

UC **SANTA BARBARA**

Gevirtz Graduate School of Education
Department of Education

Commencement
Class of 2025

June 12, 2025



This special day and ceremony celebrate a major achievement in your life.

The warm thoughts and good wishes of the faculty, the administration, and your many friends at UC Santa Barbara go with you in all your future endeavors.

All of us are confident that your time here has instilled within you the knowledge, skills and confidence to enrich the world around you, and that your future will be as challenging and fulfilling as your years at UC Santa Barbara.

COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM

WELCOME

Dr. Andrew Fedders
Faculty Chair

Dr. Jeffrey F. Milem
Jules Zimmer Dean

CALL OF PH.D. CANDIDATES

Noreen Balos
Advisors: Dr. Jeffrey Milem, Dr. Sharon Conley
and Dr. Gustavo Fischman

Matthew David Bennett
Advisor: Dr. Danielle Harlow

Liliana Garcia
Advisors: Dr. Julie Bianchini and Dr. Danielle Harlow

Donald W. McNish
Advisor: Dr. Julie Bianchini

Alexandria Muller
Advisor: Dr. Danielle Harlow

Royce Olarte
Advisor: Dr. Sarah Roberts

Hannali Medel Pajela
Advisor: Dr. Mary Betsy Brenner

Jamie Pillsbury-Fischler
Advisor: Dr. Sarah Roberts

Sabiha Sultana
Advisors: Dr. Diana Arya and Dr. Andrew Maul

Courtney Wright
Advisor: Dr. Rebeca Mireles Rios

CALL OF M.A. CANDIDATES

Margarita Rodriguez
Advisor: Dr. Amy Kyratzis

Jing Su
Advisor: Dr. Mian Wang

Nicole Mapp
Advisor: Dr. Rachel Lambert

CLOSING

Dr. Andrew Fedders

PH.D. CANDIDATES



Noreen Lou Balos

Dissertation:

"Diversity & Design: Reimagining Inclusion and Support in Higher Education STEM Settings"

Advisors:

Dr. Jeffrey Milem, Dr. Sharon Conley and Dr. Gustavo Fischman



Matthew David Bennett

Dissertation:

"Deeper Learning in Teacher Education: From Teacher Educators to Preservice Teachers"

Advisor: Dr. Danielle Harlow



Liliana Garcia

Dissertation:

"Pre-service Secondary Teachers' Identity Journey Toward Socially Just STEM Education: A Case Study"

Advisors:

Dr. Julie Bianchini and Dr. Danielle Harlow

PH.D. CANDIDATES



Honeiah Karimi

Dissertation:

"Educational Measurement in Virtual Reality Contexts"

Advisors:

Dr. Diana Arya and Dr. Andrew Maul



Donald W. McNish

Dissertation:

"Transforming Climate Literacy Instruction: The Development of the SAGE Framework Within a K-12 Professional Learning Program"

Advisor: Dr. Julie Bianchini



Alexandria Muller

Dissertation:

"An Investigation of Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Practices and Challenges in Science Centers"

Advisor: Dr. Danielle Harlow

PH.D. CANDIDATES



Royce Olarte

Dissertation:

*"Becoming a Mathematics Professor:
The Identities and Narratives of Mathematics
Graduate Students"*

Advisor: Dr. Sarah Roberts



Jamie Pillsbury-Fischler

Dissertation:

*"Distributed Leadership and Organizational
Change at One Title V Student Center"*

Advisor: Dr. Sarah Roberts



Sabiha Sultana

Dissertation:

*"Measuring K-8 Students' 21st Century
Writing Ability"*

Advisors:

Dr. Diana Arya and Dr. Andrew Maul

PH.D. CANDIDATES



Hannali Medel Pajela

Dissertation:

"Math Undergraduates' Transition to Proof: Navigating Argumentation Skills"

Advisor: Dr. Mary Betsy Brenner



Courtney Wright

Dissertation:

"Parental Childhood Experiences and Community Involvement that Influence the Way Children are Exposed to Environmentalism Within the Black Community"

Advisor: Dr. Rebeca Mireles Rios



Ye Yuan

Dissertation:

"AI vs Humans: Unraveling the Impact of Chatbots and Human Instructors on Spanish L2 Learners' Willingness to Communicate"

Advisor: Dr. Jin Sook Lee

M.A. CANDIDATES



Margarita Rodriguez

Independent Research Project:

"Using Everything We Know About Language to Communicate: Bilingual-Teacher Perspectives

on Translanguaging as Pedagogy"

Advisor: Dr. Amy Kyratzis



Jing Su

Independent Research Project:

"An Exploration of Mental Health of Chinese International Undergraduate Students"

Advisor: Dr. Mian Wang



Nicole Mapp

Independent Research Project:

"A Black Deaf Woman's Reflections on Peace Corps Deaf Education"

Advisor: Dr. Rachel Lambert



Congratulations from the Department of Education

FACULTY

Lucy Arellano, Ph.D.

Diana Arya, Ph.D.

Tarek Azzam, Ph.D.

Julie Bianchini, Ph.D.

Tim Dewar, Ph.D.

Jason Duque, Ph.D.

Richard Duran, Ph.D.

Andrew Fedders, Ph.D.

Danielle Harlow, Ph.D.

Amy Kyratzis, Ph.D.

Rachel Lambert, Ph.D.

Jin Sook Lee, Ph.D.

Karin Lohwasser, Ph.D.

Hui-Ling Malone, Ph.D.

Andrew Maul, Ph.D.

Jeffrey Milem, Ph.D.

Rebeca Mireles Rios, Ph.D.

Amber Moran, Ph.D.

Maung Ting Nyeu, Ph.D.

Karen Nylund-Gibson, Ph.D.

Christopher Ograin, Ph.D.

Mayra Puente, Ph.D.

Sarah Roberts, Ph.D.

Laura Romo, Ph.D.

Carolyn Sattin-Bajaj, Ph.D.

Antar Tichavakunda, Ph.D.

Elizabeth van Es, Ph.D.

Mian Wang, Ph.D.

Special Thanks

We extend our appreciation to

Brenda Lavin and Antoniya Terzieva for their help in organizing the ceremony, the Graduate Student Association in Education (GSAE) Board for their assistance at this event, Terrill and Delwin Carter for providing the beautiful music, and Andrew Fedders for his leadership as the Chair of the Department of Education.