Pi Eta

Lambda Pi Eta is the national communication honor society. Majors who maintain outstanding grade point averages while making significant progress toward their degree are invited to join.

Nicole A. Contenza
Kaitlyn E. Miller
Aleksandra Slenk
Molly E. Specht
Maria Stelea

Omicron Delta Kappa

Omicron Delta Kappa is a national senior leadership honor society recognizing leadership in scholarship, athletics, University publications, cultural life, and student affairs.

Harper A. Crews
Macy E. DeHartt

Phi Alpha Theta

Phi Alpha Theta is an American honor society for undergraduate and graduate students and professors of history. Students who have completed three courses in history, earned a 3.1 GPA or better in history courses, earned a 3.0 GPA or better in two-thirds of their remaining courses, and have a GPA in the top 35 % of their class are eligible.

Abigail E. Alcorn
Carter J. Bluvol
Madison M. Cochran
Sarah E. Tagg

Phi Eta Sigma

Phi Eta Sigma is a national honor society that seeks to recognize and encourage scholarship among first-year college students. Selection is based entirely on achieving a 3.5 cumulative GPA for fall semester of the first year.

Gavin J. Darner
Anthony J. Sexton
Owen W. Treece

Pi Mu Epsilon

Pi Mu Epsilon, founded in 1914, is the nation's most prestigious mathematics honor society. Majors who have taken a sufficient number of classes toward the fulfillment of their degree, achieved a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in mathematics courses, and a 3.0 GPA overall are invited to join.

Hillary Z. Humbaugh
Victoria G. Pipinich
Derek L. Stinefield
Jarrett O. Wilson

Pi Sigma Alpha

Pi Sigma Alpha is the only honor society for college and university students of government in the United States. Juniors and seniors who have completed requisite political science courses with excellence and whose overall grade point average is above 3.3 are eligible for membership.

Tyler M. Gardner
Erin G. Reichert

Pick & Pen

Pick and Pen is a junior honorary emphasizing leadership, service, and scholarship.

Julia E. Balent
Nicole A. Contenza
Shannon N. Flaherty
Dimitri A. Gonzalez
Mackenzie E. Hessick
Jessica S. Himes
Justin T. Katona
Ethan M. Libby
Annie M. Miloser
Christian D. Nicewaner
Charity M. Perry
Mazie K. Reece
Reagan M. Simpson
Abby E. Sphar
Owen W. Treece
Lainee N. Valentine
Elizabeth-Anne M. Wegman

Psi Chi

Psi Chi is the international honor society in psychology. Wittenberg's Psi Chi members have a psychology grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

Naevon L. Boykin
Harper A. Crews
Cameron Y. Elliott
Ethan M. Libby
Bailey L. Maloon
Carys E. Williams

Sigma Tau Delta

Sigma Tau Delta is an international English honor society founded in 1924. Membership is available to any declared English major who meets the society's academic standards of a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher.

Abigail E. Alcorn
Allyson E. Gardner
DeLaney E. Jordan
Reagan M. Simpson

Sigma Theta Tau

Membership to this international nursing honor society is by invitation to the top 35% of the baccalaureate nursing students, who demonstrate excellence in scholarship.

Tori K. Banks
Edward A. Bolden
Jenna R. Hallett
Grace A. Hehman
Jessica S. Himes
Mazie K. Reece
Emma G. Reeder
Emilya E. Rosenberg
Addeanna Tedros
Lainee N. Valentine

Tau Pi Phi

Founded in 1931 on Wittenberg's campus, Tau Pi Phi is a business and economics honor society for students of high academic achievement. Students who meet certain academic criteria are initiated into the honor society.

Nicole A. Contenza
Hannah M. Heald
Kaitlyn E. Miller
Lauren M. Neutzling
Sidney N. Sheridan
Cameron S. Stevovich
Joshua E. Wright

The Wittenberg Luther Cap

The red cap worn by Martin Luther while teaching at Germany's Wittenberg University during the Reformation is still being worn by designated persons at what is now the only Wittenberg University in the world – the one in Springfield, Ohio.

