Order of Exercises

COMMENCEMENT CONVOCATION
Sunday, May 21, 2017

Procession
Yale School of Music Brass Ensemble

Welcome
Lynn Cooley
Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
and the C.N.H. Long Professor of Genetics
Professor, Cell Biology and Molecular, Cellular &
Developmental Biology

Student Prizes
Presented by Richard Sleight
Associate Dean of the Graduate School

Prize Teaching Fellows
Presented by Dean Richard Sleight

Graduate Mentor Awards
Presented by Nicholas Vincent
Chair of the Graduate Student Assembly

A reception will follow immediately after
Convocation in the Hall of Graduate Studies
Common Room and HGS 119.
Departmental Awards

The Marston Anderson Prize is awarded on an occasional basis to truly outstanding dissertations in the field of East Asian Languages and Literatures in memory of Professor Anderson for his contribution to the intellectual and pedagogical mission of the department.

Stephen Poland
East Asian Languages and Literatures
“Manchukuo as Method: Problematizing Nationality in Literature, 1906–1945”

Poland has produced a groundbreaking dissertation that reveals how Japanese, Chinese, and “societies of security,” occupying a state between the national and the postcolonial, but reducible to neither, represent (im)possibilities that were never fulfilled.

The Francis J. Anscombe Award is given on an occasional basis for outstanding academic performance in the Department of Statistics and Data Science.

Jason Klusowski
Statistics and Data Science

The Henry Prentiss Becton Prize for exceptional achievement in research is awarded to a graduate student within the Council of Engineering.

Matthew Bersi
Biomedical Engineering
“Biomechanics of Angiotensin II Induced Vascular Remodeling”

The dissertation provides practical and theoretical innovations that contribute greatly to our understanding of how hypertension contributes to arterial remodeling and disease. The work offers significant advancements in our knowledge of how vessels respond to stress.

The Frederick W. Beinecke Prize is awarded upon the recommendation of the History Department for an outstanding doctoral dissertation in the field of Western American History.

Alyssa Reichardt
History
“War for the Interior: Imperial Conflict and the Formation of North American and Transatlantic Communications Infrastructure, 1727–1774”

This is a work of prodigious and innovative scholarship that, when published, will be essential reading for historians of eighteenth-century North America, the Atlantic world, and settler colonialism. War for the Interior is a remarkable piece of scholarship.

The Frances Blanshard Fellowship Fund Prize is awarded annually for the outstanding doctoral dissertations submitted to the History of Art Department.

Emma Stein
History of Art
“All Streets Lead to Temples: Mapping Monumental Histories in Kanchipuram, ca. 8th–12th Centuries CE”

Emma Stein’s dissertation “All Streets Lead to Temples: Mapping Monumental Histories in Kanchipuram, ca. 8th–12th centuries CE” examines the temples of medieval Kanchipuram, in Southern India. Stein locates the city and its temples at the heart of networks of trade and artistic exchange spanning South India, Southeast Asia, and Southern China. She uses the latest techniques, including GPS mapping, to bring back to life the physical and symbolic grids along which these venerable and sacred structures were arranged; she has, quite literally, re-drawn the map of one of the most important temple complexes in India.
The **Harding Bliss Prize for Excellence** in Engineering and Applied Science is awarded annually to the outstanding student who has completed his or her Ph.D. thesis during the current academic year and who has done the most to further the intellectual life of the department.

**Holly Lauridsen**  
Biomedical Engineering  
“Modeling the Microvasculature: Novel In Vitro Models of the Human Microvasculature to Elucidate the Roles of Pericytes and Extracellular Matrix in Innate Inflammation”

Holly developed a novel system to study interactions among three cell types (neutrophils, endothelial cells and pericytes). This promises to advance our understanding of a critical early aspect of inflammation.

The **Sylvia Ardyn Boone Prize** is awarded annually in memory of Sylvia Boone, a noted scholar of African art, who was the first tenured African-American woman on the Yale faculty. In her memory, Vera Wells, Yale ’71, has established a prize to honor Sylvia Boone’s life and work.

**Heather Vermeulen**  
African-American Studies; American Studies  
“Archival Ecologies, Queer Kin-aesthetics: Thomas Thistlewood and the Plantation Grotesque”

“Archival Ecologies” is brilliant, lucidly written and innovative. The dissertation’s theoretical ambitions are to situate the Atlantic slave trade in the discussion of the anthropocene and to trace the relationship between Enlightenment, terror and slavery. Vermeulen’s archival excavations transform the silences and exclusions of history into forms of intimate knowledge about the enslaved. The project’s erudition and originality merit this recognition.

