

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS
COLLEGE OF LAW

2026
Commencement

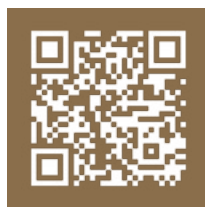
SATURDAY, MAY 9

Congratulate THE CLASS OF 2026

by sharing your commencement photos today
on social media using #LOYNOJD26



For Closed Captioning
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**For a Digital Program
With Graduate Names**
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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS
COLLEGE OF LAW

MAY 9, 2026 • SMOOTHIE KING CENTER

CEREMONIAL REGALIA

Arts, Letters,
Humanities
White

Commerce,
Accountancy,
Business
Drab Olive

Economics
Copper

Education
Light Blue

Fine Arts
Brown

Journalism
Crimson

Law
Purple

Library Science
Lemon

Medicine
Green

Music
Pink

Nursing
Apricot

Philosophy
Dark Blue

Public
Administration,
including
Foreign Service
Peacock Blue

Science
Golden Yellow

Theology
Scarlet

Universities have held ceremonies for the awarding of degrees since the eleventh century. Over these many hundreds of years, considerable tradition has evolved around these commencement exercises and the procedure by which degrees are awarded.

Authorization for the awarding of a degree is complex. In the United States, each state has laws that permit the state to recognize and acknowledge the worthiness of an institution to award a degree. The Louisiana Legislature granted a charter to Loyola University on July 10, 1912, recognizing the university's right to grant degrees. Regional associations set standards and after careful examination will recognize an institution through accreditation. Loyola is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.

The sequence of events that leads to the awarding of a degree consists first of a statement by the faculty of a college that an individual has completed all of the requirements and a recommendation to the dean that the individual be awarded a degree. The dean then certifies to the president of the institution that the student has completed the course requirements. The president, who has been authorized by the Board of Trustees, then confers the degree. A degree is a title that a college grants an individual upon completion of scholarly work. As proof of that title, a diploma is issued. The diploma repeats the sequence of faculty recommendations, certification by the dean, conference by the president, and the authority of the Board of Trustees as shown by the presence of the seal of the university.

In today's ceremonies, the name of each candidate for graduation present will be announced publicly. Each individual will come to the stage when their name is announced. The president of the university will congratulate the recipient. The diploma cover symbolizes the academic achievement that the individual has attained. Those who have completed undergraduate degree requirements move the tassel on the mortarboard from right to left, another symbolic custom. The president will wait until all of the names of degree recipients and candidates are announced and then will confer a degree collectively upon each individual in a real or prophetic way. At many universities today, diplomas are not issued until some weeks after commencement exercises.

ACADEMIC GOWNS AND HATS

Academic gowns and hats are a custom that dates back to the Middle Ages. Since early European and English universities were founded by the church, students and teachers were required to wear distinctive gowns at all times. Although the custom was brought to this country in colonial days, the requirement for students was soon dropped. The custom for professors was confined to special occasions such as graduation exercises and inaugurations of college and university presidents.

With the increase in the number of educational institutions and the development of new fields of study, confusion arose about the type of gown and the color to denote various degrees. To introduce uniformity and set up a clearinghouse for new disciplines, a commission representing leading American colleges produced The Intercollegiate Code in 1895. In 1932, a national committee of the American Council on Education revised this code into The Academic Costume Code. It was revised again in 1959. Although not obligatory, most of the educational institutions in the country follow it in awarding their degrees, earned and honorary.

The most significant part of the academic dress is the hood. While there are bachelor's degree hoods, many institutions reserve the wearing of hoods for graduate degrees. Each successively higher degree carries with it a longer hood. The doctoral hood also has side panels on the back. The color of its velvet border indicates the academic field, and it is lined with the color or colors of the institution granting the degree.

Although most doctoral gowns are black, with black velvet bars and panels, in some cases the color of the gown is that of the university conferring the degree—blue for Yale, crimson for Harvard, slate for Columbia. All such gowns have black bars and panels.

