



MIDDLEBURY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

COMMENCEMENT

MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT
FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2026

MIDDLEBURY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Commencement Exercises and Conferring of Degrees

Established 1915



PROCESSIONAL

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND INVOCATION

Danielle Stillman

Rabbi/Associate Chaplain

Jesse Bruchac

Director, School of Abenaki

OPENING

Ian B. Baucom

President

MUSICAL SELECTION

“Chinese Poetry and the Guqin”

Mr. Kang Zhou and Ms. Ju Min Wang

Chinese School: Celebrating 60 Years

WELCOME

Stephen B. Snyder

Dean of Language Schools

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Mayumi Oka

CONFERRING OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREES

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING DEGREES

**CONFERRING OF DOCTOR OF
MODERN LANGUAGES DEGREES**

CONFERRING OF HONORARY DEGREE

Mayumi Oka

MUSICAL SELECTION

Fredy Bonilla, German for Singers Program
“Gamaliel Painter’s Cane”
Please sing along (page 18)!

CLOSING

Stephen B. Snyder

RECESSIONAL

Kevin Parizo, *piano*

**THE FRIEDA DERDEYN BAMBAS PRIZE IN
FRENCH LITERARY STUDIES**

Rosa Freeman Frank
Adriel Julio Roncal

**2026
CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS**

ARABIC

Salam Q. Defar *of Washington*

CHINESE

Pingting Huang *of Florida*
Paul Benjamin Murray *of New Hampshire*
Xuelian Yan *of Connecticut*

FRENCH

Emma Elizabeth Bryan *of Vermont*
Ian Olivier Butcher *of Ohio*
Brigitte Ellington *of Kansas*
Gabriella Marie Forster *of California*
Rosa Freeman Frank *of Massachusetts*
Jonathan Lincoln Fried *of New York*
Brendan Nolan Germain *of New Jersey*
Reginald Lee Hefner *of Pennsylvania*
Nathalie Hartshorne Ingersoll *of Vermont*
Madeleine Maria Lechner *of New York*
Aidan Keanuhea McGadden *of New Hampshire*
Josue Antonio Ortega *of Texas*
Anthony John Pancrazio *of New Jersey*
Adriel Julio Roncal *of Massachusetts*
Isabel Wiles Rubin *of Connecticut*
Samantha Carol Sullivan *of Vermont*
Samantha Noelle Thomas *of Minnesota*
Noelle Thompson *of Rhode Island*

GERMAN

Thomas Dag Horn *of Massachusetts*
Cobey Mauldin *of Massachusetts*
Richard Schachter *of Maryland*

HEBREW

Shir Blonder *of Israel*
Marianna Gelfand *of Israel*
Nadav Linial *of Ohio*
Avital Lupovitch *of Illinois*
Merav Talmor *of California*

ITALIAN

Mina Louise Cordioli *of North Carolina*
Crystal Joy Gibb *of Alabama*
Nicole Jacqueline AuCoin Lee *of Montana*
Benn Stephen Padulo *of Canada*
Lauren Mary Watson *of California*
Lilly Katherine Wernick *of Georgia*

JAPANESE

Adam Mc Erlean Bowen *of Japan*
Mable Mei Fang Huang *of California*
William Hiro McCormick *of Massachusetts*
Sydney Paige Lukesic Michael *of Wisconsin*
Akiyo Osumi *of Maryland*
Melvin Yacib Rivera Muñiz *of Puerto Rico*

KOREAN

Jeong Ah Ahn *of Texas*

RUSSIAN

Elijah M. Aubrey *of Utah*
Cameron Cronwall *of California*
Julia Corrigan Rayhill *of New York*
Eilis Regan *of New York*
Jordan K. Scott *of Nevada*
Joshua McFarland Silver *of Ohio*

SPANISH

Emily S. Adams *of Illinois*
Natalie Bourque *of Massachusetts*
Amneris Caraballo-Medina *of Puerto Rico*
Isata L. Conteh *of New York*
Isaiah William Degner *of Minnesota*
Jesse Landers Facey *of New York*
Micah Rae Flanery *of Kentucky*
Sara Galli *of Canada*
Christian Gomez Reyes *of New Jersey*
Taciana Jeudy *of Florida*
William Joseph Klotz Jr. *of Maryland*
Grace Ellen Kushner *of Pennsylvania*
M. Javier Makepeace *of Oregon*
Elsa Mamani Pachuri *of Maryland*
Cristina Melchor-Ortiz *of North Carolina*
Maggie Jean Ritthaler *of Illinois*
Chalena D. Rudolph *of Minnesota*
Jessica Solodkin Lilienthal *of New Jersey*
Taylor Marie Stevens *of Florida*
Susanne Frawley Sullivan *of Massachusetts*
Justin Elliott Torre *of Massachusetts*
Michelle Bani Ziporovich Velazquez *of Mexico*

