



Academic Year 2026 – 2027

Convocation

Ceremony

30 July 2026

*The Warner Center for Advanced Military Studies
Auditorium*

PROGRAM

Attention

Entrance of the Official Party

Invocation

CDR McGrath
Chaplain, USN

The National Anthem

Honors

Introduction of the Guest of Honor

Brigadier General Matthew W. Tracy, USMC
Commanding General, Education Command
President, Marine Corps University

Remarks by the Guest of Honor

General Eric M. Smith, USMC
39th Commandant of the Marine Corps

Closing Remarks

Service Hymns

Departure of Official Party

OFFICIAL PARTY

Guest of Honor

General Eric M. Smith, USMC
39th Commandant of the Marine Corps

Brigadier General Matthew W. Tracy, USMC

Commanding General, Education Command
President, Marine Corps University

Dr. Megan J. Hennessey

Provost, Marine Corps University

MCU KEY LEADERS

Colonel Daniel M. Murphy, USMC
Chief of Staff
Education Command
Marine Corps University

Colonel Andrew M. Kelley, USMC
Director, Marine Corps War College

Dr. Christopher D. Yung
Dean, Marine Corps War College

Colonel Brian J. Donlon, USMC
Director, School of Advanced Warfighting

Dr. Michael F. Morris
Dean, School of Advanced Warfighting

Colonel John G. Lehane, USMC
Director, Command and Staff College

Dr. Paul D. Gelpi
Dean, Command and Staff College

Colonel Christopher T. Steele, USMC
Director, Expeditionary Warfare School

Dr. Kirklin J. Bateman
Dean, Expeditionary Warfare School

Colonel Robert M. Barnhart, USMC
Director, College of Enlisted Military Education
Marine Corps Senior Enlisted Academy

Mr. Keith M. Carroll
Dean, College of Enlisted Military Education
Marine Corps Senior Enlisted Academy

Mr. Terence K. Kerrigan
Director, College of Distance Education and Training

Mr. Scott E. Erdelatz
Dean, College of Distance Education and Training

Sergeant Major George Garcia III, USMC
Command Senior Enlisted Leader
Education Command
Marine Corps University



Eric M. Smith

General, USMC

39th Commandant of the Marine Corps

General Smith is currently serving as the 39th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, and raised in Plano, Texas, General Smith graduated from Texas A&M University and was commissioned in 1987. He has commanded at every level, including Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment during Operation Assured Response in Monrovia, Liberia; 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment during Operation Iraqi Freedom; and 8th Marine Regiment/ Regimental Combat Team 8 during Operation Enduring Freedom. He also served in Caracas, Venezuela as part of the U.S. Military Group.

As a General Officer, he commanded U.S. Marine Corps Forces Southern Command, 1st Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

General Smith's staff assignments as a General Officer include serving as the Director of Capability Development Directorate, Combat Development and Integration; Senior Military Assistant to both the Deputy Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Defense; Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration; and the 36th Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Matthew W. Tracy

Brigadier General, USMC

Commanding General, Education Command

President Marine Corps University

Brigadier General Matthew Tracy assumed the role of Commanding General, Education Command and President, Marine Corps University on 11 June 2024.



Brigadier General Tracy's command assignments include Platoon Commander and Executive Officer with 3d Battalion, 8th Marines; Company Commander with the Chemical Biological Incident Response Force and 2d Battalion, 3d Marines; Commanding Officer of Recruiting Station Chicago; Battalion Commander of 3d Battalion, 3d Marines; and Commanding Officer of the 4th Marine Regiment. He has combat experience in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq and supported humanitarian relief operations in Albania, Turkey, the Philippines, and the United States.

His staff assignments include Future Operations and Plans Officer at United States Marine Corps Forces, Pacific and Future Operations Officer at United States Special Operations Command. On two separate occasions, he served as Assistant Chief of Staff, War Plans (G5) and Operations (G3) for III Marine Expeditionary Force. He most recently served at Headquarters, Marine Corps as the Future Operations Branch Head within Plans, Policies, and Operations.

Brigadier General Tracy's military education includes The Basic School, Expeditionary Warfare School, College of Naval Command and Staff, and College of Naval Warfare. He is a graduate of the Maritime Advanced Warfare School.