Academic fields also may be indicated by the color of velvet on the doctoral gowns: three two-inch bars on the sleeves and a five-inch border extending from the back of the neck down the two sides in front.

Caps are black. Gowns for bachelor's and master's degrees are plain black, but sleeves of the latter are short with trailing "elbows." Doctoral gowns of European universities are usually very colorful. The caps often are not of the conventional mortarboard shape.

DISTINCTION CORDS

Undergraduate students graduating with honors wear distinction cords symbolizing the following honors:

GOLD CORDS — *Summa Cum Laude* (3.8 GPA)

SILVER CORDS — *Magna Cum Laude* (3.6 GPA)

BRONZE CORDS — *Cum Laude* (3.4 GPA)

CEREMONIAL MACE

Loyola University's Ceremonial Mace is an ornamental mace traditionally carried at the head of academic processions as a symbol of educational authority and institutional identity. Its design and appearance typically resemble a metal torch or cross decorated by carvings including the university seal.

The Loyola mace was designed in 1995 by then Department of Visual Arts faculty member Erik Johnson. It is carried as a symbol of authority in processions at commencement and other academic ceremonies. During other times of the year, it is on permanent display in Marquette Hall. It was utilized for the first time October 28, 1995, at the inauguration of the Rev. Bernard P. Knoth, S.J., as 15th president of the university.

The iconography on the mace is derived from the seal of the university as designed in 1929 and stylized in 1970. The arms of the Loyola family consist of two gray wolves suspending a kettle between them. This is seen as a symbol of generosity because it signifies such abundance that after everyone was fed there was always something left in the pot upon which the wolves could feast.

The fleur-de-lis represents the French origins of the state and city.

The pelican feeding her young with her own blood affiliates Loyola with the state of Louisiana.

The wolves, fleur-de-lis, pelican, and bottom termination are of cast bronze. The kettle, with the facade of Marquette Hall in low relief, is cast iron. Overall length is approximately thirty-three inches.

The staff is inscribed with the following significant dates in Loyola University New Orleans history:

- 2012 — the 100th anniversary of Loyola's charter;
- MCMXII — 1912 — chartering of Loyola University;
- MDCCCXLIX — 1849 — founding of the College of the Immaculate Conception;
- MDCCCXXXVII — 1837 — founding of St. Charles College; and
- MDCCXXVI — 1726 — arrival of the Society of Jesus in Louisiana.

HONORARY DEGREES

Honorary degrees are awarded to individuals because of contributions the individual has made to their community and beyond. These degrees carry the distinction *honoris causa*, which means “cause of honor.”

The sequence of events is slightly different and is somewhat more ceremonial than for traditional degrees.

A committee of faculty, staff, and student representatives considers individuals for this honor, examining both the careers and the contributions of the nominees. This group presents its recommendations to the president, who forwards them to the Board of Trustees. The board selects the recipients and authorizes

the preparation of a diploma for each honoree. The diploma bears the signatures of the chair and secretary of the Board of Trustees, the president, and the provost.

The diploma notes the actions of the individual that the committee and the board considered. The president confers the degree. The honoree wears an honorary degree hood, bordered in velvet and lined in the maroon and gold colors of the university.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER



THE REVEREND THOMAS P. GREENE, S.J., '86, J.D. '89

Father Thomas P. Greene, SJ, '86 BA, '89 JD, is the provincial superior of the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province, serving since July 31, 2020, with his term concluding this July. In this role, he has led key apostolic initiatives grounded in a faith that does justice.

With the support of Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, he established a border ministry in the Rio Grande Valley to provide pastoral care for detained migrants and those in shelters along the U.S.-Mexico border. He also launched the Jesuit Prison Education Network, expanding access to higher education for incarcerated individuals across Jesuit institutions, and created a retreat scholarship fund to broaden access to Ignatian spirituality among Black Catholics.

