



Framingham
State University

The Inauguration of

Nancy S. Niemi, Ph.D.

as the 17th President of Framingham State University

Friday, May 5, 2023

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Friday, May 5th, 2023, 10 a.m.
Dwight Hall Performing Arts Center
Framingham State University
100 State Street
Framingham, Massachusetts



Nancy S. Niemi, Ph.D.

Nancy S. Niemi's commitment to educational and social equity is evidenced throughout her work with universities and schools across the country, in her scholarship, and in her service in and with communities throughout her career.

She received her Bachelor's Degree in English Literature from the University of Rochester in 1984 and began teaching middle school English and History in Horseheads, New York. She received a Master's Degree in Education from Elmira College in 1987, writing an honors thesis on the necessity of specialized education for teachers of adolescents, as well as two other important papers: one on the development of and necessity for sexuality education for all educators and the second on the absence of discussion of the *My Lai Massacre* in high school history textbooks.

Dr. Niemi was elected to the Horseheads Public School Board in 1989, a role in which she served for three consecutive terms (nine years), the last of which she was elected to by the widest margin in New York State history. Her tenure on the Board included positions as Curriculum Committee Chair and Vice President, as well as representing the Southern Tier of NY State as Legislative Liaison to the New York State Department of Education, from 1995-1997.

Her interest in questions of politics, society, and power in public education led her to doctoral study at the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education. While a student, she taught as an Adjunct Professor of Education, creating several new classes for the School. Her doctoral dissertation was a year-long ethnographic study of a middle school, exploring the intersections of gender, education, and power, which set the stage for her career-long exploration of those dimensions.

Dr. Niemi spent seven years as an Assistant and Associate Professor of Education at Nazareth College (Rochester, NY), followed by six years as Professor and Chair of the Education Department at the University of New Haven. In New Haven, she and her colleagues secured the Department's first national accreditation, created and launched a Sixth Year Diploma in Instructional Technologies and Digital Media Literacy, and instituted curricular reforms. They initiated the inclusion of part-time faculty into the fabric of the department, including the establishment of faculty awards for part-time teaching, development of a program of annual assessment of all part-time faculty, and reshaping part-time faculty teaching and curricular expectations.

In 2016, Niemi was named the inaugural Director of Faculty Teaching Initiatives at Yale University's Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. There, she and her colleagues created the university's first programs of faculty development, available to all faculty in Yale College, the graduate school, and many of the professional schools. She and the Center's Executive Director, Dr. Jenny Frederick co-led the university's first New Faculty Teaching Academy. Niemi created and implemented communication strategies for increasing faculty exposure to research on teaching and learning, and designed many discipline-specific faculty development programs for infusing DEI work in their pedagogy.

As Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (2019-2022), Niemi led many initiatives in concert with her faculty and administrative colleagues. A singular project was the establishment of the *Men of Color in Education program*, one of the few in the State of Maryland designed for BIPOC male high school students, university students, and career changers who are interested in teaching. She and her colleagues also created an Office of Sponsored Research and hired UMES's first Director of Research. Under Niemi's leadership, the university established an undergraduate STEM degree program as part of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's (HHMI) Driving Change Initiative. One of only six institutions in the country, and the only HBCU to win this award, UMES is now at the forefront of contributing to lasting culture change on research university campuses so that undergraduate students from all backgrounds, particularly those who belong to historically excluded groups, will excel in STEM and graduate from college to become leaders in STEM.

Niemi's inquiry and scholarship continues to center on the intersections of gender, social equity, and higher education. She has published widely on social equity in schools. Her book, *Degrees of Difference: Women, Men, and the Value of Higher Education* (Routledge, 2017) explored the assertion that U.S. women's dominance in college degree completion has resulted in women having cultural and socio-economic advantages over men. She and co-author Marcus Weaver-Hightower published the *Wiley Handbook of Gender Equity in Higher Education* in December 2020. And in 2022, she and two colleagues (Kathy Lund Dean and Charles Fornaciari) co-authored *Course Design and Assessment* (Elgar). She and her colleagues Marie-Pierre Moreau and Penny Jane Burke currently edit the *Bloomsbury Gender and Education: Intersectional and international perspectives* series. Her journal publications cover an array of educational inquiries including the portrayal of teachers in children's fiction, addressing sexual orientation in elementary school curriculum, and countering the invisibility of clinical educators.