His awards and decorations include Legion of Merit (with gold star), Bronze Star (with valor distinguishing device), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (with two gold stars), Navy Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (with two gold stars) Combat Action Ribbon (with gold star), and various unit and service medals and ribbons. He was the 2006 recipient of the Leftwich Award for leadership

COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

Marine Corps War College

The Marine Corps War College, as the senior PME institution of the Marine Corps, educates selected military and civilian professionals in order to develop strategic advisors, critical and creative thinkers, military strategists, and joint warfighters who are prepared to meet the challenges of a complex and dynamic security environment.

School of Advanced Warfighting

School of Advanced Warfighting develops lead planners and future commanders with the will and intellect to design and execute joint campaigns and naval expeditionary operations.

Command and Staff College

The Marine Corps Command and Staff College provides graduate level education and training in order to develop critical thinkers, innovative problem solvers, and ethical leaders who will serve as commanders and staff officers with Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF) and with service, joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational organizations confronting complex and uncertain security environments.

Expeditionary Warfare School

Expeditionary Warfare School educates and trains company grade officers to prepare them mentally, morally, and physically for billets of increased leadership responsibility across the Fleet Marine Force and the Joint Force with emphasis on the warfighting capabilities of a Marine Air Ground Task Force operating within a complex and distributed naval expeditionary environment.

College of Enlisted Military Education

Marine Corps Senior Enlisted Academy

The College of Enlisted Military Education provides a continuum of education to improve leadership, sharpen critical and creative thinking skills, and deepen Marines' understanding of warfighting concepts in distributed and joint environments in order to foster ethical, professional leaders who make sound decisions in complex operational situations. CEME oversees the Marine Corps Senior Enlisted Academy (MCSEA) and the Senior Non Commissioned Officer Academies (SNCOA)

College of Distance Education and Training

College of Distance Education and Training (CDET) provides a worldwide Marine Corps network that supports the professional growth of students through distance education with and emphasis on warfighting, leadership, and battle-staff employment, in both joint and multinational environments, at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of warfare.

MARINES' HYMN

“From the Halls of Montezuma
To the shores of Tripoli;
We fight our country's battles
In the air, on land, and sea;
First to fight for right and freedom
And to keep our honor clean;
We are proud to claim the title
Of United States Marine.

Our flag's unfurled to every breeze
From dawn to setting sun;
We have fought in ev'ry clime and place
Where we could take a gun;
In the snow of far-off Northern lands
And in sunny tropic scenes;
You will find us always on the job
The United States Marines

Here's health to you and to our Corps
Which we are proud to serve;
In many a strife we've fought for life
And never lost our nerve;
If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven's scenes;
They will find the streets are guarded
By United States Marines.”

MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY HISTORY



“This school is a revolution....

We want to make this post and the whole Marine Corps a great university. We want to find out who our most capable people are and to give them opportunities accordingly.”

**Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler, USMC
Commander, Marine Corps Schools, 1920**

Marine Corps University (MCU) was founded on 1 August 1989 by order of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Alfred M. Gray, Jr. Its schools claim a much longer history, beginning in 1891 with 29 company grade officers attending the School of Application. Today's MCU is the legacy of visionary leaders of the Marine Corps: Generals John A. Lejeune, Smedley D. Butler, James C. Breckinridge, and Alfred M. Gray. The understanding of the demands of military leadership provided the drive that culminated in the establishment of Marine Corps University.

Since the founding of the School of Application in 1891--the first resident school for Marine Corps officers--MCU has evolved and expanded to meet the emerging needs of a mobile, warfighting force. By 1921, the framework for what General John Lejeune termed the "Marine Corps Schools" was established through the creation of the Field Officers Course and the Company Grade Officers course. The commitment to amphibious warfare provided the impetus behind the development of Marine Corps science, eventually leading to the establishment of the Amphibious Warfare School. The Senior Course developed into what is now Command and Staff College, and the Junior Course became the Amphibious Warfare School, now called Expeditionary Warfare School.

The establishment of the Marine Corps War College, an academy for senior-level strategic skill development, and the emergence of the School of Advanced Warfighting, which specializes in developing superior operational planning experts, completed the University's complement of schools for Officer Professional Military Education. The system of Enlisted Professional Military Education established through the Staff Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academies and continuing education of senior NCOs was included in the mandate of MCU from its inception.

While preserving the legacy of this great tradition, MCU maintains the highest level of academic excellence as proven by Joint Professional Military Education and regional accreditation by the Joint Staff and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, respectively.

The Marine Corps is poised on the foundation of our history, moving with confidence into a new era. MCU seeks engagement with those who share our vision of creating visionary leaders who are capable of shaping the world through the power of dynamic leadership and bold ideas.