

Apply to be Marist's 2026 Commencement Student Speaker

Applicants will be evaluated by the
Commencement Student Speaker Selection
Committee.

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**All undergraduate and graduate students are
eligible and encouraged to apply!**

Applications are due by:
February 1, 2026

APPLICATION IS ATTACHED



Requirements

Speaker Eligibility

- Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible and encouraged to apply
- Must be a graduating student in good academic and disciplinary standing
- Must be eligible to walk at the **May 2026** Commencement ceremony
- Must commit to attending speaker rehearsals and the Commencement ceremony

Application Requirements

- Students may self-nominate via an application form, due **February 1, 2026**
- Include a 3-5 minute draft of proposed speech, which need not be in final form but should convey key themes to be included in the Commencement speech
- Include a 1-minute video explaining why you are interested in becoming Marist's next Commencement speaker
- Submit a resume or list of contributions to the Marist Community



2026 Commencement Student Speaker Application

Due : February 1, 2026 by 11:59 p.m.

The Commencement Student Speaker Selection Committee is seeking nominations for students to speak at the upcoming 80th Commencement Ceremony, **Thursday, May 21, 2026**, at the 5:00 pm ceremony (master's and doctoral students) and **Friday, May 22, 2026** (undergraduates). The time allotted for the student commencement speech is 3-5 minutes. The most well-received speeches are those that reflect on the common educational experience and share, in a personal way, the value of the education received at Marist. The Selection Committee will review the applications and make recommendations of the top candidates. Final selection will be made by the Provost.

Name of Applicant: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

Email: _____ Cell Number: _____

Academic School: _____

Student Status: ☒ Undergraduate ☐ Graduate

Major/Minor (for undergraduate applicants): _____

Program (for graduate applicants): _____

The following materials **must** be included in all Commencement Speaker application packets, as a **single file** (PDF only). Please check the items off as you put them into the application packet and sign the sheet, verifying completion. The Selection Committee will not consider incomplete applications. Please submit Last Name-First Name-Application.pdf.

- ☒ Application form (please combine all files and submit **Last Name-First Name-Application.pdf**)
- ☒ Commencement speech – should be no longer than 3-5 minutes, approx. 2 pages double-spaced
- ☒ Current Curriculum Vitae/Resume

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- ☒ Video must be uploaded (submit **Last Name-First Name-Video.mp4**) 1 minute explaining why you are interested in becoming the 2026 Commencement Student Speaker. Please limit background noise.

I verify that the contents of the application packet are my own work, accurate and that all of the required materials noted above are included in the Commencement Speaker application packet. If selected, I agree to give only the final approved speech. I understand that if I materially deviate from the final speech, my microphone may be muted, I may be escorted from the stage, and I may be subject to sanctions, as it could indicate a lack of professionalism or unethical conduct. Finally, I understand that a material deviation from the submitted speech may also subject me to discipline under the Student Conduct Code. I understand that I must remain in good academic and disciplinary standing until the Commencement Ceremony.

Applicant's Electronic Signature

Applicant's Printed Name

Dated

Application Deadline: Sunday, February 1, by 11:59 p.m.

Please upload all documents and video to this [folder](#).

Identify any organizations you are involved with at Marist and your role within these organizations.

Identify how you have contributed to a vibrant academic community at Marist.

Please feel free to include any additional information that should be considered by the Selection Committee.



Commencement Student Speaker Application Guidelines

The Commencement Student Speaker will be selected on the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria

- Speech content (clarity, inspiration, relevance to Marist mission and values, and ability to represent the experience of the graduating class)
- Presentation skills (delivery, poise, engagement)
- Academic and extracurricular achievements and contributions to a vibrant academic community

Selection Process

- Committee reviews all applications and selects 5-7 finalists
- Finalists invited to give live presentations to the committee
- Committee deliberates and recommends top candidates to the Provost
- Selections are announced by mid-April

Final Steps

- Selected speakers work with Marketing & Communications to refine speech
- Speakers participate in rehearsals leading up to Commencement
- Speakers deliver address at designated Commencement ceremony

Selected applicants will be required to present their speeches to the Commencement Student Speaker Selection Committee. Once chosen, the student speaker will work with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Marketing and Communications to rehearse their speech in preparation of Commencement.

DEADLINE: February 1, 2026
TO SUBMIT APPLICATION WITH ALL REQUIRED MATERIALS