The original Wittenberg University, founded in 1502 in a little town in Saxony, provided the sixteenth-century setting for Martin Luther, the man whose reforming activities ultimately led to Protestantism. Wittenberg, writes the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, was where Luther lived without a break for 35 years prior to his death: "Here he wrote most of his books, here he delivered most of his sermons, here he burned the bull of Pope Leo X that threatened excommunication, here he raised his family."

Luther's Wittenberg University, for many years one of the strongest universities in the world, thrived until 1817, when Saxony became part of Prussia, and the old university was absorbed by the University of Halle. Fewer than 30 years later, a dedicated group of German Lutherans created another Wittenberg on the frontier of a new nation. In 1842, the English Lutheran Synod of Ohio unanimously resolved: "We, now in Synod assembled, do ordain and establish a Literary-Theological Institution." In 1845, the new Wittenberg in Springfield, Ohio, received a charter from the State of Ohio empowering it to "do such acts as may be necessary to [promote] theological and scientific knowledge"

In September 1959, in honor of the original Wittenberg and the man whose ideas transformed the world, President Clarence C. Stoughton revived the wearing of the red cap worn by Martin Luther. During the 16th century, red caps were worn by teachers as a badge of office and as protection from the cold drafts blowing through the halls. Today, complete with ear tabs and made of red velvet, the cap is worn by the President of the University and is given as a presidential award to those receiving honorary degrees and the Medal of Honor from Wittenberg. In a memorable Commencement ceremony, June 15, 1975, the late President Emeritus Clarence Stoughton, in his last public appearance, removed his cap and presented it to President William A. Kinnison, who, in turn, gave it to his successor at Dr. Baird Tipson's inauguration on November 4, 1995.

The cap may also be worn by Wittenberg officials of vice-presidential level and above, department chairs, tenured faculty, University pastor, and delegates appointed by the president to represent him/her at academic functions such as inaugurations and dedications. Also eligible to wear the cap are Wittenberg alumni who have earned a baccalaureate degree from Wittenberg University and are either of vice presidential rank or above, department chairs, or tenured faculty at two-, three-, or four-year, fully accredited institutions of higher education.

Symbols of Learning

The academic procession as seen today is a pageant made colorful by the dress and ceremony inherited from the medieval universities of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The principal features of academic dress are three: the gown, the cap, and the hood. To preserve the dignity and the meaning of these features, American universities agreed on a definite system in 1895 and set up a code of academic dress for the colleges and universities of the United States. In 1932, the American Council on Education presented a revised code, which largely governs the style of academic dress used in our country today.

The Gown. The flowing gown comes from the 12th century. Some think it was worn in olden times as protection against the cold of unheated buildings. It has become symbolic of the democracy of scholarship, for it completely covers any dress of rank or social standing underneath. Black gowns are acceptable for all institutions, but some universities have adopted optional colors for gowns; for example, Yale, Yale blue; Harvard, crimson; Columbia, light blue; Princeton, black with orange trim. The gown has pointed sleeves for the bachelor's degree; long, closed sleeves for the master's degree with a slit for the arm; and round, open sleeves for the doctor's degree. For the bachelor's or master's

degree, the gown has no trimmings. For the doctor's degree, it is faced down the front with velvet and has three bars of velvet across the sleeves in the color distinctive of the faculty or discipline to which the degree pertains. Some of the colors most frequently seen and the fields they represent are: blue – philosophy; purple – law; green – medicine; yellow – science; light blue – education; red – theology; white – literature and humane letters. The official colors of the college may appear in the gown and its decorations.

The Cap. When Roman law freed the slave, the privilege of wearing a cap was won. And so the academic cap is a sign of the freedom of scholarship and the responsibility and dignity with which scholarship endows the wearer. Old poetry records the cap of scholarship

as square to symbolize the book, although some authorities claim that the mortarboard is a symbol of the Masons, a privileged guild. The color of the tassel on the cap denotes the discipline.

