

CLASS OF 2025

*Doctoral  
Commencement*



1 MAY 2025

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

# CONTENTS

This program is for ceremonial purposes only and is not to be considered an official confirmation of degree information. It contains only those details available at the publication deadline. Please note that not all graduates' names are listed, as some students opt out of having their names appear in Northeastern publications.

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# A UNIVERSITY ENGAGED WITH THE WORLD

## THE HISTORY OF NORTHEASTERN

Founded in 1898, Northeastern is a global research university, the recognized leader in experiential learning, and renowned for its innovative approach to education. Yet it had humble beginnings.

At the end of the 19th century, immigrants and first-generation Americans constituted more than half of Boston's population. Chief among the city's institutions committed to helping those new to the country improve their lives was the Boston YMCA, where young men gathered to hear lectures on literature, history, music, and other subjects considered essential to intellectual growth.

In response to the enthusiastic demand for these lectures, the directors of the YMCA organized the "Evening Institute for Young Men" in May 1896. Frank Palmer Speare, a well-known teacher and high-school principal with considerable experience in public schools, was hired as the institute's director. Two years later, under Speare's direction, the YMCA advertised the creation of the "Department of Law of the Boston YMCA," and on October 3, 1898, Robert Gray Dodge taught the first class. The program, an immediate success, marked the birth of Northeastern University. Speare would later remark, "We started with an eraser and two sticks of chalk."

When demand for other courses grew, Speare moved to add more programs, and in 1909 the full-time day colleges began instruction. That same year, the Evening Polytechnic School announced "cooperative engineering courses," in which students would have an opportunity to apply classroom knowledge in the workplace—the beginning of Northeastern's signature cooperative education program.

### **Decades of expansion**

The school continued to grow, and in 1922 the College of Business was founded. More space was needed. The university purchased the former home of the Boston Red Sox in 1929, and in 1934 the Boston architectural firm Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbott was awarded the contract to design Richards Hall. Using what was to become the campus signature—white brick—Shepley, Bulfinch presented plans for a neoclassical building. Opened in 1938, Richards Hall was the first building to appear on the front quadrangle.

As the campus grew, so did Northeastern's programs. In 1935, the College of Liberal Arts was added, signaling that Northeastern was on its way to becoming a major university.

When Speare stepped down as president in 1940, he was replaced by Carl Stephens Ell, dean of the College of Engineering. It was under Ell's leadership that Northeastern first admitted women to full-time day programs.

In the postwar world, Northeastern, like its peer institutions, saw a phenomenal increase in the number of people attending college. The university expanded its programs to accommodate this growing population of increasingly diverse students. In rapid succession, additional programs and colleges were established: College of Education, 1953; University

College, 1960; College of Pharmacy, 1962; College of Nursing, 1964; Boston Bouvé College, 1964; College of Criminal Justice, 1967; and College of Computer Science, 1982.

This expansion of programs brought with it a need for more buildings—and land. When Ell retired as president in 1959, he was succeeded by Asa S. Knowles. Under his leadership, suburban properties in Weston, Nahant, and Burlington were acquired. The Boston campus blossomed with new buildings, including various undergraduate dormitories designed to accommodate the increasing number of residential students at what had been primarily a commuter campus.

### **Transforming the Boston campus**

When Knowles retired in 1975, he was succeeded by Kenneth G. Ryder, who had begun his career at Northeastern as a member of the history department and had risen through the ranks to become executive vice president before his election as president. Under his leadership, the university expanded and enriched its programs, particularly in the arts and humanities, and continued to improve its facilities. Plans for the Snell Library were finalized during Ryder's tenure, and the campus was beautified. During these years, Northeastern also deepened its commitment to Boston and its neighborhoods.

In 1989, Ryder stepped down as the fourth president of the university. He was succeeded by John A. Curry, Northeastern's executive vice president and its first alumnus to become president. With President Curry in charge, the university embarked on a series of ambitious undertakings, including a new science and engineering research center, a state-of-the-art classroom building, a recreation complex, and several new graduate and undergraduate programs.

To support these new ventures, Curry led Northeastern in a successful fundraising campaign. His years of leadership also featured significant restructuring as the university prepared to enter its second century. In June 1996, after four decades of service, Curry retired from Northeastern. To succeed him, the trustees elected Richard M. Freeland as the university's sixth president.

### **Elevating experience**

A distinguished historian and administrator, President Freeland brought to the university a renewed sense of energy and mission. His programs were designed to support his vision of Northeastern as a university that would be student-centered, practice-oriented, and urban. Northeastern developed the West Campus with architecturally acclaimed residence halls and teaching facilities for the health sciences and computer science, and added new spaces to enrich student life on campus.