The **Dirk Brouwer Memorial Prize** was established in 1966 by friends of Professor Dirk Brouwer, Chairman of the Department of Astronomy and Director of the Yale Observatory from 1941 to 1966. It is awarded to a student in the department for a contribution of unusual merit to any branch of astronomy.

**Ana Bonaca**  
Astronomy  
“Chasing Tidal Tails Around the Milky Way”

Ana’s thesis characterized the shape of the Milky Way Galaxy using stellar tidal streams, which are formed by small galaxies or star clusters which are accreted by the Galaxy, then become disrupted by tidal forces. She discovered a new, highly constraining stream and developed a novel method using multiple streams to constrain the distribution of dark matter in our Galaxy.

**Joel Tanner**  
Astronomy  
“Simulating Convection in Stellar Envelopes”

Joel Tanner performed three-dimensional simulations of convective heat transport in stars of different types to derive a better description of convection in stellar models. He found that convective properties depend critically on stellar chemical abundances. Additionally, he found that for a given abundance, the properties depend on a combination of surface temperature and gravity of the stars.
The **Anthony DiGuida Delta Mu Research Prize** was established in memory of a doctoral student from the School of Nursing. It is given to a graduating student whose love of clinical scholarship has resulted in a dissertation that advances nursing knowledge and demonstrates creative conceptualization of a complex clinical problem, methodologic and analytic excellence, and superb writing.

**Shelli Feder**
*Nursing*

“Demographic and Clinical Correlates of Palliative Care in HIV-Infected and Uninfected Patients Hospitalized with Heart Failure”

In her dissertation, Shelli examined the extent to which patients hospitalized with heart failure, with and without HIV, receive palliative care, as well as the factors that contribute to use of palliative care. This research provides the platform for understanding and improving the access to and quality of palliative care to those in need.

The **George Washington Egleston Historical Prize**, established in 1901, is awarded annually to a research student who discovers new facts of importance for American history or gathers information or reaches conclusions which are useful from a historical, literary, and critical point of view.

**Michael Hattem**
*History*

“Past and Prologue: History Culture and the American Revolution”

This is an exceptionally well-written dissertation. For clarity of purpose, argumentation, documentation, and revision and editing, it ranks among the best. Michael’s dissertation succeeds wildly at what it sets out to do.

The **English Department Dissertation Prize** is awarded for the best dissertation in the current year.

**Anya Adair**
*English Language and Literature*

“Composing the Law: Literature and Legislation in Early Medieval England”

Adair affirms the centrality of law codes to the social and literary lives of Anglo-Saxon readers, and through excellent primary and linguistic scholarship shows how these codes share poetic strategies of language use, voice, and the creation of textual authority. The notion that a firm distinction can be drawn between legal texts and fictive works of literature is convincingly dispelled.

**Andrew Kau**
*English Language and Literature*

“Astraea’s Adversary: The Rivalry Between Law and Literature in Elizabethan England”

Kau’s dissertation studies the literary consequences of the tensions dividing the ‘legal’ and the ‘literary’ aspects of many features of later sixteenth-century culture. His research re-examines the rhetorical culture of the Inns of Court to make original arguments about the resistance of new poetry, including Shakespeare’s, to legal discourse.

The **Estwing Hammer Prize** is awarded by the Estwing Manufacturing company to outstanding geology or geophysics graduate students.

**Elizabeth Clark**
*Geology and Geophysics*

“The Biomechanical Evolution of Echinoderm Locomotion”

**Neala Creasy**
*Geology and Geophysics*

“Constraining Lower Mantle Dynamics with Seismic Anisotropy and Mineral Physics”
JIE DENG
Geology and Geophysics
“Using the LHDAC to Determine Phase Diagrams: Melting of Fe-bearing Minerals in the Deep Earth”

The Excellence in Teaching Prize is given in recognition of a student’s outstanding contribution to the teaching process at the Department of Geology and Geophysics.

YANA BEBIEVA
Geology and Geophysics

The Miguel Ferreyros Memorial Award is awarded to the joint-degree student in Global Affairs with the highest academic achievement.

