



University of Nebraska Medical Center

Graduate Studies Matriculation Ceremony

August 19, 2025

Agenda

Welcoming Remarks

Karen A. Gould, PhD, MEd

Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Interim Dean, Graduate Studies
Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy

Awards

Karen A. Gould, PhD, MEd

Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Interim Executive Associate Dean, Graduate Studies
Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy

Dr. David Crouse, PhD (Sara Crouse)

Graduate Studies Wellness Advisor

Invited Speaker

Moorthy P. Ponnusamy, Ph.D.

Professor
Co-Director, Graduate Program
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
College of Medicine

Student Matriculation

Karen A. Gould, PhD, MEd

Students' Welcome

Annant Kaur

President, Graduate Student Association

Alumni Council Welcome

Alice Schumaker, PhD

Graduate Studies Wellness Advisor

Closing Remarks

Karen A. Gould, PhD, MEd

Matriculating Students

(by program)

Certificate in Applied Health Informatics

Tanya Custer, PhD, MS, R.T.(R)(T)ARRT

Director – Interprofessional Academy of Educators

Director – CAHP Distance Education

Associate Professor

Department of Allied Health Professions Education, Research & Practice

College of Allied Health Professions

Brandie Gatzemeyer

Sanjay Srinivasan

Lisa Treat

Certificate in Health Professions Teaching & Technology

Tanya Custer, PhD, MS, R.T.(R)(T)ARRT

Rana Al-Sadi

Nila Jones

Nicole Kusnik

Amanda Roberts

Master of Healthcare Delivery Science

Tanya Custer, PhD, MS, R.T.(R)(T)ARRT

Tracy Campin

Kesha DeGroff

Jared Denny

Jamie Maier

Heather Young

Skyler Zeller

Jaidyn Zong

Master of Health Professions Teaching & Technology

Tanya Custer, PhD, MS, R.T.(R)(T)ARRT

Kate Bednarke

Sydnee Castrow

Amber Cecil

Samantha Cox

Jennifer Eiland
Evangeline (Gigi) Green
Courtney Hegouet
Shafeeque Kunhiabduallah
Tammy (Tam) McDowell
Cassy Richards
Leah Stamps
Kerith Wolf

Master of Science - Applied Behavior Analysis

Mark D. Shriver, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Professor, Psychology
Director, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
Director, MS in Applied Behavior Analysis Program
Associate Director for Education and Training, Psychology
Munroe-Meyer Institute for Genetics and Rehabilitation

Kelly Leuthaeuser
Faith Lodes
Ellie Schmidt

Master of Science – Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Suhil Kuman, PhD
Assistant Professor
Co-Director, Graduate Program
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
College of Medicine

Melissa Teoh-Fitzgerald, PhD
Assistant Professor
Co-Director, Graduate Program
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
College of Medicine

Fabiola Alanoca Rugel
Jackson Courville
Rupsha Das
Brandon Howard
Maria Perez-Durham

Master of Science – Biostatistics

Christopher S. Wichman, PhD
Associate Professor & Graduate Program Director
Department of Biostatistics

Katianna Feldewerd
Iqra Ismail
Margaret Lapan

Janet McGinn
Emma Podlich
Gerald (Gerry) Zavorsky

Master of Science – Cancer Research

Joyce Solheim, PhD
Professor, UNMC Eppley Institute for Research in Cancer and Allied Diseases
Director, IGPBS-Cancer Research Doctoral Program, Cancer Research M.S. Program, and Eppley
Summer Undergraduate Research Program
Associate Director for Training and Education, Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

Tai Prauner

Master of Science – Immunology, Pathology & Infectious Disease

Rakesh K. Singh, PhD
Samuel M. and Janet L. Cohen Distinguished Professor in Pathology and Microbiology
Professor, UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
Vice Chair of Graduate Education, UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
Director, UNMC Immunology, Pathology, and Infectious Disease Graduate Program

Elizabeth Ruck, PhD
Professor, UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
Co-chair, UNMC Immunology, Pathology, and Infectious Disease Graduate Program

Madeleine Morta
Gabriel Tonucci
Chenyang Wang

Master of Science – Medical Anatomy

Samantha Simet, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy
Co-Director, Masters in Medical Anatomy Program

Travis McCumber, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy
Co-Director, Masters in Medical Anatomy Program

Jacob Aldridge
Victoria Banister
Jacob (Jake) Dolesh
Nolan Eatherton
Rosenda (Rose) Ebert
Jacob Engel
Joseph Heirigs
Madison (Maddie) Kent
Blake Kidder
Kael Kingery
Ashley Kraemer

Matthew Millian
Sudha Paudel
Jasmine Sparrock
Mason Warner
Kate Zachary

Master of Science – Medical Physiology

Matthew C. Zimmerman, PhD

*Professor and Vice Chair of Education, UNMC Department of Cellular and Integrative Physiology
Director, Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences
Director, Master of Science in Medical Physiology Program
Director, Electron Paramagnetic Resonance Spectroscopy Core and the Physiological Environment
Research Core Facility*