Father Greene's ministry has included legal advocacy for detained immigrant children and asylum seekers in Chicago, Houston and New Orleans. He has served as provincial assistant for international ministries, superior of the Jesuit Community of Belize, and rector of Bellarmine House of Studies at Saint Louis University. He is a founding member of Loyola's Jesuit Social Research Institute and serves on the boards of Jesuit Refugee Service International and JRS-USA.

A native of New Orleans, he is a graduate of Jesuit High School, Loyola University New Orleans, and its College of Law. He practiced law before entering the Jesuits in 1997 and was ordained in 2007.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDING

Xavier A. Cole, Ed.D.

President, Loyola University New Orleans

PROCESSION.....	Candidates for Degrees College of Law Faculty and Staff Presidential Party
MACE BEARER.....	Sarah Allison, Ph.D. <i>Hutchinson Distinguished Professor, Associate Professor of English, Director of Composition, and Chair of the University Senate</i>
GONFALON BEARER.....	Alysse Arceneaux <i>Assistant Director, Law Records and Chair of the University Staff Senate</i>
CALL TO ORDER.....	Ryan Haas '99, M.S. <i>Chair, Board of Trustees</i>
INVOCATION	The Reverend Lawrence W. Moore, S.J., J.D. <i>Professor of Law</i>
NATIONAL ANTHEM	Jessica Mulgrew, J.D. '26
WELCOME AND PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS	Xavier A. Cole, Ed.D.
FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR'S COMMENCEMENT MESSAGE	Selwyn Wayne Theodore Rukero, LL.M. '26
2026 COMMENCEMENT MESSAGE	Eduardo Chamah Nicolas, J.D. '26

PRESENTATION AND CONFERRING
OF HONORARY DEGREE Xavier A. Cole, Ed.D.
Thomas A. Chambers, Ph.D.
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

2026 COMMENCEMENT REMARKS.....The Reverend Thomas P. Greene, S.J., '86, J.D. '89
Provincial of the Jesuits' USA Central and Southern Province

DEAN'S REMARKS AND
CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATES..... The Honorable Madeleine M. Landrieu, J.D. '87, H '05
Dean and Judge Adrian G. Duplantier Distinguished Professor of Law

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES..... The Honorable Madeleine M. Landrieu, J.D. '87, H '05

READERMary Garvey Algero, J.D. '89
*Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Faculty Development,
Philip and Eugenie Brooks Distinguished Professor of Law,
and Warren E. Mouledoux Distinguished Professor of Law*

CONFERRING OF DEGREES Xavier A. Cole, Ed.D.

BLESSING The Reverend W. Penn Dawson, S.J., J.D.
Visiting Assistant Professor of Law

RECESSIONAL Presidential Party
College of Law Faculty and Staff
Graduates

ANNOUNCER
Tom Evison
University Athletics

*Guests may meet their graduates outside on Dave Dixon Drive
between the Arena and the Superdome.*

COLLEGE OF LAW

JURIS DOCTOR

William T. Aguillard
Lake Charles, Louisiana

Ashlyn Elise Alack
Madisonville, Louisiana

Una Anderson ◊
New Orleans, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Gabrielle E. Armstrong
New Orleans, Louisiana

Rilley Rose Arreola
Corpus Christi, Texas

Peter James Bagley
Wayne, Pennsylvania
Cum Laude

Ashley D. Bailey
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Spencer Allan Bargas
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Zakaria J. Barhoush
Ocala, Florida

Brylon D. Batiste
St. Martinville, Louisiana

Brandon L. Becerra
Miami Lakes, Florida

Julie Marie Belanger
Metairie, Louisiana

Hector R. Belarmino
Bel Air, Maryland

Jonathan Louis Benit
Mandeville, Louisiana
Cum Laude

Emily A. Berthelot ◊
Harvey, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Ivana Betances Juarez
San Antonio, Texas