Dr. Niemi has been active in leadership of professional and community organizations throughout her career, including Research on Women in Education (American Education Research Association), the Edgerton Park Conservancy (New Haven, CT), the Newtown Historical Society (Salisbury, MD), and the Friends of the Library (Horseheads, NY). She currently serves on the board of the United Way of Tri-County, and looks forward to working with many more nonprofit, corporate, and legislative partners within the Framingham, MetroWest, and New England regions.

Nancy Niemi is married to Dr. Michael Morris, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of New Haven, and writer of the education blog, University Life. She is the wildly proud mother of three children, Andrew Peckham (Hyde Park, MA), Nathaniel Peckham (Philadelphia, PA), and Anna Peckham (Oakland, CA), as well as the besotted grandmother of Miles Peckham.

Order of Procession

Delegates of the Universities and Colleges
Administrators of Framingham State University
Faculty of Framingham State University
Guests of Honor and Platform Party
Former Presidents of the University
Trustees of Framingham State University
Bearer of the University Mace
the President of Framingham State University

About Daniel Belknap - Composer of Belknap's March

Daniel Belknap (1771 – 1815) grew up and went to common school in Framingham. He learned enough music to start his own singing school when he was only eighteen years old. His first songs were published in anthologies of religious tunes, but by 1797 he had brought out a tune book devoted entirely to his own work. In all he published four books of sacred music, the largest, *The Village Companion*, included fifty-six of his own compositions. He also published a secular “songster,” which included an instrumental piece, “Belknap’s March,” which was chosen for the Processional during today’s ceremony.

Inaugural Ceremony

Processional

“Belknap’s March”

Daniel Belknap, Composer

Performed by Occasional Brass

Welcome

Ann McDonald

Chairperson, Inauguration Committee

The National Anthem

Francis Scott Key, Composer

Performed by Haylee Girouard ’25

Greetings to the President

Kevin Foley ’84

Chair, Board of Trustees

Rafaat Elkhoury ’24

Vice President, Student Government Association

Olivia Mangué Nandongo ’19

Graduate Student

David Baldwin

Director of Human Resources

Mirari Elcoro

Vice President, MSCA, Framingham Chapter

Guest Speaker

Kristin Esterberg
Chancellor, University of Washington Bothell

Presentation of the Symbols of Office

Kevin Foley '84, Chair of the Board of Trustees
Kristen Porter-Utley, Provost

Administration of the Oath of Office

The Honorable Kim Driscoll
Lt. Governor, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Inaugural Address

Nancy S. Niemi, 17th President
Framingham State University

Closing Remarks

Ann McDonald
Chairperson, Inauguration Committee

Alma Mater

“Live to the Truth”
To the tune of “Finlandia”
Jean Sibelius, Composer
Words by Martin F. O’Connor
Performed by Haylee Girouard '25

Recessional

“Autumn 3, The New Four Seasons - Vivaldi Recomposed”
Max Richter, Composer
Performed by Occasional Brass

Delegates

1636 Harvard University Thomas Grove Professor Emeritus	1863 Boston College Anyenda Inyagwa Associate Director, Alumni Affinity Programs	1894 Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Christopher Macdonald-Dennis '92 Senior Advisor for Institutional Equity & Belonging
1821 Widener University Stacey Robertson President	1873 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Nina Lyon-Bennett Assistant Dean for Academics, School of Agriculture, Fisheries & Human Sciences	1894 Fitchburg State University Patricia Marshall Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
1839 Westfield State University Linda Thompson President	1873 Massachusetts College of Art and Design Mary Grant President	1897 Bay Path University Revathi Dragu Alumna
1840 Bridgewater State University Frederick W. Clark, Jr. President	1874 Worcester State University Barry Maloney President	1950 University of Massachusetts Boston Marcelo Suarez-Orozco Chancellor
1854 Salem State University John Keenan President	1883 Houghton University J. Anthony Lloyd Trustee	1961 MassBay Community College David Podell President
1856 University of Maryland, College Park Brian Bergen-Aurand Alumnus	1886 University of Maryland Eastern Shore Moses Kairo Professor and Dean	1997 Olin College of Engineering Kristin Casasanto Director of Post-Graduate Planning

Academic Regalia

Representative Sampling of the Colors Worn by the Faculty

Arts, Letters, Humanities	– White
Business	– Drab
Education	– Light Blue
Fine Arts	– Brown
Home Economics	– Maroon
Journalism	– Crimson
Law	– Purple
Library Science	– Lemon
Music	– Pink
Nursing	– Apricot
Philosophy	– Dark Blue
Science	– Golden Yellow
Theology	– Scarlet

Academic Attire

The academic attire worn today in American colleges and universities originated in the Middle Ages, when all of the scholarly institutions were religious or monastic foundations. Officially adopted in 1895 as a standardized code for academic costume, its essentials remain largely unchanged.