Bryan T. Hackfort, PhD

*Assistant Professor, UNMC Department of Cellular and Integrative Physiology
Assistant Director, Master of Science in Medical Physiology Program
Director, three research cores*

Richard (Alex) Burke
Bruce Callahan
Chacen Carpenter
Holden Cave
Ava Cunningham
Tommie (Trey) Frazier
Sophia Grace
Rebecca Gross
Tristan Kleinschrodt
Allison Minter
Garrison Potadle
Daniela Santillan
Alexandra (Ally) Stodola
Bryce Thacker
Petra Ulrich
Thomas Walsh

Master of Science – Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology

Gargi Ghosal, PhD

*Associate Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy
Co-Director, Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology PhD Program and MS Program*

Sandipan Brahma PhD

*Assistant Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy
Co-Director, Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology MS Program*

Ifeoluwa Adeagbo
Aditi Aditi
Camille Carlson

Harleen Kaur
Yanan Lou
Sushant Pokhrel
Claire Poupore
Muhammad Faisal Sattar

Master of Science – MSIA Biological Defense & Health Security

Eric Carnes, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Environmental, Agricultural, and Occupational Health
Fellow, National Strategic Research Institute
Director, Biological Defense and Health Security PhD Program
Director, Biological Defense and Health Security MS Program

Peter Mercredi

Master of Science – MSIA Clinical & Translational Research Mentored Scholars Program

Anthony Podany, PharmD, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science
Director, Clinical & Translational Research Mentored Scholars MS Program

Amarnath (Amar) Annapureddy
Kaveh Bookani
Moataz Ellithi
Rashi Sandooja

Master of Science – MSIA Oral Biology

Professor, Department of Oral Biology
Director, Master of Science MS Program

Robert (Dalton) Cline
Mark Fischer
Akshay Ghai
Ankur Kaul
Blake Kopf

Master of Science – MSIA Patient-Oriented Research

Ka-Chun (Joseph) Siu, PhD
Professor, Department of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences
Director, Patient-Oriented Research MS Program
Chair, PT Global Health Opportunities Program

Sara Albagoush
Matt Milcsik
Kareem Omran

Master of Science – Pharmaceutical Sciences

*Professor, UNMC Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Director, Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Program*

Syed Ahmed Haqqani
Madhura Dhanaji Kanase
Noran Ahmed Amir Radwan

Doctor of Philosophy – Biomedical Informatics

*Jenenne Geske, Ph.D.
Research Director, UNMC Department of Family Medicine
Associate Professor, UNMC Department of Family Medicine
Interim Chair and Program Director, UNMC Biomedical Informatics Program*

Evangel Anyanwu
Kishore Challagundla
Amin Foroughi Nezhad
Shaun Grammer
Bulidierxin Tuerhanbayi

Doctor of Philosophy – Biostatistics

*Christopher S. Wichman, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Biostatistics
Director, Biostatistics Graduate Program*

Lap Pui Chung
Yinting Liu
Xuxiang Wang

Doctor of Philosophy – Environmental Health, Occupational Health & Toxicology

*JoEllyn McMillan, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Environmental, Agricultural and Occupational Health
Director, Environmental Health, Occupational Health, and Toxicology Graduate Program*

Paul Brantmier
Ruhma Khan
Jair Uddin
Alexandrea (Alex) Welch

Doctor of Philosophy – Epidemiology

*Ariane Rung, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor and Vice Chair, UNMC Department of Epidemiology
Director, Epidemiology Graduate Program*

Muskan Ahuja
Simranjit Kaur
Khadija MSami

Doctor of Philosophy – Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Research

Tzeyu L. Michaud, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Health Promotion

Director, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research Graduate Program

Laura Ellenberger

Xabier Irujo Urdiroz

Marian Kombat

Doctor of Philosophy – Health Services Research, Administration & Policy

Hongmei Wang, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Health Services Research & Administration

Director, Health Services Research & Administration Graduate Program

Kristen Hendershot

Doctor of Philosophy – Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences (IGPBS)

Matthew C. Zimmerman, PhD

Professor and Vice Chair of Education, UNMC Department of Cellular and Integrative Physiology

Director, Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences

Director, Master of Science in Medical Physiology Program

Director, Electron Paramagnetic Resonance Spectroscopy Core and the Physiological Environment Research Core Facility

Samuel (Sam) Aden

Aavash Adhikari

Emma Bitterman

Rachel Burke

Cassidy Drescher

Mariam Garcia Escobar

Allison Gershenson

Kate Graham

Carmela Huntington

Bright Manu

Evanjalina Matoy

Bianza Mbavha

Thao (Arlie) Nghiem

Charles (Charlie) Porto

Claire Ryan

Gretchen Simon

Puspa Sornakar

Davin Tafuri

Hadley Taggart

Angela Truong

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

Rebecca Oberley-Deegan, PhD

Professor, UNMC Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Director, IGPBS-Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Doctoral Program