Jean-Paul B. Bezou
Covington, Louisiana

Alayna Lynn Blanda
Marrero, Louisiana

Sophia Patricia Boudreau
Atlanta, Georgia

Madison Bourgeois
New Orleans, Louisiana
Cum Laude

Crayton Lee Bowie
Oxford, Mississippi

Ashley C. Bowler
Lake Charles, Louisiana

Charles Arlen "Trey" Braud III
Covington, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Brianna L. Brewer ◊
Violet, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Emily Sarah Brouillette
Metairie, Louisiana

Gage C. Broussard
Erath, Louisiana

Jillian Christine Brown
Shreveport, Louisiana

Breanna L. Burkhead ◊
Lake Charles, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Anika Olympia Butler
New Orleans, Louisiana

Christopher J. Caldarera ◊
Laplace, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Eugene Thomas Calongne IV
New Orleans, Louisiana
Cum Laude

Cole Thomas Carmouche Baton Rouge, Louisiana <i>Cum Laude</i>	Maryam A. Diaab Detroit, Michigan <i>Cum Laude</i>
Shelby Paige Cascio Gonzales, Louisiana	Patricia Victoria Diaz San Juan, Puerto Rico
Hannah I. Cavazos Weslaco, Texas	Kimberly Ann Dickerson Harvey, Louisiana
Clélie Colleen Chachere Opelousas, Louisiana	Lacey C. Dodson Haughton, Louisiana
Eduardo Chamah Nicolas Mayagü, Puerto Rico <i>Cum Laude</i>	Donavan M. Donahé Bossier City, Louisiana
Marryn Mikayla Chaney Lancaster, Pennsylvania <i>Cum Laude</i>	Sophia Yiannopoulos Dooley Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Jack Mitchell Chapoton Mandeville, Louisiana	Alicia M. Ducksworth Dallas, Texas
Nicole Ourso-Chetta Baton Rouge, Louisiana	Kelsey D. Ferguson Beaufort, North Carolina
James Chilimigras ◊ Bay St. Louis, MS <i>Summa Cum Laude</i>	Brenna Kay Ferrell Ocean Springs, Mississippi
Madeline Annalise Clay Gardendale, Alabama	Daniel T. Field Saint Francisville, Louisiana
Elizabeth Mary Coman ◊ New Orleans, Louisiana <i>Summa Cum Laude</i>	Gina Marie Flores Alice, Texas
Julián J. Contreras Mandeville, Louisiana	Tracey D. Ford Carlisle, Massachusetts <i>Cum Laude</i>
Catherine V. Cool Bay St. Louis, Mississippi	Allen C. Foss Cincinnati, Ohio
Phillip Hampton Brock Creel Franklinton, Louisiana	Allison Zoglio Foy New Orleans, Louisiana
Joleen Rivera Dacula New Orleans, Louisiana <i>Cum Laude</i>	Elizabeth Walsh Gainer Nashville, Tennessee <i>Cum Laude</i>
Hannah Catherine Daniel ◊ Pineville, Louisiana <i>Summa Cum Laude</i>	Dara Martiné Gallion Shreveport, Louisiana <i>Cum Laude</i>
Macy Louise Debnam West Monroe, Louisiana	Olivia Grace Gillis Dallas, Texas
Alexander Manuel DePascual New Orleans, Louisiana	Lee John Gilyot New Orleans, Louisiana
	Kyle T. Godeaux Lake Charles, Louisiana