When Freeland stepped down in 2006, he was succeeded by Joseph E. Aoun, an internationally known linguistics scholar. Northeastern's seventh president came from the University of Southern California, where he served as dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences. President Aoun developed an academic plan outlining the university's vision in several areas: experiential learning, global outreach, use-inspired research, urban engagement, and intellectual life. He greatly expanded global co-op opportunities. He also aligned the university's research with three worldwide imperatives—health, security, and sustainability—with a focus on interdisciplinary solutions.

## **A rising global profile**

Under Aoun's leadership, Northeastern launched a system of campuses designed to be platforms for lifelong learning aligned with area economies. The first two opened in Charlotte, North Carolina (2011), and Seattle (2013). Additional campuses followed in Silicon Valley, California (2015), and in Toronto (2016).

In 2016, Aoun led the development of a new academic plan, Northeastern 2025. The plan was a blueprint for transforming the university into a global university system—featuring networks of learners and innovators—designed to empower people to succeed in this era of unprecedented technological change. Accordingly, the university expanded the role of its global campuses to serve as platforms for learning, research, and industry partnerships. In 2019, it opened another location in Vancouver and acquired New College of the Humanities in London, now officially Northeastern University London and offering undergraduates a unique opportunity to earn a dual U.S./U.K. degree. Later in 2019, Northeastern launched a research campus in Arlington, Virginia, an addition to two existing research campuses in Nahant and Burlington, Massachusetts (formed in 1967 and 2012 respectively).

Then in January 2020, technology entrepreneur David Roux and his wife, Barbara, made an investment in the university to open the Roux Institute in Portland, Maine. The institute focuses on graduate studies and research in fields such as AI, digital engineering, and advanced life sciences, amplified by industry partnerships. It was specifically designed to be a model of how higher education can ignite economic development in regions of the country largely bypassed by the innovation economy, setting a new bar for what the global university system could achieve.

## **Resilience and momentum**

The same revolutionary vision for global learning and discovery that inspired Northeastern 2025 infuses the university's latest academic plan, Experience Unleashed. The plan is designed to deepen the impact of Northeastern's global network by maximizing the power of experience to understand and solve the world's interconnected, ever-evolving challenges.

In 2022, the university took a significant step in realizing the potential for its global system by merging with Mills College in Oakland, California, becoming the first university with comprehensive residential campuses for undergraduate and graduate students on both U.S. coasts. In 2023, Northeastern opened a campus in Miami, with graduate education and innovation partnerships aligned with South Florida's economic growth. The following year, the university announced the addition of a campus in New York City through a merger with Marymount Manhattan College.

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our university community, Frank Palmer Speare's "eraser and two sticks of chalk" have evolved into one of the world's most innovative universities. Our faculty collaborates more fluidly with experts across industry, government, and community-based organizations. Ideas and solutions can be scaled. And our students are empowered to be true global citizens, scientists, entrepreneurs, and creators—prepared to make an impact wherever they go.

# PROGRAM

MATTHEWS ARENA, BOSTON  
TEN-THIRTY A.M.

## Prelude

### Welcome and Opening Remarks

Jared Auclair

*Dean, College of Professional Studies*

### Faculty Speaker

Noor Ali

*Assistant Teaching Professor*

### Announcement of the Candidates

*Doctor of Law and Policy*

*Doctor of Physical Therapy*

*Doctor of Education*

### Presentation of the Dean's Medal for Outstanding Doctoral Work

Jared Auclair

*Dean, College of Professional Studies*

### Remarks of the Dean's Medal Speaker

Ahmed Abdullahi Elmi

*Doctor of Law and Policy*

### Charge to the Graduates

Jared Auclair

*Dean, College of Professional Studies*

## Recessional

*We ask those in attendance to kindly silence their electronic devices and to remain in their seats until the platform party has left the stage and the graduate recessional has finished.*

# DOCTOR OF LAW AND POLICY

Patrick Robert Ashley

*Dissertation: Barriers to accessing and sharing health care data during the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Advisor: Kevin Brannon

Valerie Denise Carpenter

*Dissertation: Elevated Voices: The Perspectives of Homeless, Black Men with Mental Illness on Services in Washington, D.C.*

Advisor: Megan Kennedy

Sarah Victoria Diehl

*Dissertation: Bridging the Gap Between Inputs and Outcomes: Pell-eligible Students' Usage and Perceptions of Aid and Support at Community Colleges*

