

*Message to Graduating Students*  
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To reach this moment, each of you had to negotiate the layered challenges that make up the New College experience – whether in the form of Academic Contracts, the senior thesis and baccalaureate, personal relationships, or the discovery of your true passion. The very things that drew you to New College in the first place – such as the freedom to chart your own educational path – not only look considerably different from this end of the process, they have significantly changed you.

Now from one standpoint, this is simply called, “growing up.” But from the specific standpoint of the New College experience, your success in reaching this moment signifies a superior capacity to cope with complexity, to respond constructively to a serious challenge, and – hardly trivial – to meet a deadline. The element of personal responsibility running through these achievements is not only impressive in itself, but it should also give you the self-confidence that your New College education has prepared you well for the utterly unforeseeable challenges that lie before you.

No single snapshot captures the way you as a graduating class have achieved this success. Each of your journeys has been as individualized as the outfits you wear tonight. One common theme affecting all of you, however, involves the dedication and professionalism of your teachers, and the personal attention each of you has received from them. In the years ahead, you will appreciate the most the teachers who have pushed you the hardest – and, as alumnae/i, you will be eager to return to campus to impress this lesson on a new generation of students, as though it has been your own discovery.

We look forward to your frequent return, even as we share with your families the pride they are feeling at this moment. Congratulations.