- M. Belen Goicoechea Ruiz ◊
Necochea, Argentina
Magna Cum Laude
- Alexandra A. Gomez-Resendiz
Ponchatoula, Louisiana
Cum Laude
- Katera R. Green
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Kansas City, Missouri
- Christopher A. Guerra
Houston, Texas
- Hannah Emilia Guerra ◊
Hammond, Louisiana
Summa Cum Laude
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New Orleans, Louisiana
- Jack Elliot Hamilton
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Margaret Elizabeth Head
Montgomery, Alabama
- Warren Alexander Hedrick
Harahan, Louisiana
- Max T. Henson
San Antonio, Texas
- Dennise Jackeline Hernandez Plascencia
Snellville, Georgia
- Grace Elizabeth Herring
New Iberia, Louisiana
- Kennedy Imani Hood
Atlanta, GA
- William Theis Huckabay
Shreveport, Louisiana
- Maeve R. Hurson ◊
Austin, Texas
Summa Cum Laude
- Lindsey C. Ingram
Syracuse, New York
- Henri Lloyd Jacobs
New Orleans, Louisiana
- Jacob A. Jimenez
Pflugerville, Texas
Cum Laude
- Cameron Rashad Johnson
New Orleans, Louisiana
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Waxahachie, Texas
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Shreveport, Louisiana
- Karam Preet Kaur
Clinton, Mississippi
- Amari William Kelly
Bowie, Maryland
- Tyler Wesley Kennemore
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Cum Laude
- Abigail Claire Kilgore
Crowley, Louisiana
Cum Laude
- Katherine Jane Kimbrell
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Kelli Kirkland
Slidell, Louisiana
- Ann Marcelle Lafranca
New Orleans, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude
- Bradley K. Lane
Mobile, Alabama
- Nicolle Elizabeth Lanson
New Orleans, Louisiana
Cum Laude
- Carianne McClellan Lewis
Daphne, Alabama
- Madison Elizabeth Lively
Las Cruces, New Mexico
- Vallerie Lockwood
Williamsburg, Virginia
Cum Laude
- Christopher Lucore
Bay St. Louis, Mississippi
Cum Laude
- Matthew D. Maier
Prairieville, Louisiana
- Rachel H. Male
North Yarmouth, Maine
- Alec C. Maraldo
New Orleans, Louisiana

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Mahalie Belle Matassa Baton Rouge, Louisiana	Analise Kathryn Morrow Tampa, Florida
Morgan Layne Matte Lafayette, Louisiana	Patrick Thomas Moss, Jr. Murfreesboro, Tennessee
Christian May Birmingham, Alabama	Jessica Mulgrew Lake Charles, Louisiana
Tavaziva C. Mazhindu Harmony, Pennsylvania	Kevin J. Mulgrew Los Angeles, California
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Cum Laude

Tanner Morgan White ◊
Cedar City, Utah
Magna Cum Laude

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Metairie, Louisiana

Joshua Paul Joel Williams
Mobile, Alabama

Kayla Ann Wilson
San Antonio, Texas

Patrick C. Winters ◊
New Orleans, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

Alexandra Elise Zengel ◊
New Orleans, Louisiana
Magna Cum Laude

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Christopher A. Guerra
Houston, Texas
Summa Cum Laude

MASTER OF LAWS

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Cum Laude

Rawan Barakat
Palestine

Selwyn Wayne Theodore Rukero
Windhoek, Namibia

Adrienne Lee Sanders
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Summa Cum Laude

Brandon Michael Tate
New Orleans, Louisiana

Madushika Nadeeshani
Weerasinghe Pathirana
Sri Lanka

Yaribelky Cedeño Work
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Elyssa Willis
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR

Fulbright Scholars attend the Loyola College of Law as part of the U.S. Department of State's prestigious, merit-based, cultural enrichment program that supports foreign students interested in pursuing graduate study in the United States.

Selwyn Wayne Theodore Rukero, LL.M. '26 Windhoek, Namibia

Wayne Rukero is a foreign Fulbright scholar from Namibia who holds an LL.B. (Honours) degree from the University of Namibia; a certificate in International Law from the National University of Singapore; and, today, he is an LL.M. graduate in United States Law.

He is also a qualified lawyer of the High and Supreme Court of Namibia and, having taken his MPRE in March 2026, he is a prospective candidate of the New York State Bar Examination. His prior legal experience includes having practiced as an Associate Attorney at two of Africa's largest law firms in their respective corporate and commercial departments.

Finally, Wayne is a co-founder of a start-up that is developing Namibia's first chlor-alkali chemical production plant.

FACULTY EMERITI

Loyola considers granting emeritus status upon retirement to all assistant and associate professors, professors, and academic administrators who normally have given 15 years or more of service to the university and who have made contributions to the university. The following individuals were granted emeritus status during the 2025–2026 academic year.