Advisor: J.D. LaRock

Richard J. Driscoll

*Dissertation: Lost in Translation: Rethinking 9-1-1 Appraisal*

Advisor: Jack McDevitt

Lindsey Kay Starnes Duch

*Dissertation: Enhancing Geriatric Care: Analyzing the Impact of Onsite Providers on Reducing Emergency Service Dependency in Assisted Living Communities*

Advisor: Mikhail Oet

Ahmed Abdullahi Elmi

*Dissertation: Conditioning Federal Awards for Biomedical Research on Equitable Representation in the Enrollment of Research Participants:*

*Perspectives of Biomedical Researchers*

Advisor: Megan Kennedy

Mark Raafat Fahmy

*Dissertation: Analyzing the Practice of Shareholder Activism and its Impact on Corporate Governance Policy Reform – Through the Prism of Environmental, Social, and Governance Advocacy*

Advisor: Kevin Chuah

Jennifer Thomson Griffis

*Dissertation: Parents as Co-Researchers: Valuing Parental Expertise within Child-Serving Systems*

Advisor: Patty Mason

Rita S. Holmes-Bobo

*Dissertation: Attorney Evaluations of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives: Findings from a Factorial Survey in the Context of an Anti-DEI Environment*  
Advisor: Ted Johnson

The Most Honorable Andrew Holness

*Dissertation: From the States to the Streets: The Impact of US Gun Laws on Gun Violence in Jamaica*  
Advisor: J.D. LaRock

Katrina Sharese Huffman

*Dissertation: An Immeasurable Toll': Learning from the Lived Experiences of Black Educational Leaders in U.S. School Districts*  
Advisor: Tracy Pascua-Dea

Paul C. LeBlanc

*Dissertation: Fake News and Domestic Terrorism: A Moderation Analysis of Fake News Communications Media*  
Advisor: Jack McDevitt

Harry Levant

*Dissertation: Gambling and Public Health: Examining the Prevention Paradox and Responsible Gaming Model*  
Advisor: J.D. LaRock

Erik Marshall Luker

*Dissertation: Grounded: A Quantitative Analysis of Police Defensive Tactics Training*  
Advisor: Jack McDevitt

Laura Mandt

*Dissertation: An Exploration of the Relationship Between Professional Factors, Legal Environment, and Victim Service Provider Perceptions of Restorative Justice*  
Advisor: Megan Kennedy

Elizabeth J. Mattern

*Dissertation: The Impact of Segregation and Discrimination on the Black-White Wealth Gap: Assessing the Efficacy of Down Payment Assistance on the Net Worth of Black Women in Connecticut*  
Advisor: Fiona Creed

Denisha Shonelle McPherson

*Dissertation: Nevertheless, She Persisted: Examining the Structural and Individual Barriers Impacting NSBE, SHPE, and SWE Professional's Engineering Careers*  
Advisor: Tracy Pascua-Dea

Martha Nkechinyelum Okafor, PhD

*Dissertation: Developing Democratic Legitimacy and Capacity Framework for Executive Advisory Task Forces: A case study of Biden-Harris COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force*

Advisor: Jack McDevitt

Thomas Joseph Powell

*Dissertation: Barriers to Implementing Accessory Dwelling Units for Middle-Income Workforce Housing in a Rural Resort Community*

Advisor: J.D. LaRock

Pierre Douger Raymond

*Dissertation: Protecting Low-Income Individuals In Boston: The Search For The Most Effective Strategies Against Climate-Induced Temperature Rise*

Advisor: Jack McDevitt

Lobsang Thinley Salaka

*Dissertation: Millennials' Attitude Toward Social Media Organizations and Sharing Privacy Information*

Advisor: Kevin Brannon

Brooke A. Switzer

*Dissertation: Exploring the Intersection of U.S. National Security Policy and the Food System - A Private Sector Perspective*

Advisor: Fiona Creed

Ali Sharifi Tarokh

*Dissertation: All Doors Are Open, but Those Doors Are Too Heavy: Exploring Economic Self-Sufficiency Challenges Among Refugees in the State of Illinois*

Advisor: Fiona Creed

Claudia Veronica Vartgess

*Dissertation: Unveiling the Risks: The Sale of Consumer Data, Trigger Leads, and the Threat of Fraud, Privacy Breaches, and Unwelcome Solicitation*