The Hood. Heraldically the hood is an inverted shield with one or more chevrons of a secondary color on the ground of the primary color of the college. The color of the facing of the hood denotes the discipline represented by the degree; the color of the lining of the hood designates the college by which the degree was granted.

The Cord. The colored cord worn by today's graduates represents membership in their academic discipline's honor society.

The Wittenberg Torch

During today's ceremony, the Class of 2025 will carry on the tradition of celebrating the University's motto, "Having Light We Pass It On To Others." In keeping with the image depicted on the University's official seal as shown on the Commencement program cover, Commencement marks a symbolic passing of the torch from the Class of 2025 to the Class of 2026. The event serves to symbolize the passing of light from one generation to the next, which has defined

the Wittenberg experience for 175 years and united alumni across all classes.

Designed and handcrafted by Kenny Lake, retired carpenter foreman from Wittenberg's Physical Plant, at the request of the Class of 2006, the Torch used in today's ceremony is made entirely of walnut with 28 coats of tung oil applied. The flame itself consists of an intricate arrangement of brass, bronze, and copper petals, which Ed Charney, professor emeritus of art, helped to create.

The Wittenberg Municipal Coat of Arms

The municipal coat of arms of Wittenberg, City of Luther, reflects the city's historical origins and significance. The fortress rising above the blue water symbolizes the medieval walled city on the banks of the river Elbe. (The city's fortifications were removed in 1873.) The silver fish refers to the abundant fishing that was once part of the region's riches. The two shields displayed against the background of the city walls form the crest of the Elector of Saxony, whose court resided at Wittenberg. The yellow and green crest to the right, divided by a garland of heraldic lozenges, symbolic of crowns, represents the ducal house. The crest to the left with the crossed

sword represents the office of Imperial Grand Marshal of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, an office held by the Duke of Saxony in his capacity as Elector. (An Elector was one of the princes of the Holy Roman Empire granted the privilege of participating in the election of the Emperor.)

The city's coat of arms is carried in today's procession to symbolize the establishment of formal ties between the city and Wittenberg University in 1995 and as a symbol of the heritage that the city and University share.

A Brief History of Commencement Exercises at Wittenberg

The event of Commencement is an old academic ritual but one that has undergone continuous change at Wittenberg.

Although two students completed the requirements for graduation in 1850, one headed for the California gold fields, and the other, J. F. Mitchell, elected to graduate in 1851. Mitchell's grades enabled him to be the valedictorian of his new class.

Wittenberg's first Commencement in 1851 was held not in May but in September. On Wednesday, September 10, President Samuel Sprecher delivered the baccalaureate sermon in First Lutheran Church. His subject was "The Duties of Educated Men and the Manner in Which They Should Be Performed." On Thursday, the literary societies met together in the city hall to hear the first of their annual speakers, The Rev. Edwin H. Nevin, D.D., who spoke on "Faith in God – the Foundation of Individual and National Greatness." On Friday, the Commencement exercises were held in the city hall, and each of the eight members of the class delivered an oration and received the A. B. degree. Music was provided by the Independent Sax-Horn Band of Dayton, Ohio, an aggregation that featured the newly invented and, to older listeners, strange-sounding sax-horn.

Respect was paid to students of high academic achievement by enlisting them to deliver the various orations of the Commencement. One could tell the achievements of the top scholars of the class by the assignment given each student in the exercises: the valedictorian, salutatorian, Latin orator, Greek orator, English orator, German orator, etc.