REBECCA ANDERSON
Global Affairs

The Harry Burr Ferris Prize is awarded to a doctoral candidate in Cell Biology for a distinguished record of academic accomplishments. A distinguished record is evidenced by many of the following criteria: publications, a scholarly and well-written dissertation, fellowships and other awards, leadership and service activities that benefit the Department or the University.

RUI DONG
Cell Biology
“Endosome-ER Contacts Control Actin Nucleation and Retromer Function through VAP-Dependent Regulation of PI4P”

Rui Dong identified a new mechanism in the regulation of intracellular membrane transport. She found that the phospholipid PI4P plays an important role in the regulation of vesicle budding from endosomes. Impairment of this process, which is mediated by the retromer complex, has been implicated in several neurodegenerative diseases. Thus, her results have relevance for both fundamental biology and medicine.

The William Ebenezer Ford Prize was established in 1963 by gift from Mary Ford in memory of her husband, Professor William E. Ford, Ph.B. 1899, Ph.D. 1903. It is awarded to students who have distinguished themselves in study or research in mineralogy.

KIERSTIN DAVIAU
Geology and Geophysics

“The High Pressure and Temperature SiC and its Implications for Carbon Rich Exoplanets”

The Hans Gatzke Prize is awarded upon the recommendation of the History Department for the outstanding dissertation or dissertations in a field of European history.

CATHERINE ARNOLD
History
“Affairs of Humanity: Sovereignty, Sentiment, and the Origins of Humanitarian Intervention in Britain and Europe”

Catherine Arnold’s dissertation is a distinguished piece of research and writing that draws on a broad range of archival sources and provides a historiographically sophisticated analysis of the genesis of human rights. This is an outstanding example of historical scholarship.
The William J. Horwitz Prize is awarded for continuous excellence and distinction in a chosen discipline within the field of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations.

SHANA ZAIA
Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations
“Official Religion in the Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions”

Shana Zaia’s dissertation studies “official religion” in first millennium BCE Assyria by collecting and analyzing thousands of references to gods and religious activities found in a central group of sources, the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions. The dissertation, a major contribution to the study of early empires, shows how religion advanced the agendas of the Assyrian elites and especially the Assyrian kings.

The Mary Ellen Jones (Ph.D. 1951, Biochemistry) Prize is awarded to the most distinguished dissertation in Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry submitted during the academic year. Dr. Jones was a leading scientist and a pioneer in the advancement of women in academia.

DAIFEI LIU
Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry
“Structural Studies of Macromolecular Complexes by Electron Microscopy”

The kinesin motor protein uses its two motor domains as feet to walk along microtubules, transporting cellular cargoes to their destinations. This thesis gives insights into the coordination mechanism between the two feet by using cryo-electron microscopy to reveal the first structure of kinesin in a walking pose, with both feet attached to the microtubule.

Antoine Lentacker
History
“Signs and Substances: Making Media and Drugs in Modern Europe”

This is an ambitious, thoughtfully designed, and hugely exciting comparative study of the co-emergence of the mass press and the pharmaceutical industry in France and Austria. Antoine Lentacker has researched, organized, and nicely presented a distinguished dissertation of remarkable originality.

The Award for Academic Excellence in Global Affairs is given to the master’s student in Global Affairs with the highest academic achievement.

Emilie Leforestier
Global Affairs

The James B. Grossman Dissertation Prize was established in memory of a doctoral student in Psychology. It is given to the author of an outstanding Ph.D. dissertation in Psychology, with preference for research embodying some of the characteristics of James Grossman’s scholarship, such as creativity, use of other disciplines, and clinical work with children.

Charles Firestone
Psychology
“Cognition Does Not Affect Perception”

Both science and intuition draw a foundational distinction between seeing and thinking, but how do these processes interact? A tidal wave of recent research alleges that higher-level cognitive states (involving desire, emotion, intention, and language) can change what we see. This dissertation demonstrates otherwise — showing empirically how perception is in fact ‘cognitively impenetrable’ by such outside influences.
The Annie Le Fellowship is awarded each year to one or more Ph.D. students in the biological and biomedical sciences whose demonstrated commitment to bettering the world around them and outstanding record in research exemplify the life and career of Annie Marie Le, a Yale graduate student between 2007 and 2009.

