

PIEDMONT UNIVERSITY

UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE COMMENCEMENT

Friday, July 18, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.
Johnny Mize Athletic Center



PROGRAM

Presiding

Marshall M. Criser III

President of the University

PROCESSIONAL “The Liberty Bell March” *United States Army Field Band*
The audience will rise as the academic procession begins and remain standing until after the first hymn.

INVOCATION The Reverend Joyce Acree

HYMN “The Star Spangled Banner” Ellawyn Ketch
Piedmont University Graduate Student

Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming
Whose broad stripes and bright stars thru the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER President Criser

ADDRESS Dr. Michael Friedline
Associate Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology

CONFERRING OF DEGREES Vickie Turner
Vice President for Academic Affairs

The conferring of degrees is authorized by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the President and Faculty. Vice President for Academic Affairs Vickie Turner, will present the dean of college who will read the names of the candidates. Chairman Gus Arrendale and President Criser will award diplomas to recipients of the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Business Administration, and Education Specialist.



HYMN TO THE ALMA MATER..... Ellawyn Ketch
Piedmont University Graduate Student

Please rise as Ellawyn Ketch performs the Hymn to the Alma Mater. Remain standing until the conclusion of the recessional.

<p>Verse 1</p> <p>Where the Georgian hills grow purple In the sunset glow, Proudly stands our Alma Mater In the vale below.</p>	<p>Verse 2</p> <p>As around the mighty oak tree Clings the ivy vine, So around thee, dear old Piedmont Loyal hearts entwine. (Refrain)</p>
<p>Refrain</p> <p>Green and Gold float on for aye, Old Piedmont for thee, We, thy loyal sons and daughters Bless thy memory.</p>	<p>Verse 3</p> <p>Here's to thee, then dear old Piedmont May you ever stand As an emblem of the noblest In our fair Southland. (Refrain)</p>

BENEDICTION..... The Reverend Joyce Acree

RECESSIONAL “Radetzky March”Johann Strauss Sr.

Faculty Marshal	Albert Pleysier, <i>Professor of History</i>
Registrar	Melissa Fortner
Student Marshals	Sheena Patrick, <i>Associate Registrar</i> Lily Cranford, <i>Student Services Specialist</i> Yareli Vazquez, <i>Student Services Specialist</i>
Gonfalon Bearer	Hannah Marlowe

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Dr. Michael Friedline is an associate professor of Neuroscience and Psychology at Piedmont University. He began his career at Piedmont in 2016 as an adjunct, moving up the ranks to assistant professor in 2018 and associate professor in 2023. Dr. Friedline was instrumental in the formation of an undergraduate program in neuroscience that began Fall 2023. In addition to his role as associate professor, Dr. Friedline is currently serving his second term as Faculty Senate Chair. Dr. Friedline holds a B.A. in Psychology (1983), a M.S. in Biopsychology (1987), Ph.D. of Philosophy and Biopsychology (1995), and a Master of Public Health (2013) from the University of Georgia. He has been a Certified Addiction Counselor, Level II, since 2001. In May 2025, Dr. Friedline was named the Outstanding Undergraduate Advisor Award winner at Piedmont University.

Dr. Friedline has been married for 37 years and has two daughters. One of them, Dr. Mary Friedline, is an assistant professor of Philosophy and Religion at Piedmont. In his free time, he enjoys running long distances, gardening, cooking, reading, and listening to music.

DEGREE CANDIDATES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Steve Jacobs, Dean

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Caitlyn Marie Chilito
Psychology

Abby Noel Hutchinson
Sociology

Elizabeth Anne Ivey
Political Science

Austin Lee Jones
History and Government

Gabriel Lane Richman
Theatre Arts

Kelbi Christiana Sceau
Political Science

Alexyss Symone Smith
Psychology

Bailey James Wiseman
Mass Communications

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Jeremy Cooper
Computer Science

WALKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

J. Kerry Waller, Dean

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Kyle A Carlson
Business Administration

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Crystal Evans

R.H. DANIEL COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Jaime Johnson-Huff, Dean

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Ja'Vierre Sharika Marlowe
Sport and Fitness Administration

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Megan Easterday
Health and Human Performance