Elizabeth Quaw

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Bioinformatics & Systems Biology

Jordan Rowley, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy

Director, IGPBS-Bioinformatics and Systems Biology Doctoral Program

Abtin Akhtari

Aniello (Niel) Infante

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Cancer Research

Joyce Solheim, PhD

Professor, UNMC Eppley Institute for Research in Cancer and Allied Diseases

Director, IGPBS-Cancer Research Doctoral Program, Cancer Research MS Program, and Eppley

Summer Undergraduate Research Program

Associate Director for Training and Education, Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

Hamed Abbasi

Jacob Gosnell

Priyanka Radhakrishna Bhargav

Amanda Robotham

Khadija Turabi

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Immunology, Pathology & Infectious Disease

Rakesh K. Singh, PhD

Samuel M. and Janet L. Cohen Distinguished Professor in Pathology and Microbiology

Professor, UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology

Vice Chair of Graduate Education, UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology

Director, UNMC Immunology, Pathology, and Infectious Disease Graduate Program

Elizabeth Ruck, PhD

Professor, UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology

Co-chair, UNMC Immunology, Pathology, and Infectious Disease Graduate Program

Hayden Klaus

Claire Snodgrass

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Integrative Physiology & Molecular Medicine

Erika I. Boesen, PhD, FAHA

Associate Professor, UNMC Department of Cellular and Integrative Physiology

Director, IGPBS-Integrative Physiology & Molecular Medicine Doctoral Program

Rosaline Smillie

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology

Kyle Hewitt, PhD

*Associate Professor, Department of Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy
Co-Director, Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology PhD Program*

Gargi Ghosal, PhD

*Associate Professor, Department of Genetics, Cell Biology, and Anatomy
Co-Director, Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology PhD Program and MS Program*

Anna Frie

Frank Osei

Xiaoxiao Wang

Yiyang (William) Wu

Doctor of Philosophy – IGPBS Neuroscience

Keshore R. Bidasee, PhD

*Professor, Department of Pharmacy and Experimental Neuroscience
Director, IGPBS-Neuroscience Doctoral Program*

Alejandro Hernandez

Chayse Kerzman

Julie Leibig

Krunalbhai (Krunal) Solanki

Hayden Zahler

MD/PhD Scholars

Justin L. Mott, MD, PhD

*Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Director, MD-PhD Scholars Program*

Hannah Johnson

Steph Maurina

Alexis Shindhelm

Sarah Uhm

Collin White

Doctor of Philosophy – MSIA Applied Behavior Analysis

Nicole Rodriguez, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA

*Professor, Munroe Meyer Institute, Integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders
Director, Applied Behavior Analysis Doctoral Program*

Sydney Burlison

Ellie Eastlund

Drew Piersma

Amaya Rocheleau

Tina Vo

Doctor of Philosophy – MSIA Clinically Relevant Basic Research

Carol A. Casey, PhD

*Professor, UNMC Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Director, Clinically Relevant Basic Research Doctoral Program*

Yiran Li

Swathi Priyanka Murakonda

**Doctor of Philosophy – MSIA Clinical & Translational Research Mentored
Scholars Program**

Anthony Podany, PharmD, PhD

*Associate Professor, UNMC Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science
Director, Clinical & Translational Research Mentored Scholars Doctoral Program*

Makena Sundine

Doctor of Philosophy – MSIA Health Practice & Medical Education Research

Sharon Medcalf, PhD

*Associate Professor, UNMC Department of Epidemiology
Director, Health Practice & Medical Education Research Doctoral Program*

Kristen Fishler Malone

Michael Hollins

Elizabeth (Betsy) Litman

Peggy Moore

Brandy Sundberg

Melanie Thompson

Doctor of Philosophy – MSIA Patient-Oriented Research

Ka-Chun (Joseph) Siu, PhD

*Professor, Department of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences
Director, Patient-Oriented Research Doctoral Program
Chair, PT Global Health Opportunities Program*

Marie Neumann

Samuel Owolabi

Doctor of Philosophy – Nursing

Roxanne Vandermause, PhD, RN

*Gladys E. Sorensen Endowed Chair in Nursing
Professor, College of Nursing
Director, Nursing PhD Program*

Kyle Hughes

Yaw Okyere

Kendra Quandt

Jade Rice

Erika Rodriguez

Tara Timberlake

Doctor of Philosophy – Pharmaceutical Sciences

Don Ronning, PhD

Professor, UNMC Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Director, Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Program

Samia Akter

Ahmad Almardini

Marcia Borges

Kevin Galindo Herrera

Manisha Ghising

Amit Kolhe

Felicidad Lebario

Artyom Marchenko

Francisco Pepe Illuzzi

Zalak Sheth

Sai Sadhananth (Sai) Srinivasan

Xander Van Horn