Robes: Undergraduate gowns are black, worn closed, and distinguished by long, pointed sleeves. Masters wear their black gowns open, with square-cut sleeves open at the wrist and an arc cut out near the hem. The doctoral gown features large, bell-shaped sleeves and is trimmed with a velvet yoke that is attached to the neck and stitched down the front edges to the hem. In addition, three horizontal velvet bars are attached to the upper arm of the sleeves. The velvet trimmings may be either black or in a color particular to the field of study of the degree. Doctoral gowns are traditionally black, but many American universities have adopted their own color for these gowns.

Headgear: The mortar board, always black, is required by the American code for degree levels below the doctorate. The soft cap, which resembles a large tam, is permitted with the doctoral gown. The doctoral cap may be made of velvet. For undergraduates the tassel is worn on the right side of the cap. Upon receipt of the bachelor's degree, it is moved to the left.

Hoods: Hoods are the most distinctive feature of academic attire. Their shape and size indicate the level of degree attained, while the colors reflect both the field of study and the institution that granted the degree. The bachelor's hood is three feet long with a two-inch velvet border around the edge and collar. The master's hood is three and a half feet long with a three-inch collar and border in its academic discipline. The doctoral hood is four feet long with a five-inch collar and border of velvet. All hoods are lined in silk with either a single university color or with several stripes or chevrons representing the colors of the institution that awarded the degree.

Symbols of the Office of the President

The Mace

Originally a medieval club or weapon used for protection, the mace is now a ceremonial object symbolizing the authority of an institution, governing body, college or university. The Framingham State University mace is a three-and-a-half-foot long ceremonial staff fashioned from the wood of an 18th Century white oak tree that used to stand near Dwight Hall. It has brass accents and features bronze medallions at the top. In university ceremonial processions, it is carried by the chief faculty marshal.

The Chain of Office

For centuries, ceremonial Chains of Office have honored the highest officials of educational institutions. The Framingham State University Chain of Office includes the engraved names of every former president around the chain and culminates in a large medallion engraved with the University seal.

Framingham State University

Framingham State University (FSU), originally known as the Lexington Normal School, was founded by noted education reformer Horace Mann as the first public teacher's college in America on July 3, 1839. Today, FSU is a comprehensive arts and sciences institution offering rigorous programs to more than 4,000 students annually, including nearly 1,500 graduate students. The University is located on a beautiful 73-acre traditional New England campus just 20 miles from Boston in the Commonwealth's thriving MetroWest region. It offers more than 60 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences, and professional fields. Framingham State is home to several Centers, including - Center for Inclusive Excellence; Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching, Scholarship and Service (CELTSS); Christa Corrigan McAuliffe Center; Danforth Museum and Art School; Entrepreneur Innovation Center; MetroWest Economic Research Center (MERC); MetroWest STEM Education Center; and John C. Stalker Institute (JSI) for Food and Nutrition. For more than 180 years, the University's commitment to a strong liberal arts education that encourages independent thought and creativity has remained steadfast. The University is dedicated to ensuring student success, building faculty and staff, strengthening diversity in the student body and curriculum and responding to the needs of the local community. Framingham State boasts

a student-to-faculty ratio of 14 to 1 – small enough for learning to be personal and collaborative, yet large and diverse enough to broaden students' understanding of their world. When students are asked why they chose to attend FSU, they talk about an outstanding academic reputation, interesting course offerings, an exciting location, and a sense of community. FSU provides a challenging and supportive living and learning environment that encourages students' active participation in residential life, dozens of student clubs and organizations, recreational and athletic programs, internships, study abroad programs, and cultural and social events. Nearly 1,500 students reside on campus in seven residence halls, including LEED Certified Miles Bibb and West Hall. The University supports the professional growth and development of its faculty and staff, enabling them to remain on the cutting-edge in their areas of expertise. Framingham State also seeks to enhance access to a first-rate educational experience for students in need through an ambitious financial aid program. The large majority of Framingham State's more than 40,000 alumni live and work in Massachusetts. They excel in many fields, including law, business, the arts, communications, education, biotechnology, biochemistry and food science, nutrition and dietetics, information technology and public service.

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