Anika Nguyen
Health and Human Performance

Lindley Marie Ward
Health and Human Performance

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Octavius Mulligan, Dean

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

Stephanie Marie Boldt
Elementary Education

Ayana Daniel-Lewis
Elementary Education

LaDawn Glass
Art Education

Kathryn Murphy
Elementary Education

Martina Stewart
Special Education

Savannah Sweatmon
Elementary Education

Beatrix Washell
Art Education

Eric Christopher Wyatt
Elementary Education

MASTER OF ARTS

Elizabeth Claire Bush
Art Education

Lydia Carr
Special Education

Allyson Heinlein
Elementary Education

Ashley Hutchinson
Educational Studies

Akyriyah Johnson
Special Education

Samantha Levine
Elementary Education

Brison Noggle
History Education

Misty Manous Norton
Middle Grades Education

Michelle Quinn
Elementary Education

Brooke Ramey
Middle Grades Education

Robert Reedy
Elementary Education

Leddy J. Serrano Toledo
Educational Studies

Bobby Wiggins
History Education

Patricia Roberts Williams
Special Education

EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Meagan Akins
Curriculum and Instruction

Stephanie Alston
Curriculum and Instruction

Tammy Anderson
Music Education

Joshua Astacio
Curriculum and Instruction

Shonda Atkinson
Curriculum and Instruction

Callie Barnes
Curriculum and Instruction

Jennifer L. Bolton
Curriculum and Instruction

Julie Bosworth
Music Education

Adam Brooks
Music Education

LaToya M. Brooks
Music Education

Chantal Brown
Curriculum and Instruction

Temika Brown
Curriculum and Instruction

Maxine Mae Ezell
Curriculum and Instruction

Kellie Fallon
Art Education

Thomas James Floyd
Curriculum and Instruction

Taylor Franklin
Art Education

Megan Gibson
Music Education

Sharon Henry
Curriculum and Instruction

Victoria Ijemere
Curriculum and Instruction

Amanda Hill Irby
Music Education

Josey Jazmin Jimenez
Music Education

Christina Jones
Art Education

Brittney McCollum
Curriculum and Instruction

Tanya Meadows
Curriculum and Instruction

Kaitlin Alexandra Merck
Music Education

Jacey Partain
Curriculum and Instruction

Kennedy Reily
Curriculum and Instruction

Matthew Scott Rubenstein
Music Education

Caroline Rubio
Curriculum and Instruction

Shedra Greene Searcy
Curriculum and Instruction

Charles C. Seidel
Curriculum and Instruction

Karen Sexton
Curriculum and Instruction

Jennifer Reed Simpson
Curriculum and Instruction

Nicholas Singleton
Curriculum and Instruction

Jillian Smith
Curriculum and Instruction

Yuri Ae Strom
Art Education

Sarah Hope Thornley
Curriculum and Instruction

Allison Paige Thornton
Curriculum and Instruction

Melody Austin Tompkins
Curriculum and Instruction

Ayanna Turner
Curriculum and Instruction

Alexandria Varlack
Curriculum and Instruction

Sharonita Wade
Curriculum and Instruction

Taylor Wallace
Curriculum and Instruction

Bryant Williams
Curriculum and Instruction

Raquel Tahnee Wymbbs
Curriculum and Instruction

Catherine Young
Art Education

The list of degree candidates was compiled prior to commencement, and the status of some candidates may have changed since that time.

The listing of the names in this program in no way implies an obligation on the part of Piedmont University to award a given degree.

HONOR SOCIETIES, ORGANIZATIONS, & GROUPS

ALPHA PSI OMEGA

Gabriel Lane Richman

TRI-ALPHA

Kelbi Christiana Sceau

AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

Kyle A Carlson

PIEDMONT STOLES & CORDS

Graduation stoles and cords represent achievement, success, or membership at Piedmont University.

R.H. Daniel School of Nursing

Apricot stole

Athletics

Green stole

Criminalists Club

Blue stole

Organization:

American Marketing Association

Campus Activities Board (CAB)

Fellowship of Christian Athletics (FCA)

Health Science Leadership Academy

M.A.N.E.

