



# **CUNY Baccalaureate for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies Commencement Exercises**

The Graduate School and University Center  
The City University of New York

June 5, 2023



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*“American students need to learn to think across disciplines since that’s where most new breakthroughs are made.”*

—Thomas Friedman, *New York Times* columnist and author

## ABOUT CUNY BACCALAUREATE FOR UNIQUE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

In the late 1960s, a group of faculty and students asked CUNY to allow individual faculty and students to define programs of study, with access to courses across campuses. On February 22, 1971, the NYS Board of Higher Education authorized a university-wide B.A.; soon after, the B.S. was approved. First known as the CUNY Baccalaureate Program and renamed CUNY Baccalaureate for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies in 2008, the degree is commonly called CUNY BA.

Faculty mentoring is the cornerstone. Over 400 professors have mentored CUNY BA students as they have built their individualized degrees, which have ranged from American Revolutionary History to Zoological Photography. Student-mentor opportunities have proven invaluable in the personal development of CUNY BA students, leading to independent research projects, internships, and study abroad opportunities.

CUNY BA has received grants from renowned foundations and organizations, and was recognized by the University Design Consortium, an international organization that challenges public universities to develop innovative strategies to address complex issues, and nationally as a top military-friendly institution. In addition, CUNY BA has its own academic fellowship established by the Thomas W. Smith Foundation and has received a multi-million-dollar bequest from the Barbara J. Price estate for fellowships. Since 1994, CUNY BA has funded over 1,300 students.

Five decades later, the goal of helping students and faculty pursue intellectual innovation continues. There are over 8,000 alumni; the majority report that they have received raises and promotions or have successfully changed careers, have gone on to graduate school, and are working in careers related to their self-designed areas of study.

<https://cunyba.cuny.edu>

# ORDER OF EXERCISES

## PROCESSIONAL

### OPENING OF CEREMONY

Margaret Carroll  
Professor of Biology, Medgar Evers College  
Grand Marshal

### THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jody Clark Vaisman  
Academic Director, CUNY Baccalaureate

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Associate Professor of Philosophy, Brooklyn College

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Brandon Greyson Kim  
June 2023 Graduate

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Michael D. Hattem  
CUNY BA, 2011; Yale University, 2013, 2014, 2017  
Associate Director of Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
Historian and Author

### PRESENTATION OF COMMENCEMENT AWARDS

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&  
Kimberly White  
CUNY BA, 2014; University of California-Berkeley, 2019  
Doctoral Candidate, University of Pennsylvania

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&

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Hyosik Shin  
Mechanisms for Understanding Behavior

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\*Subject to successful completion of degree requirements.

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Financial Technology

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Exercise Science and Health Education

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Jerlene Dell  
Interdisciplinary Social Sciences: Social Behavior  
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Sol A. Deutsch  
Medicine and the Law

Omina Abdelazim Elsheikh  
Computers, AI and the Brain  
Software Development and Mathematics

Richard Garcia  
Graphic Fine Arts

Alexander Gaviria  
Athletic Leadership

Cristina M. Goeller  
Urban Economic Policy

Yayoi Kawahito  
Motion Graphics and Video Editing

Alanna C. Kroening  
Digital and Multimedia Design

Milagros Latorres  
Human Service Administration: Youth and  
Community

Alisa Leshchenko  
Mathematics  
Data Science

Christina Mary Eloise Marks  
Critical Theater Practice  
History and Philosophy of Art

Ashley Masih  
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The background of the entire page is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background is a pattern of stylized, light blue leaves. The leaves are arranged in vertical, branching clusters that resemble laurel or olive branches. Each leaf is a simple, elongated shape with a pointed tip and a central vein. The pattern is dense and covers most of the page area.

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**NY** UNIVERSITY  
OF  
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