Advisor: Mikhail Oet

Judy Sophia Villeneuve-Dyce

*Dissertation: Shared Goals For K-12 Education: Exploring Parent, Educator and Parent-Educator Perspectives about Controversial K to 12 Curricula, State Anti-Critical Race Theory legislation and Proposed Federal Parent Bill of Rights to Inform Collaborative Policy Design and Implementation Strategies*

Advisor: J.D. LaRock

**Maria Katherine Voyiatzis**

*Dissertation: The Crucifixion of the American Teacher: An Examination of Burnout  
Amongst K-12 Teachers in Massachusetts*

*Advisor: Patty Mason*

**Karl Anthony Waggoner**

*Dissertation: Sustainability 3D: Global Supply Chain Complexity Factors' Relationship  
to Corporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Performance*

*Advisor: Luis Dau and Elizabeth Moore*

# DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Rashid Hameed Bavotty

*Dissertation: AL4 Critique of Internal Validity in the Ten Most Cited Randomized Controlled Trials in Manual Therapy*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Kathy Ann Boehmer

*Dissertation: Return to Run Following Medial Patellofemoral Ligament*

*Reconstruction: A Scoping Review*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Danielle Lyn Fioriello

*Dissertation: Can Pulmonary Rehabilitation Delivered via Telehealth Be Effective for a Lung Transplant Candidate? A Case Report*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Lisa Marie Hoogasian-Klein

*Dissertation: Body-Weight Support Interventions for Gait Recovery in*

*Canine Paralysis: A Case Report*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Michal Leibovitz

*Dissertation: Complications Associated with Blood Flow Restriction Training in Older Adults: A Scoping Review*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Bridget Ruth Logan

*Dissertation: Exploring Physical Therapists' Awareness and Integration of Social Determinants of Health in Clinical Practice*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Nicole Lynn Marquardt

*Dissertation: Quality Assurance Project: The Impact of Acute Care Physical Therapy Hours on Length of Stay for Post Operative Lower Extremity Total Joint*

*Arthroplasties* Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Charles Gregory Robidoux

*Dissertation: All Doors Are Open, but Those Doors Are Too Heavy: Exploring Economic Self-Sufficiency Challenges Among Refugees in the State of Illinois*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

Robin Thulin

*Dissertation: The Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Training for Reducing Burnout in Healthcare Professionals*

Advisor: Lorna Hayward

# DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Sequoyah Deola Adebayo

*Dissertation: The Decision-Making Process of Black Veterans who Elect to Attend a Public Historically Black Institution in Washington, DC*

Advisor: Thomas Wylie

Rebecca Jane Adey-Merrithew

*Dissertation: Holding Open the Doors of Higher Education for Justice-Impacted Students Through Informed and Compassionate Student Support*

Advisor: Melissa Parenti

Kerry Riccio Aguero

*Dissertation: Implementation of Comprehensive School Counseling Plan to Improve School Culture*

Advisor: Michael Dean

Tony Aguilar, Jr.

*Dissertation: Increasing Student Engagement in Urban Public Middle Schools*

Advisor: William Boozang

Haitham Al Khateeb

*Dissertation: Increasing Data Protection Compliance for Remote Workers*

Advisor: Daniel Serig

Gary David Alexandere

*Dissertation: Eastern Orthodox Seminary Students' Understanding of Christian Servant Leadership Through Transformative and Adult Learning Theories: A Case Study Analysis*

Advisor: Lynda Beltz

James Edward Anderson, Jr.

*Dissertation: Student Engagement through Personalized Learning in Urban High Schools*

Advisor: Patricia Mason

Lauren Deacon Baran

*Dissertation: Perceptions, Preparation, and Pedagogy: Supporting Teachers of Multilingual Learners in Core Content Classrooms*

Advisor: Cherese Childers-McKee

Jeffrey L. Barry

*Dissertation: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of Leadership's Impact on Turnover in Nonprofit Organizations: An Employee Perspective*

Advisor: Charles Kilfoye

Sara Bartelloni

*Dissertation: Highlighting Marginalized Voices Through Critical Literacy*

Advisor: Annine Crystal

Melissa Bastien

*Dissertation: Using the United States Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) to Eliminate the Skills Gaps in Nursing Programs*

Advisor: Christopher Unger

Daniel Glennon Bauer

*Dissertation: Supporting Administrative Teams to Enact Co-Teaching in Their High Schools: An Action Research Project*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Karen Jennifer Beckett

*Dissertation: Understanding the Influence of Communication by Higher Education Institution Leadership on Front-line Staff's Acceptance of an ERP Implementation*