Piedmont University Student Nurses Assoc, NSNA

Piedmont Peer Tutors

Resident Assistants

SAIL

Student Government Association

Team Piedmont Ambassadors

Zeta Tau Alpha

Navy Blue, White cord

Light Yellow cord

Royal Blue, Red, Gold cord

Old Gold, White cord

Forest Green, Silver cord

Silver, Light Blue, Purple cord

Service Pin

Service Pin

Service Pin

Green, Gold cord

Forest Green, Black cord

Teal, Gray cord

Society:

Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha)

Alpha Lambda Delta

Alpha Psi Omega

Chi Alpha Sigma

College of Nursing and Health Science Honor Society

Delta Mu Delta

Lillian E. Smith Scholars

Natural Science Honors Program

National Society Leadership and Success

Psi Chi

Sigma Tau Delta

Society for Collegiate Journalists

Navy Blue, Gray/Silver cord, and Service Pin

Red, Gold, White cord

Light Blue, Gold cord

Gold, Black cord, and Gold medallion

Green, White cord

Purple, Gold cord

White cord

White, Gold cord

Silver, Black cord

Blue, Silver cord

Cardinal Red, Black cord

Scarlet, Gray cord

COMMENCEMENT

COMMENCEMENT

When Piedmont was founded in 1897, commencement was a five-day affair filled with speeches, sermons, academic and debating competition, dinners, and—finally—the conferral of degrees. Over the years, the time allotted for commencement was shortened, a reflection of the quickened pace of the modern era. Piedmont University still retains many commencement customs and traditions that date back to the 12th century, including the use of the mace, gonfalon, and academic garb.

MACE

The Piedmont mace was handcrafted by Dr. Patrick Taylor, former chair of the Department of Art. The staff is carved from American cherry wood, and the handle is leather. The base is cast in bronze. The pommel, located at the bottom of the staff, symbolically represents the foundation of the University and is inscribed with the date 1897.

The crown on top of the mace is a globe representing the University's commitment to the preparation of students for global work and service. The mace and attached seals represent the authority of Piedmont University to award academic degrees as prescribed by the institution's charter from the State of Georgia.

The flame of learning, cast in an alloy of bronze, sterling silver, and gold and mounted on the top of the mace, symbolizes student acquisition of knowledge from an academically accomplished and talented Piedmont University faculty. The tip of the flame forms an open hand representing the quest for spiritual and intellectual development in service to humankind.

GONFALON

Another Medieval trapping still used in modern commencement traditions at Piedmont University is the gonfalon, a banner hung from a crossbar instead of from a pole as commonly used for flags. A gonfalon is known as a standard, and in Italian tradition the "gonfalonier" is the standard bearer. Piedmont uses a ceremonial gonfalon that bears the University seal and is displayed at the head of the processional column.

ACADEMIC DRESS

Academic dress originates with the founding of European universities in the 12th century. All Medieval students were clerks (clerici) and wore the dress of the secular clergy. The oldest article of academic dress worn was the robe (roba), a loose gown, over which hung the habit (cappa), usually a kind of tunic with short, wide sleeves. The Medieval hood (caputium) could be gathered around the neck or pulled up on the head as a turban. There were three kinds of caps: the round pileus, reserved for doctoral dignity; the tena, a round cap with strings that were tied under the chin and worn by jurists; and the square birretium.

The basic design of academic costumes in the U.S. was established in 1895 and was first used at Piedmont by the class of 1902. There are three types of gowns, three styles of hoods, and two kinds of cap tassels used for the American academic garb. The bachelor's gown has long, pointed, open sleeves. The master's gown is similar but has longer sleeves that are closed at the bottom. The doctoral gown has full-length lapels of velvet and bell-shaped sleeves with three horizontal velvet bars. The color of gowns is usually black, although some colleges have specified that doctoral students may wear gowns showing distinctive colors.

The hood varies according to respective academic degrees, with the doctoral hood being longer and fuller in shape than the others. The academic field of study can be determined by the color of the velvet facing sewn on the hood. The color represents the academic field of study as follows: white for the arts; gold-yellow for science; drab for business administration; lemon for librarianship; scarlet for theology; brown for fine arts; light blue for education; pink for music; and dark blue for philosophy. The hood is lined in silk displaying the colors of the degree-granting institution. Tassels for bachelor's and master's are black. The doctoral tassels are gold.

Piedmont faculty have earned degrees at a number of post-baccalaureate institutions, and most wear the doctoral hood. The hood colors worn by some Piedmont faculty represent the following academic institutions: purple and gold (Louisiana State University); red and black (University of Georgia); crimson and white (Indiana University); silver and red (Georgia State University); blue and gold (West Virginia University); gold and white (Georgia Institute of Technology); white and light blue (Pennsylvania State University); orange and white (University of Tennessee); crimson and white (University of Alabama); blue and white (University of Kentucky); and blue and buff (The George Washington University).

