

Commencement Speakers - 1996 to 2021

Year	Ceremony	Speaker	Title/Description	HD Received
2021	Spring Commencement	Bryan Stevenson	Civil Rights Attorney, Author, Founder and Executive	Humane Letters
	University Graduate Exercises	Twyla Tharp	Choreographer, dancer, and founder of the Twyla Tharp Dance Company	Fine Arts
	Winter Commencement	Ruth Simmons	President of Prairie View A&M University, Former President of Brown University	Laws
2020	Spring Commencement	N/A (COVID-19)	No ceremony held due to COVID-19	N/A (COVID-19)
	University Graduate Exercises	N/A (COVID-19)	No ceremony held due to COVID-19	N/A (COVID-19)
	Winter Commencement	N/A (COVID-19)	No ceremony held due to COVID-19	N/A (COVID-19)
2019	Spring Commencement	Gretchen Whitmer	49th Governor of Michigan	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	Randy W. Schekman	Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, Professor of Cell and Development Biology, University of California, Berkeley	Science
	Winter Commencement	Hendrik (Hank) Meijer	Executive Chairman of Meijer, Inc.	Laws
2018	Spring Commencement	Charles Woodson	Former U-M football player, Heisman Trophy winner, NFL Super Bowl champion, Founder, The Woodson Foundation, and ESPN commentator	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	David R. Walt	Harvard Medical School Professor of Pathology, Founder, Illumina Inc. and Quanterix Corp.	Science
	Winter Commencement	Lynn Conway	U-M professor emerita, computer scientist, electrical engineer, inventor and transgender activist	Science
2017	Spring Commencement	N/A	N/A	N/A
	University Graduate Exercises	Damon A. Williams	Senior VP, Boys & Girls Club of America	Bicentennial Alumni Award
	Winter Commencement	Jesmyn Ward	U-M alumna, author, Tulane University professor, MacArthur Fellow	Bicentennial Alumni Award
2016	Spring Commencement	Michael Bloomberg	Former New York City Mayor and business magnate	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	Mary Claire-King	Professor of Human Genetics and human rights activist, University of Seattle	Science
	Winter Commencement	Julio Frenk	President, Miami University, former Dean, Harvard School of Public Health, and former Secretary of Public Health of Mexico	Laws
2015	Spring Commencement	Paul Saginaw/Ari Weinzweig	Co-Owners and Founding Partners, Zingerman's Community of Businesses	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	Robert J. Shiller	Sterling Prof of Economic, Yale Univ; Prof of Finance, Yale School of Management	Science
	Winter Commencement	Martha Minow	Dean, Harvard Law School	Laws
2014	Spring Commencement	Mary Barra	CEO, General Motors Company	Engineering
	University Graduate Exercises	Daniel Okrent	U-M alumnus, author, editor, journalist and cultural historian	Humane Letters
	Winter Commencement	Charles F. Bolden, Jr.	Administrator of NASA, ret. US MarineCorps MajGenl, former NASA Astronaut	Science
2013	Spring Commencement	Richard (Dick) Costolo	CEO, Twitter	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	Rosabeth Kanter	Ernest L. Arbuckle Professor, Harvard, Editor, Harvard	Humane Letters
	Winter Commencement	Michele Norris-Johnson	National Public Radio journalist	Humane Letters
2012	Spring Commencement	Sanjay Gupta	CNN Chief Medical Correspondent	Humane Letters
	University Graduate Exercises	Susan Orlean	Journalist and Author	Humane Letters
	Winter Commencement	Raynard Kington	President, Grinnell College	Laws
2011	Spring Commencement	Richard D. Snyder	48th Governor of Michigan	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	Eugene Robinson	Journalist and Author	Humane Letters
	Winter Commencement	Jill Abramson	Executive Editor, New York Times	Humane Letters
2010	Spring Commencement	Barack Obama	44th President of the United States	Laws

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	University Graduate Exercises	Charles Vest	President, National Academy of Engineering	Laws
	Winter Commencement	Daniel Kahneman	Psychologist, Nobel Laureate Economics	Science
2009	Spring Commencement	Lawrence Page	Co-Founder and President, Google	Engineering
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Michael Posner Jeff Daniels	Cognitive Neuroscientist Actor	Science Fine Arts
2008	Spring Commencement	Robert W. Woodruff	ABC News Anchor, Journalist	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Frances Allen Roger S. Penske	Computer Scientist, Turing Award Winner Chairman, Penske Corporation	Science Laws
2007	Spring Commencement	William Jefferson Clinton	42nd President of the United States	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Philip Converse Francis S. Collins	Sociologist Former Director, National Human Genome Research Institute	Science Science
2006	Spring Commencement	Christiane Amanpour	Journalist and Chief International Correspondent, CNN	Humane Letters
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Amartya Sen Dave Bing	Economist, Nobel Laureate Chairman, The Bing Group	Science Laws
2005	Spring Commencement	John Seely Brown	Computer Scientist	Engineering
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Mildred S. Dresselhaus Freeman J. Dyson	Physicist Professor Emeritus, Institute of Advanced Study; Mathematician and Physicist	Science Science
2004	Spring Commencement	David E. Davis, Jr.	Journalist, Founder and Editor Emeritus of Automobile Magazine	Humane Letters
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Julius L. Chambers Robert P. Moses	Civil Rights Leader and Educator Civil Rights Activist, Educator of Mathematics, Founder and President, The Algebra Project, Inc.	Laws Laws
2003	Spring Commencement	Jennifer Granholm	47th Governor of Michigan	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	John J. H. Schwarz Thomas J. Miller	Physician, Former Michigan State Senator United States Ambassador to Greece	Laws Laws
2002	Spring Commencement	Willima H. Gray	CEO, College Fund/UNCF, Social Activist	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Donna Shalala Philip Levine	President, University of Miami Poet and 1995 Pulitzer Prize Winner	Laws Humane Letters
2001	Spring Commencement	Robert Pinsky	Former US Poet Laureate	Humane Letters
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Marshall Sahlins Charles Baxter	Anthropologist Author and Adjunct Professor of English Language and Literature	Humane Letters No degree awarded
2000	Spring Commencement	David Halberstam	Journalist, Author, Pulitzer Prize Recipient	Humane Letters
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Bernice Johnson Reagon Elmore Leonard	Distinguished Professor of History, Curator, Smithsonian, Musician and Producer Popular Contemporary Author	Music Humane Letters
1999	Spring Commencement	Kofi Annan	7th Secretary General of United Nations	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises Winter Commencement	Shirley Malcolm Romano Prodi	Chemist, Science Policy and Education Policy President of the European Community, Former Prime Minister of Italy	Science Laws
1998	Spring Commencement	Mamphela Ramphela	Chancellor, Cape Town University	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	Richard Ford	Author	Humane Letters

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	Winter Commencement	David DiChiera	Founder and General Director, Michigan Opera Theatre	Music

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1997	Spring Commencement	Lee Bollinger	12th President, University of Michigan	No degree awarded
	University Graduate Exercises	Lee Bollinger	12th President, University of Michigan	No degree awarded
	Winter Commencement	Ken Burns	Filmmaker and Historian	Laws
1996	Spring Commencement	Johnetta B. Cole	Educator, President Spellman College	Laws
	University Graduate Exercises	James J. Duderstadt	11th President, University of Michigan	No degree awarded
	Winter Commencement	Sandra Day O'Connor	United States Supreme Court Justice	Laws