Elizabeth Mo
Pharmacology

Molly Scott
Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology

The Elias Loomis Prize is awarded for excellence in studies of physics of the earth. Elias Loomis was a professor of natural philosophy and astronomy in Yale College.

Yana Bebieva
Geology and Geophysics
“The Influence of a Mesoscale Eddy on Double-diffusive Processes in the Arctic Ocean”

Christopher Kruse
Geology and Geophysics
“Mountain Wave Attenuation and its Influence on Earth’s General Circulation”

The John Spangler Nicholas (Ph.D. 1921) Prize was established in 1972 by bequest of Helen Brown Nicholas in memory of her husband. The prize is awarded annually to outstanding doctoral candidates in experimental zoology.

Edward Barbieri
Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology
“Development and Application of Precise Multiplex Genome Engineering in Saccharomyces cerevisiae”

Edward discovered a novel mechanism for editing the genomes of live eukaryotic cells. The mechanism works by incorporating synthetic DNA into the chromosome during DNA replication. Previous methods required cutting the chromosome to integrate synthetic DNA, but this cutting mechanism is toxic to cells and limits the ability to edit multiple genes at once. This discovery led to the development of a new genetic engineering technique for precisely editing chromosomes at many sites simultaneously in a cell without cutting the cell’s DNA. The technique has major applications in identifying the causal genetic basis of complex diseases such as cancer, the development of new genetically tailored therapeutics, and for engineering cells to cheaply produce important molecules such as pharmaceuticals, biofuels, and antibodies at large scales.

Sarah Federman
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
“Biogeography, Diversification, and the Maintenance of Biodiversity in Madagascar: Case Studies in Canarium (Burseraceae)”

Valerie Morley
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
“Experimental Evolution of RNA Viruses in Multi-host Environments”

Sarah Federman elucidated the evolution of a dominant group of trees in the tropical forests of Madagascar. She discovered that this plant lineage, Canarium, arrived in Madagascar from Southeast Asia some eight million years ago, and diversified into six major sub-lineages. The evolution of the fruits of these trees was driven by frugivorous lemurs, many of which are now extinct.

Valerie Morley
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
“Experimental Evolution of RNA Viruses in Multi-host Environments”

Valerie Morley produced groundbreaking thesis studies on RNA virus evolution, by characterizing how virus traits and virus genomes change in
response to the infection of multiple host species. This work is crucial for refining predictions of RNA virus emergence, especially the increasing problem of mosquito-borne transmission to new host species such as humans. Valerie was the first to use deep-sequencing to track the molecular dynamics within virus genomes, to infer how differing mixtures of host species affect the adaptive mutations that evolve in RNA virus populations. Valerie’s studies demonstrate how basic research in the ecology and evolution of viruses is vital for addressing current problems in biomedicine and public health.

Liz Hebbard traces a critical history of the troubadour lyric archive, from the copying of lyric manuscripts in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, through the study of these manuscripts in the mid-nineteenth century, and the edition of troubadour song in the twentieth century, considering how each phase of this history has participated in the construction and deployment of archival knowledge.

The George Gaylord Simpson Prize was established in 1984 in honor of Professor Simpson and is awarded to graduate students and recent Ph.D. recipients for an exceptional paper concerning evolution and the fossil record.

Matthew Davis
Geology and Geophysics
“What North America’s Skeleton Crew of Megafauna Tells Us About Community Disassembly”

By carefully analyzing the diets and other functional traits of North America’s largest Ice Age mammals, Matt was able to show that contrary to expectations, functionally unique species were not more likely to go extinct than functionally redundant species. This means that although the Pleistocene extinction at the end of the Ice Age was severe, it did not impact communities as much as researchers had previously thought. However, modern large mammals are now extremely isolated and losing just a few endangered species could collapse much of North America’s megafauna community.

The Philip M. Orville Prize was established in 1981 in memory of Philip M. Orville. The prize is awarded to graduate students in geology and geophysics in recognition of outstanding research and scholarship in the earth sciences.

Ross Anderson
Geology and Geophysics
“The Rise of Eukaryotes: Environmental Controls During the Neoproterozoic-Cambrian Transition”

Srikanth Toppaladoddi
Geology and Geophysics
“The Statistical Physics, Fluid Mechanics, and the Climatology of Arctic Sea Ice”

The Marguerite A. Peyre Prize was established in 1964 and is awarded at the discretion of the chair of the Department of French to a graduate student in the department.