Advisor: Julie Lanzillo

Sheila D. Cox Bennett

*Dissertation: The Lived Experiences of Adult Community College Students who Experienced Success in Developmental Mathematics: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis*

Advisor: Joseph McNabb

Katherine Lynn Berger

*Dissertation: The Impact of Self-Management Programming on Gifted Student Perceptions of Sleep in a Residential Setting*

Advisor: Cherese Childers-McKee

Patricia Judith Boland

*Dissertation: Adapting to Adaptivity: Faculty Use of Learning Analytics in Gateway Courses - A Multi-Case Study*

Advisor: Dan Volchok

Joanne Boucher

*Dissertation: A Culture of Collaboration: Fostering Professional Growth Through Instructional Rounds and Universal Design for Learning*

Advisor: Ella Benson

Ramsay Joseph-Rameau Cadet

*Dissertation: The Impact of Going From Face-to-Face to Virtual Mentoring During the Pandemic From April 2020 to April 2021*

Advisor: Christopher Unger

Agatha Cadette

*Dissertation: The Perceived Effects of Teacher-Student Interactions on Student Performance*

Advisor: Afi Wiggins

Corinne Marie Calabretta-Crandell

*Dissertation: Improving District Culture to Decrease Educator Burnout in a Title I Urban School District*

Advisor: Tyneka Holley

Michele J. Campbell

*Dissertation: "Chock-Full of Women, Not so Much at the Very Top, but Everywhere Else": A Strategic Action Framework for Advancing Women Toward Leadership at Arts and Culture Organizations*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Cindy Capitolin Laurent

*Dissertation: College Readiness for All: An Action Research of College Readiness in Inner-City Public Schools with a Focus on English Language Learners*

Advisor: Joseph McNabb

Suzanne Carey

*Dissertation: Developing Educators: A Qualitative Study of Continuous Content-based Learning*

Advisor: Andrew Anderson

Jody Marie Serewicz Carson

*Dissertation: Removing Barriers for Adult Learners at a Community College through Competency-Based Education*

Advisor: Kari Thierer

Amy West Casi

*Dissertation: From Awareness to Action: Advancing Cultural Competency in Homogenous Elementary Schools*

Advisor: Kimberly Nolan

Jonathan David Cavallo

*Dissertation: The Use of Authentic Assessment Practices*

Advisor: Andrew Anderson

Febi M. Cheeran

*Dissertation: Women Leaders in the Private Sector: Challenges and Propositions*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Heidi Sue Cheerman

*Dissertation: Preparing Students to Enact Their Role in the Reduction of Health Inequities: Interprofessional Education Rooted in Social Justice*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Jonathan Robert Clark

*Dissertation: Fostering Staff Belonging in Higher Education Through Exploration of Professional Identity*

Advisor: William Boozang

Danielle June Courtemanche

*Dissertation: Persisting Past the First Year: A General Inductive Analysis Around the Attrition of a Diverse Population of Adult-Learners Enrolled in an Online Undergraduate Program*

Advisor: Dan Volchok

Jennifer Scot Couture

*Dissertation: Taking a Fix: An Action Research Study Exploring Ethical Leadership and Culture Development in the United States Navy*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Kimberly Lennell Crawford

*Dissertation: Home-Based Delivery of Alternative Prekindergarten Curriculum: The Role of Family Instruction for Improved Kindergarten Readiness in a Northeastern United States School District*

Advisor: Karen Smith

Steven E. Cromack

*Dissertation: Bending Granite and Herding Cats: Applying the Science of Learning to Police Training*

Advisor: Charles Kilfoye

Samantha Elizabeth D'Alonzo

*Dissertation: Exploring Approaches to Teaching Early Reading in Preschool in Queens, New York: An Action Research Study*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Andrea B. Davis

*Dissertation: Empowering Collaboration: Strengthening Interdisciplinary Teams Through People-Centered Norms and Psychological Safety*

Advisor: Kelly Conn

Danielle Victoria Davis

*Dissertation: Developing Effective Communication Among Staff and Leadership Within Human Services: An Experiential Learning Initiative in the Northeast Region of the United States*

Advisor: Charles Kilfoye

Holly Ann Davis

*Dissertation: Empowering Leadership: A Peer Collaborative Approach to Retaining & Supporting Black Women Leaders Across Sectors*

Advisor: Tyneka Holley

Didem Nur Dede

*Dissertation: Factors Contributing to ELL Success Based on Administrative Support*

Advisor: Christopher Unger

Stacy Lynne Deemar

*Dissertation: Teach Me How to Think, Not What to Think: Using Creative Drama as an Instructional Methodology to Develop Students' Critical Thinking*