**2026
CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING
SECONDARY EDUCATION MODERN LANGUAGES**

Georgia Michelle Beatty *of Vermont*
Samuel Raymond Bell *of Massachusetts*
Meigan Quetzal Clark *of New York*
Irene Elisenda Diaz Mora *of New York*
Cesar J. Espinoza Ramirez *of California*
Jorge Espinoza Ramírez *of California*
Nanci Lenton *of Nevada*
Jacquelyn Marie O'Connell *of Illinois*
Ani G. Ohanian *of California*
Samuel Lucas Schuler *of Maryland*
Josiah Benjamin Priest Siegel *of Massachusetts*
Julia Marie Sinatra *of Connecticut*

**2026
CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

THE SCHOOL OF HEBREW

Adi Katz *of Connecticut*
First Language: Hebrew Second Language: Spanish

Irit Stein *of Massachusetts*
First Language: Hebrew Second Language: Spanish

Ilan Yona *of California*
First Language: Hebrew Second Language: Spanish

THE ITALIAN SCHOOL

Marisa Z. Munzi Noe *of Italy*
First Language: Italian Second Language: Spanish

THE SPANISH SCHOOL

Christopher Daniel Dinon *of Pennsylvania*
First Language: Spanish Second Language: French

Jessica Lee Graham Hanley *of California*
First Language: Spanish Second Language: Italian

Includes students who received their degrees on March 1, 2026, those who are receiving their degrees today, and those who will receive their degrees on March 1, 2027.

**COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER
HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT**

MAYUMI OKA

Mayumi Oka is an assistant research scientist in the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, where she has also served as director of the Japanese Language Program (JLP), as a senior lecturer (Lecture 4) in Japanese, and as the lead instructor for the Japanese Language Pedagogy course for over 20 years.

She received her master's in education and human development from the University of Rochester in 1985. After completing her degree, she taught Japanese at the University of Rochester, Sophia University in Japan, Columbia, and Princeton before joining the University of Michigan faculty in 2000.

Over the past 40 years she has been dedicated to strengthening the study of Japanese language and culture at universities and beyond. As director of the JLP at the University of Michigan, she developed the program into one of the strongest in the United States. Her fields of study are Japanese language pedagogy and material development, and she has authored or coauthored numerous textbooks for learners of Japanese that are used around the world. In addition, Mayumi and her husband, Masao, have been generous donors to the Japanese programs at the University of Michigan.

Middlebury's School of Japanese has also benefited from Mayumi's commitment to Japanese studies. She played a key role in the development of its graduate programs. Her global visibility and leadership were pivotal in securing foundational grants from the American Association of Teachers of Japanese, the Laurasian Institution, and others to establish scholarship support for these programs. Her family has also provided substantial financial backing through the Tobira Funds to help cultivate the next generation of Japanese educators. She taught at the School of Japanese for three summers, and her lasting influence is evident in how her pedagogical principles continue to shape the school's core curriculum.

MIDDLEBURY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Stephen B. Snyder
Dean of Language Schools

GERMAN SCHOOL (founded 1915)	Bettina Matthias, <i>Director</i>
BETTY ASHBURY JONES MA '86 SCHOOL OF FRENCH (founded 1916)	Armelle Crouzières-Ingenthron, <i>Director</i>
SCHOOL OF SPANISH (founded 1917)	Jacobo Sefamí, <i>Director</i>
ITALIAN SCHOOL (founded 1932)	Donato Santeramo, <i>Director</i>
KATHRYN WASSERMAN DAVIS SCHOOL OF RUSSIAN (founded 1945)	Tatiana Smorodinska, <i>Director</i>
CHINESE SCHOOL (founded 1966)	Cecilia Chang, <i>Director</i>
SCHOOL OF JAPANESE (founded 1970)	Motoko Tabuse, <i>Director</i>
ARABIC SCHOOL (founded 1982)	Nader Morkus, <i>Director</i>
PORTUGUESE SCHOOL (founded 2003)	Luis Gonçalves, <i>Director</i>
SCHOOL OF HEBREW (founded 2008)	Adi Raz, <i>Director</i>
SCHOOL OF KOREAN (founded 2015)	Sahie Kang, <i>Director</i>
SCHOOL OF ABENAKI (founded 2020)	Jesse Bruchac, <i>Director</i>
MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING (MAT) (founded 2025)	Jason Martel, <i>Director</i>