D. Majeeda Snead, J.D.

Clinical Professor of Law Emerita

Bachelor of Arts, 1981, University of New Orleans; J.D., 1984,
Loyola University School of Law.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM L. CROWE, SR., SCHOLARS

In 2000, the faculty at the College of Law established an honor in memory of their late colleague for students graduating in the top 10 percent of the class (based on fall 2025 senior rank). These students, in grade point average rank order, are designated the 2026 William L. Crowe, Sr. Scholars.

Maeve R. Hurson	Rachel Avery Norwood
Grace Farnsworth Schaumburg	Alejandro H. Medina
Hannah Catherine Daniel	Patrick C. Winters
James Chilimigras	Breanna L. Burkhead
Alex Joseph Perera	Abigail Elizabeth Strohmeier
Elizabeth Mary Coman	Tanner Morgan White
Hannah Emilia Guerra	Christopher J. Calderera
Mary Helen VanHoy	Robert Lee Moore III
Alexandra Elise Zengel	Una Anderson
Emily A. Berthelot	Brianna L. Brewer
	M. Belen Goicoechea Ruiz

THE ORDER OF BARRISTERS

The Order of Barristers is a national honor society that encourages effective oral advocacy and brief writing. Schools selected to have chapters are those nationally recognized for outstanding Moot Court and Trial Advocacy programs and for successful participation in regional, national, and international interscholastic oral advocacy competitions. The following graduates have been inducted as members of this prestigious group for the 2025–2026 academic year:

Grace Farnsworth Schaumburg	Carianne McClellan Lewis
Phillip Hampton Brock Creel	Tavaziva C. Mazhindu
Nicolas Allen Montalbano	Rachel Avery Norwood
Sal Edward Montalbano	Eduardo Chamah Nicolas
James Montague Wakeland	Ashley D. Bailey
Marryn Mikayla Chaney	Marshall Gregory Meek

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A MESSAGE FROM DEAN LANDRIEU

Dear Graduates of 2026,

Welcome to our 2026 graduation ceremony. We have come together to celebrate your successes and to send you forth, equipped in mind, body, and spirit, to make a difference in the world.

As you have made your way to this moment, I trust you have learned something about yourself and about one another. Together, you have worked hard to maintain a sense of community. You engaged in meaningful, thoughtful, and often difficult conversations in and out of class. You learned the written law, but you also learned that the law moves and bends as people come to rightfully expect more from each other, our society, and our systems.

You might notice that St. Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuit order, is often depicted in photographs and statues in mid-stride – in motion. He has one foot planted firmly on the ground, and one foot moving purposely forward. His head is level, his gaze fixed ahead, into the future. We never know where our lives will take us, but in the spirit of St. Ignatius, I pray that you too will plant your feet firmly in the truth and gaze forever forward in search of justice.

On behalf of President Xavier A. Cole, the Board of Trustees, and the faculty and staff of the College of Law who have walked with you, worked with you, challenged you, and supported you, congratulations!

We are so very proud of you!

Dean and Judge Adrian G. Duplantier
Distinguished Professor of Law

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The preceding program lists candidates eligible to participate in the spring 2026 commencement. Participation in this commencement exercise is not restricted to those who have completed all requirements for graduation. All candidates for the degree in spring participate without consideration of their final semester grades. Therefore, the program may not be a true list of degree recipients and their date of graduation. Likewise, the honor distinctions are based on current grade point averages.

The academic distinctions listed in this program are based on work completed through fall 2025. Distinctions may change based on spring and/or summer grades.

Graduation distinctions for transfer students who complete 60 or more Loyola quality hours will be based solely on the Loyola cumulative grade point average.

Transfer students who complete fewer than 60 Loyola cumulative quality hours are not eligible for graduate distinctions.

Spring 2026 graduation candidates will be awarded their degree upon approval of their dean on June 1. Candidates for summer and fall 2026 will be awarded their degree upon approval at a later date.