Elizabeth Hebbard
French
“Manuscripts and the Making of the Troubadour Lyric Tradition”

Nicolas Mongiardino Koch
Geology and Geophysics
“Discrete and Morphometric Traits Reveal Contrasting Patterns and Processes in the Macroevolutionary History of a Clade of Scorpions”
The **Carolyn Slayman Prize** in Genetics recognizes the remarkable achievements of our best students in the Department of Genetics, based on their body of work, the impact of their findings in the field of Genetics and their commitment to the Genetics Graduate Program and graduate education at Yale.

**Carolyn W. Slayman, Ph.D.**

An outstanding teacher and scientist, she became a member of the Department of Human Genetics when it was established in 1972, and the first woman to become department chair at the Yale School of Medicine, leading the Department of Human Genetics in 1984.

**Kailin Mesa**  
**Genetics**  
“Uncovering Extrinsic Regulation of Epithelial Stem Cell Behavior in Adult Mouse Skin by Live Imaging”

Kailin performed outstanding work to identify cellular behaviors and molecular signals that regulate homeostatic stem cell behavior in vivo. This work provides a basis for understanding how stem cell proliferation and differentiation are regulated in the in vivo environment, and establishes a framework for investigating the molecular mechanisms that maintain homeostasis.

The **Edwin W. Small Prize** was established in memory of Edwin W. Small (B.A. 1930, M.A. 1934) and is awarded in recognition and furtherance of outstanding work in the field of American history.

**Eric Rutkow**  
**History**  
“The Longest Line on the Map: The United States and the Quest to Link the Americas”

Eric Rutkow’s extraordinarily ambitious, wide-ranging, and meticulously researched dissertation on the Inter-American Highway, offers a novel perspective on a variety of important issues. His narrative elegantly weaves together ideologies of empire, struggles for national control, institutional state building in the United States, and the practical challenges of building infrastructure across vast distances and challenging terrain.

The **George Trimis Prize** was established in May 2003 in memory of a doctoral student in Economics who succumbed to cancer. In recognition of the extraordinary example that Trimis set, the prize is awarded to students whose dissertations demonstrate exceptional and distinguished achievement.

**Matthew Grant**  
**Economics**  
“Essays on the Trade Policy of Special Economic Zones”

Many countries exempt certain firms from paying tariffs on imported inputs. Such exemptions are termed special economic zones and have been little studied in economics. Matthew Grant develops a theory of the economic and political advantages of such zones and tests the theory using U.S. data that he assembled from U.S. government documents.

**Meredith Startz**  
**Economics**  
“The Value of Face-to-Face: Search and Contracting Problems in Nigerian Trade”

The arrangement of economic transactions absorbs resources. Meredith Startz studies these costs in the context of imports of foreign consumer goods into Nigeria. She develops a theory of
search and contracting costs and tests it using data she collected in Nigeria. She focuses on the expense of air travel by business people, a cost that turns out to be huge.

The **Karl K. Turekian Prize** is awarded for excellence in geochemical or cosmochemical studies.

**ELIZABETH CHRISTELEIT**  
**Geology and Geophysics**  
“Integrated Analysis of Geologic Data and Landscape Evolution, with Applications to the Patagonian Andes, Olympics Mountains, and Messinian Salinity Crisis”

**SHUANG ZHANG**  
**Geology and Geophysics**  

The **Richard Wolfgang Prize** was established in 1971 in memory of Richard Leopold Wolfgang, M.A. Hon. 1962, and member of the faculty from 1956 to 1971. It is awarded each year for the best doctoral theses of graduating chemistry students.

**JOSHUA HUMMEL**  
**Chemistry**  
“New Synthetic Methods for Rh(III)- and Co(III)-catalyzed C-H Bond Functionalization”

The aim is to develop new synthetic methodologies to access versatile and pharmaceutically relevant molecular scaffolds. A large portion of this thesis dissertation focused on the design and implementation of earth abundant first row transition metal cobalt catalysts, as well as practical reaction conditions. Additional advances included the development of new conceptual synthetic strategies with significant promise for future development.