STAFF OF THE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

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Molly Baker, *Associate Dean of Admissions*
Kara Gennarelli Doner, *Admissions Systems Specialist*
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Thor Sawin, *Associate Dean of Curriculum*

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Mimi Clark, *Chinese*
Sheila Schwaneflugel, *French*
Tina Ilgner, *German*
Joseph Tamagni, *Italian*
Robin Piya, *Japanese and Korean*
Laura Bachand, *Portuguese*
Oliver Carling, *Russian*
Anna Jackson, *Spanish*
Holly Stark, *Spanish*

MIDDLEBURY C.V. STARR SCHOOLS ABROAD

Carlos Vélez
Dean of International Programs

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SCHOOL IN BRAZIL	Joyce Fernandes <i>Associate Professor and Director</i>
SCHOOL IN CAMEROON	Christiane Magnido <i>Associate Professor and Director</i>
SCHOOL IN CHILE	Juan Pastene <i>Director</i>
SCHOOL IN GREATER CHINA	Zhang Kai <i>Director, Beijing</i> Hung I-Chiao <i>Director, Taiwan</i>
SCHOOL IN FRANCE	David Paoli <i>Associate Professor and Director</i> Amy Tondou <i>Associate Director</i>
SCHOOL IN GERMANY	Heike Fahrenberg <i>Associate Professor and Director</i>
SCHOOL IN ITALY	Rosa Cuda <i>Associate Professor and Director</i>
SCHOOL IN JAPAN	Sanae Eda <i>Associate Professor and Director</i>
SCHOOL IN JORDAN	Kerstin Wilsch <i>Associate Professor and Director</i>

SCHOOL IN MOROCCO

Samir Jaafar
Associate Professor and Director

SCHOOL IN PUERTO RICO

Teresa Peña-Jordan
Associate Professor and Director

SCHOOL IN RUSSIA

(currently in Kazakhstan)

Nana Tsikhelashvili
Associate Professor and Director

SCHOOL IN SPAIN

Patricia Rodríguez
Associate Professor and Director
 Kim Griffin
Director of the Program in Córdoba

**SCHOOL IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM**

Guy Perry
Principal

SCHOOL IN URUGUAY

Claudio González Chiaramonte
Associate Professor and Director

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Ian B. Baucom

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ABOUT THE MIDDLEBURY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Middlebury Language Schools and graduate programs are recognized around the world for their excellence and their unique, immersive approach to language learning. Since the establishment of the first school—the German School—in 1915, nearly 50,000 students have attended one of the schools, and more than 12,000 have received advanced degrees. Today, students study 12 languages in Vermont, in addition to our graduate programs abroad in Argentina, France, Germany, Italy, Kazakhstan, and Spain. The Middlebury Language Schools provide students of all levels with innovative instruction in language through a curriculum that incorporates linguistics, literature, culture, and area studies. The Middlebury Language Pledge® is a hallmark of the commitment students bring to their experience and commits them to communicating only in their language of study during their time spent on campus. The pledge creates the opportunity for unmatched growth in language ability.

GAMALIEL PAINTER'S CANE

Gamaliel Painter's cane is one of the most treasured artifacts of the College. Once the walking stick of the founder of both the town and the College, today it is carried by the president in the academic procession. It serves as the College's mace and as a symbol of institutional strength and character. The president will present to members of the Class of 2025 a replica of the original cane, reminding the graduates that they go forward from Middlebury with the strength and character of the College always at their side.

GAMALIEL PAINTER'S CANE

Words by Charles B. Wright, Professor Emeritus of English, Hon DLitt, Class of 1915

Music by E. Pruda Harwood Wiley, Class of 1912

First sung at the Commencement Luncheon, June 20, 1917

When Gamaliel Painter died,
He was Middlebury's pride,
A sturdy pioneer without a stain;
And he left his all by will
To the College on the Hill
And included in a codicil a cane.

Chorus

Oh, it's rap, rap, rap,
And it's tap, tap, tap,
If you listen you can hear it sounding plain;
For a helper true and tried,
As the generations glide,
There is nothing like Gamaliel Painter's cane.



Middlebury Language
Schools