Advisor: Christopher Unger

Joseph M. DeMello

*Dissertation: Brazilian Adult English Language Learners: Limited English Language Proficiency and the Acquisition of 21st-century Skills*

Advisor: Lynda Beltz

Julia Motte Dennis

*Dissertation: Implementation of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice Framework for Navigating School Board Conflict and Controversy*

Advisor: Karen Smith

Jessica Jeaneen DePamphilis

*Dissertation: Reworking the Canon: Students as Curriculum Co-creators in the Secondary English Language Arts Curriculum*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Julie Ann DiPilato

*Dissertation: Beyond Fitting In: Creating a Classroom Culture to Foster Student Belonging*

Advisor: Kelly Conn

Liam Patten Doherty

*Dissertation: The Engagement Tracker: A Constructivist Action Research Approach to Improving Student and Teacher Outcomes*

Advisor: Daniel Serig

Elizabeth Draper

*Dissertation: The Impact of Trust and Knowledge Sharing in Task-Focused Modules on Faculty and Professional Academic Advisor Relationships*

Advisor: Daniel Serig

Margaret Powers Dutch

*Dissertation: Teaching Students Not Subjects: Examining Induction and Inclusion Practices in Vocational-Technical Education*

Advisor: Joan Giblin

Jessica Lynn Eckert

*Dissertation: Damned if You Are, Damned if You Aren't: Women's Experiences on the Path to Independent School Headship*

Advisor: Karen Phillips

Gunawan Efendi

*Dissertation: A Professional Learning Community as Catalyst for Improved Teaching Quality and Facilitated Transition From Traditional to Experiential Learning Approaches*

Advisor: Karen Smith

Ariana Lee Ellsey

*Dissertation: A Sense of Belonging: Creating Equitable Education Practices that Instill an Inclusive Learning Environment for Low-Income Students of Color*

Advisor: Noor Ali

Maria Grazia Enrique

*Dissertation: Collaborative Curriculum Co-Planning: Interdisciplinary Units of Study Framed Within the National Core Arts Anchor Standards*

Advisor: Chereese Childers-McKee

Matthew Michael Ezzo

*Dissertation: The Evolving Role of Community Pharmacists and Continuous Glucose Monitoring*

Advisor: Charles Kilfoye

Alaina Denise Fernandes

*Dissertation: Supporting Women Graduate Students: The Persistence of Women Ph.D. Students in Male-Dominated STEM Disciplines*

Advisor: Joseph McNabb

Bindiya Ganesh

*Dissertation: Completing the Circuit: Supporting Teachers to Explore Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Careers with Middle School Students*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

Arzinia Gill

*Dissertation: From Isolation to Collaboration: The Power of Critical Friends Groups in Leadership Development*

Advisor: Annine Crystal

Matthew Joseph Gill

*Dissertation: The Bridge Between Employee and Company: A Qualitative Perspective on Organizational Identification of Remote Employees.*

Advisor: Loretta Ovueraye

John Walter Goff

*Dissertation: Retaining Teachers: An Action Research Study on the Importance of Support and Mentorship*

Advisor: Kimberly Nolan

David Michael Golden Jr.

*Dissertation: Boys Will be Boys: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Intersection of Hegemonic Masculinity and the Self-Authorship Journey*

Advisor: Sean Gallagher

Kristen Danielle Goodlett

*Dissertation: The Experiences of Black Women Leaders in Independent Schools and the Role of Affinity Groups*

Advisor: Tyneka Holley

Nancy M. Griffin

*Dissertation: Building Alliance Capability: A Framework for Early-Stage Life Science Companies*

Advisor: Charles Kilfoye

Leslie Ann Harwood

*Dissertation: The Hybrid Connection: Leveraging In-Person Residencies to Foster Community in an Online Doctoral of Education Program*

Advisor: Christopher Unger

Kathleen Elizabeth Haywood

*Dissertation: Learning Specialist Sensemaking in Independent Schools*

Advisor: Shira Leibowitz

Brian P. Hazlett

*Dissertation: Resiliency: An Exploration of Non-Cognitive Characteristics of First-Generation College Students as it Relates to Academic Success.*

Advisor: Joseph McNabb

Nicole Marie Helwig

*Dissertation: Teachers Collaborating with AI to Increase Student Engagement and Improve Student-Teacher Relationships: Action Research in an Upstate NY Middle School*

Advisor: Daniel Serig

**Mark Christopher Hevert**

*Dissertation: Utilizing Authentic Teaching Practices to Enhance Student*

*Engagement: An Action Research Study*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