**ANTHONY METRANO**  
**Chemistry**  
“Development and Study of β-Turn-Containing Peptides for Enantioselective, Bifunctional Brønsted Base Catalysis”

Peptide-based catalysts designed to adopt folded structures were employed in the synthesis of pharmaceutically relevant molecules, including amino acids, tertiary benzamides, and quinazolinones. In each case, substrate dynamics were crucial to the catalyst’s ability to select for one “mirror image” form of the product over the other. Structural studies of the peptide library revealed that catalyst dynamics also play an important role in these reactions.

**DEACON NEMCHICK**  
**Chemistry**  
“Dual Hydrogen Bonding Motifs in Noncovalent Complexes Formed with Tropolone”

Noncovalent intermolecular interactions are pervasive throughout the natural sciences and central to the fundamental question of what holds matter together. The synergistic experimental and computational studies presented in this work explore how these nominally weak cohesive forces can have large influence in governing the structure and dynamics of isolated chemical systems.
The *Arthur and Mary Wright Prize* is awarded upon the recommendation of the History Department for the outstanding dissertation or dissertations in the field of history outside the United States or Europe.

**Michael Bustamante**  
*History*  
“Cuban Counterpoints: Memory Struggles in Revolution and Exile, 1959–1980”

Original, exciting and extremely relevant to today’s political reality, Michael Bustamante’s dissertation is brilliant on many different levels, reaching out to and shaking up the methodologies and findings of many disciplines beyond his own. It is a model for how the research and writing of history reflects the very best methods, rigor and relevance of the Humanities.

**Yiwen Li**  
*History*  
“Networks of Profit and Faith: Spanning the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea, 838–1404”

A research tour-de-force, this study analyzes trade between China and Japan during a six-century long suspension of the tribute trade between 838 and 1404. Few dissertations span six centuries, two largely separate national historiographies, and several disciplines. Networks of Profit and Faith does all this, and makes it look easy with its clear, powerfully revisionist argument and graceful narratives.
University Awards

The Theron Rockwell Field Prize was established in 1957 by Emilia R. Field in memory of her husband, Theron Rockwell Field, Ph.B. 1889. It is awarded for poetic, literary, or religious works by any students enrolled in the University for a degree. This prize is awarded by the Office of the Secretary of Yale University.

Kara Yoo Leaman
Music (December 2016)
“Analyzing Music and Dance: Balanchine’s Choreography to Tchaikovsky and the Choreomusical Score”

Waleed B. Ziad
History
“Traversing the Indus and the Oxus: Trans-regional Islamic Revival in the Age of Political Fragmentation and the ‘Great Game’, 1747–1880”

The John Addison Porter Prize, named in honor of Professor John Addison Porter, B.A. 1842, is awarded for a work of scholarship in any field where it is possible, through original effort, to gather and relate facts or principles, or both, and to present the results in such a literary form as to make the project of general human interest. This prize is awarded by the Office of the Secretary of Yale University.

Joseph W. Peterson
History
“Missionaries and Marabouts: Catholicism, Islam, and Secularism in Nineteenth-Century France and Algeria”

Andrew Timberlake
Genetics
“Exome Sequencing Reveals Novel Causes of Non-syndromic Craniosynostosis”
ANYA ADAIR  
*English Language & Literature*  
2015–2016

KYLE LUH  
*Mathematics*  

DEACON NEMCHICK  
*Chemistry*  
2012–2013

MIRANDA SACHS  
*History*  
2016–2017

RAPHAEL SARFATI  
*Applied Physics*  
2015–2016

KAMALA SCHELLING  
*Music*  
2015–2016

KYLE SKINNER  
*Italian*  
2015–2016

ARBER TASIMI  
*Psychology*  
2015–2016
Graduate Mentor Awards

This year, for the nineteenth time, the Graduate School honors faculty members at Convocation for their exemplary qualities as mentors. Many dissertation advisors were nominated, and the honorees were chosen by a committee of students and faculty. All letters of nomination were anonymous.

In the Humanities

DAVID BLIGHT
Class of 1954 Professor of American History, and Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery and Abolition

“What makes David Blight an extraordinary mentor for graduate students is that he does not just offer comments on polished drafts. He takes the time to talk about ideas. Sit down in David’s office with a question, an idea, the first paragraph of a paper — and his attention turns entirely to you, not to the high stacks of books (unless one is relevant), his many speaking engagements, or his latest scholarly project.”

“David Blight has been a dedicated and supportive mentor who has improved my research, enlivened my teaching, and eased my connections in the larger world of scholars at conferences and symposia.”