As years passed and the graduating classes grew larger, the student orations grew shorter. Eventually only a select few students spoke. Finally no student spoke at all, and an annual visiting speaker became a formal part of the Commencement exercises. The change was a pleasing one to students. The student literary societies had begun the practice of jointly sponsoring an outside speaker several years earlier in order to bring outside personalities of the students' own choosing to the campus event. The advent of a Commencement

speaker thus meant the institutionalizing of the students' desire for a speaker outside the school's normal circle and at the same time freed students from the chore of preparing Commencement addresses. With these changes, however, students became increasingly passive observers at an event in which they once performed the major tasks.

The faculty, graduating class, and student body used to meet in the First Lutheran Church, from which they were led by a band from High Street, up Main, then to Market (now Fountain), and then to the old market house, where public Commencement exercises took place. In 1869, this procession was abandoned. Exercises were held in the city hall and later in Black's Opera House and in 1879 were moved to the college grounds. The Class of 1896 sought to add dignity and fame to itself by inaugurating the custom of appearing in caps and gowns. In 1904, at the first Commencement under Dr. Charles G. Heckert, the procession was revived, and faculty, graduates, and other participants processed to the campus hillside for Commencement.

Commencement exercises were held in the Springfield city hall from 1851 to 1868; in Black's Opera House from 1869 to 1878; and in the campus grove, south of Myers Hall and east of Recitation Hall, from 1879 to 1926. Only since 1927 have Commencements been held in Commencement Hollow. In bad weather, the event is staged in the Health, Wellness & Athletics Complex.

Today the event is in many ways a collection of private family celebrations. It is yet a collective event of the academic community but one in an era when academic communities are more diverse and fragmented than in an earlier day. The validity of the exercises as a demonstration of student competence, moreover, has long since been superseded by less public measurements and criteria, and the dimensions of institutional accountability are decidedly different and more complex.

The format and significance with which Commencement will be presented in the

years ahead remain to be seen, yet one central factor remains constant. Under the charter of the institution, only the Board of Directors may grant the student the degree which he or she has earned. This is accomplished by issuing a certificate that “authenticates and perpetuates” the student’s achievements. The faculty recommends, the Board of Directors

confirms, and the President publicly awards the degree, representing the institution’s common action. That is the fundamental meaning of Commencement. As an event that focuses attention upon the primary mission of the institution, it will survive in the ritual of academia so long as it emphasizes that essential meaning.

Senior Class Giving Tradition

Wittenberg alumni have long demonstrated a commitment to giving back, helping fellow Tigers pursue their dreams and continue their education. In the spirit of this tradition, we proudly announce the Philanthropy Cord. The Wittenberg University green and gold Philanthropy Cord recognizes the generosity of giving back to your community as you and your classmates join together to support future generations of Tigers. The cord is known as a symbol of tradition and excellence to wear

proudly during the Commencement ceremony. The Senior Class of 2025 has chosen to pass our light and support our beloved Wittenberg by making our Senior Class gifts to support scholarships.

Leave your legacy and make your Class Gift to support future generations of Tigers here: www.wittenberg.edu/senior-gift-2025

Learn more about how you can connect with fellow alumni at: www.wittenberg.edu/alumni

THE CLASS OF 2025

Officers

Ms. Victoria G. Pipinich, Senior Class Representative
Ms. Grace A. Hehman, Senior Class Representative

Honorary Class Members

Dr. Michael L. Frandsen,
President of the University

Dr. Marie Bashaw, DNP, RN, NEA-BC,
Director of Nursing

Dr. Raymond Dudek,
Professor of Chemistry

Dr. Jon Duraj,
Former Assistant Vice President for Student Development & Senior Associate Dean of Students

Dr. Casey Gill,
Former Vice President of Student Development and Dean of Students

Ms. Molly Hopkins, MS, AT-C,
Assistant Athletic Trainer

Mr. Jade C. W. Jones,
Former Director of Student Involvement and Fraternity & Sorority Life

Dr. Mike Mattison,
Former Associate Provost

Dr. Richard Phillips,
Associate Professor of Biology

Dr. Di Wang,
Assistant Professor of Business & Economics

MISSION STATEMENT

Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.