**Heather Lake Hileman**

*Dissertation: Man Enough to Be a Girl Scout: An Interpretative Phenomenological*

*Analysis of Male Volunteers in the Girl Scouts and Their Impact on Organizational Culture and Female Leadership Development*

Advisor: Lynda Beltz

**Dana Hill Espina**

*Dissertation: The Challenges of Altering General Educator Perceptions and Instructional Approaches Toward Multilingual Learners in High-Demand School Settings*

Advisor: Daniel Serig

**Amanda Meghan HOFFEY**

*Dissertation: Belonging as a Foundation: An Action Research Study to Enhance*

*Parental Engagement and Teacher Confidence*

Advisor: Annine Crystal

**Christina Jessica Inge**

*Dissertation: Journaling Entrepreneurial Meta Competencies: Learning Leadership in a University Incubator*

Advisor: Tyneka Holley

**JoJo Jacobson**

*Dissertation: AI-Augmented Graduate Support: A Practical Model to Increase Belonging*

Advisor: Joan Giblin

**Kristine Michele Jamieson**

*Dissertation: Shifting the Lens: An Action Research Study Exploring How Higher*

*Educational Structures Influence Impostor Phenomenon in Undergraduate Students*

Advisor: Wendy Crocker

**Michelle Ann John**

*Dissertation: Developing Pedagogical Strategies with High School Spanish Teachers to Lower the Affective Filter for African-American Spanish Learners*

Advisor: Daniel Serig

**Alicia Emancia Jones**

*Dissertation: Developing Effective Strategies to Strengthen Collaborative Practice*

*Between Registered Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses Through Action Research*

Advisor: William Boozang

**Mamadou Kane**

*Dissertation: How can intermediate algebra teaching and learning be improved at an urban community college by adopting the instructors' consensus learning to learn strategies developed within a community of practice?*

Advisor: Andrew Anderson

**Katherine King**

*Dissertation: Integrating Internationalization Initiatives into Healthcare Sciences Education: Fostering Inclusive Experiences and Global Engagement*

Advisor: Karen Smith

**Joanne (Jody) D. Klein**

*Dissertation: Dual Language Education in Transition: Building Knowledge and Improving Practices*

Advisor: Cherese Childers-McKee

**Fatima Koura**

*Dissertation: Navigating Identity and Spiritual Activism among Muslim American Women College Students*

Advisor: Noor Ali

**Ei Ei Phyo Kyaw**

*Dissertation: Empowering Educators: Strategies for Inclusive Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Integrated Co-Teaching Classrooms*

Advisor: Andrew Anderson

**Roselene Lagredelle**

*Dissertation: Elementary Teachers' Perceptions and Engagement with Experiential Learning: The Impact of a Five-Module Professional Development Program*

Advisor: Christopher Unger

**Amelia Ashley Lemmons**

*Dissertation: Midlevel Leaders' Meaning Making of Supervision in Student Affairs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*

Advisor: Dan Volchok

**Donna Linderman**

*Dissertation: Scaling What Works: The Expansion of City University of New York Accelerated Study in Associate Programs Through the Experiences of Program Leaders*

Advisor: Dan Volchok

**Avis Jocelyn Liverpool**

*Dissertation: Our Service Our Stories: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Black Female Soldiers Serving in the United States Army*

Advisor: Cherese Childers-McKee

Jessica T. McCarthy

*Dissertation: Connection, Community, and Culture: An Exploration of Graduate Student Sense of Belonging in a Multimodality Master's Program*

Advisor: Joseph McNabb

Bernadette S. McHugh

*Dissertation: Examination of Faculty Advising with the Purpose of Creating a Training Program*

Advisor: Betsy Newman

Heather A. McMorrow

*Dissertation: The Craft of Tacit Expertise Transfer in U.S. Space Exploration*

Advisor: Thomas Wylie

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## FACULTY SPEAKER

Noor Ali, Ed.D

Noor Ali is an Assistant Professor at Northeastern University's College of Professional Studies, Graduate School of Education where she teaches undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students. Ali serves as the Concentration Lead for Transformative School Leadership in the Ed.D. Program at Northeastern University.

Ali has developed a micro theoretical framework, MusCrit as a subset of Critical Race Theory where she posits a framing for understanding the lived experiences of Muslim Americans. Her book is titled *Counter-narratives of Muslim American Women: Making Space for MusCrit*. She has published extensively on topics of MusCrit, racialization of religion, demystifying Critical Race Theory, leadership, social justice, and experiential learning.