“David is one of the great historians of his time, but he wears his achievements lightly. He wants you to meet a high standard, not parrot an approach he favors.”

“In the Natural Sciences

DEREK BRIGGS
G. Evelyn Hutchinson Professor of Geology and Geophysics, and Curator, Yale Peabody Museum

“Derek’s research group represents a truly nurturing academic environment, with weekly discussion meetings that stimulate lively debate and collaboration within the group, advanced graduate level classes that promote deep understanding of the fossil record for group members (and others), and weekly social events at his own home for group members and their families that allow a remarkable level of camaraderie, trust, and friendship to develop within the group. The lynchpin of the group is, however, Derek himself. Despite being recognized as the leading global authority in the field of fossil preservation, Derek makes everyone feel valued.”

“Derek Briggs is a scientific role model of the highest caliber. He is respectful and encouraging toward students — treating them as equals. …Derek is the sort of scientist I strive to be.”

“Derek is completely devoted to the progress of each and every one of his students’ projects. Whether it is writing recommendation letters on a Sunday morning or dropping by my office on a random afternoon to ask if I need anything before leaving for a couple of days, I feel his presence, guidance, and help at all times.”

“Professor Briggs is a deeply thoughtful and caring mentor. In spite of his extremely active and well-funded research program (with no shortage of questions in need of study), he urges his students to develop their own research projects, even in research areas far from his own work.”
“Shivi, as he is affectionately known by his students and colleagues, has provided model mentorship for students at Yale across the undergraduate/graduate spectrum and in a variety of disciplines for many years. He deserves recognition for his encyclopedic knowledge of South Asia and agrarian issues, his collegiality in designing and leading interdisciplinary programming, and his tireless support of young scholars…”

“Shivi tailors his advising to every student’s needs… he is truly invested in making you the best scholar that you can be, and in helping you become the academic you want to be.”

“He is generous with his time, inspiring and sharp in his intellectual engagements, yet always – unfailingly – kind and supportive.”

“He guides by example and works very hard to bring out the best in us. He takes his job as a professional mentor very seriously, which is both refreshing and reassuring.”

“Shivi has been a huge influence on my life and career through his pithy and priceless advice and his own example and comportment as a scholar. As a teacher, Shivi emphasized two things: A) to read broadly in your scholarly fields and immerse yourself in your project… B) to be intellectually rigorous. Rigor, he stressed, produced confidence in one’s scholarship.”
THE SHIELD OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The design for the Graduate School shield was drawn by Yale art professor Theodore Sizer and approved by the University. Four themes are symbolized in the arms of the School. The background of the “chief” (the place of honor) is Yale blue, with Roman numerals in white representing 1847, the year of the founding of the Department of Philosophy and the Arts, the earliest formal organization for graduate study at Yale and, in fact, in the entire United States. Below, on a white background, is a black Y-shaped device representing the “pallium,” a garment worn by philosophers in ancient Rome, and frequently used as a symbol for Yale. The three red crosses are derived from the arms of Bishop George Berkeley, who established in 1732 an endowment for Yale College graduates “reading for the second degree.” These were the first scholarships exclusively for graduate study at Yale.

THE MACE OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The mace is carried at the head of ceremonial processions by the School’s marshal and displayed at such events as the annual Matriculation ceremony, awards Convocation, and Commencement.

The shaft of the mace is turned red mahogany. Inset near the top of the shaft on two sides is the shield of the Graduate School, rendered in cloisonné-enamelled metal. For description of the shield, see above. The shaft is topped by a disk of grained red and black macasser ebony, on which sits a large, faceted crystal orb, the chief design element of the mace. The orb symbolizes several characteristics of advanced study in the arts and sciences. The global shape suggests the ambition of advanced study to be comprehensive in its inquiry. The transparent clarity of the fine Austrian lead crystal of which the orb is made alludes to the motto of Yale University, Lux et Veritas, and to the enlightenment that scholars seek in their research and teaching. Finally, the many facets of the orb symbolize the complexity of advanced learning in the arts and sciences and the importance of approaching its subjects from many intellectual directions.

In addition to the large ceremonial school mace described above, there are four smaller maces that are carried by faculty and staff marshals. These marshals’ batons each have a similarly turned shaft of mahogany. At their tops is a single enamelled shield.