A veteran teacher in K-8 education, Ali also served as the Principal of Al-Hamra Academy – the first full-time accredited Islamic school in New England -- where she led several initiatives including teaching towards equity, experiential learning, inter-faith dialogue, citizen science, and STEM education.

Ali also serves as a Commissioner for New England Association for Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Commission of Independent Schools. She is actively involved in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work with NEASC and the Town of Shrewsbury where she served on the DEI Taskforce. She has served as Board Member on the Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services and is often found actively engaged in inter-faith and community-based initiatives. Ali was elected as a Trustee to the Shrewsbury Public Library.

# DEAN'S MEDAL FOR OUTSTANDING DOCTORAL WORK

Ahmed Elmi, D.L.P., M.P.H.

Dean's Medalist Winner

*Commencement Speaker*

Ahmed Elmi, a Somali American who migrated to the United States in 1983, serves as the Program Officer Team and Evaluation Lead for the National Institutes of Health's All of Us Research Program. This landmark initiative is building one of the most diverse research databases in history to transform medicine from a one-size-fits-all approach to precision medicine grounded in equity and inclusion.

Elmi brings over 20 years of experience across federal, state, and local government and the private sector. He led the State of Maryland's cancer outreach efforts and managed cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment programs across 11 county health departments. He also served under two mayors in Alexandria, Virginia, advancing youth development, public health, and community engagement. At the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins's Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities, he directed community outreach and research engagement to advance cancer research. Elmi has led large-scale, federally funded projects exceeding \$100 million, with a focus on equity, compliance, scientific rigor, and community impact.

A passionate advocate for underserved communities, Elmi is also the founding chairman of the Somali American Community Association, where he fosters civic participation, youth leadership, and health equity among the Somali diaspora.

He holds a Doctor of Law and Policy from Northeastern University, a Master of Public Health from The George Washington University, and a Bachelor's degree in Biology and Psychology from George Mason University. He is married with two children — a 2025 graduate of Northeastern University and an attorney in New York City.

Meredith McNerney, Ed.D.

Dean's Medalist Winner

Meredith McNerney, a cancer survivor, speaker, and educator, has transformed challenges into opportunities for systemic change throughout her career. Born with a rare gene mutation causing kidney and ear deformities, she faced significant health challenges in childhood, including a kidney removal at age 11, and later battled a rare, aggressive Merkel Cell Carcinoma at 31.

Following her cancer journey, McNerney founded the all-volunteer A Message of Hope Cancer Fund, serving as Executive Director for ten years and raising one million dollars to provide direct financial support to families facing cancer in her local community.

McNerney later served as principal of a Title 1 school in Montgomery County, Maryland, with nearly 900 students—90% qualifying for free meals and 78% speaking English as their second language. Under her leadership, what had been the lowest-performing among 134 district schools transformed into a 4-star school according to the Maryland School Report Card, with notable improvements in student achievement and growth data.

Her innovative approach to school reform integrated accountability frameworks with social-emotional health promotion, including a Spanish bilingual/bi-literacy program that taught students in their first language. As a trained mindfulness coach, she implemented comprehensive mindfulness practices throughout the school, creating calmer learning environments both online and in-person.

Today, McNerney works with schools and businesses nationwide, teaching strategies for cultivating calmer environments. She also serves as an adjunct professor at Shepherd University, where she teaches courses on Creating a Trauma-Informed School Culture and Climate and Welcoming Newcomers with a Trauma-Sensitive Mindset.

McNerney earned a B.S. in Elementary Education from East Carolina University, a Master of Education as a Reading Specialist from Towson University, and a doctoral degree from Northeastern University, where she studied educator mental health with an emphasis on attracting and retaining Black and Brown educators. She lives in Ijamsville, Maryland, with her husband Mark, a middle school teacher, and their two children, Danielle and Kaitlyn.

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## ALMA MATER

Oh, Al - ma Ma - ter, here we throng, And  
sing your prais - es strong; Your child - ren ga - ther far and near And  
seek your bless - ings, dear; Fair mem - o - ries we cher - ish now And  
will for - ev - er - more. Come, let us raise our voi - ces strong, North -  
east - ern we a - dore.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Alma Mater". It consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written in treble clef. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The score ends with a double bar line.

*Oh, Alma Mater, here we throng,  
And sing your praises strong;  
Your children gather far and near  
And seek your blessings, dear;  
Fair memories we cherish now  
And will forevermore.  
Come, let us raise our voices strong,  
Northeastern, we adore.*

