



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Binghamton University to hold commencement ceremonies May 17-18

A former U.S. poet laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner; an internationally known economist and educator; a philanthropist; and a chemical engineer will receive honorary degrees and speak at Binghamton University Commencement ceremonies in May.

Binghamton University will confer more than 3,400 degrees for bachelor's, master's and doctoral candidates during the 2008 Commencement ceremonies Saturday, May 17, and Sunday, May 18, in the Events Center on campus.

### Date, time of commencement ceremonies:

5 p.m. Saturday, May 17 - Graduate School

**Honorary degree recipient:** Ronald Ehrenberg, a staunch advocate of public higher education, will receive the doctor of science degree. He is the Irving M. Ives Professor of Industrial and Labor Relations and Economics at Cornell University, where he is also director of the Cornell Higher Education Research Institute. His research and publications on the economics of education have earned widespread praise and have contributed to the national dialogue on the funding of higher education, both public and private. In addition to the economics of education, Ehrenberg's fields of specialization include the analysis of labor markets, evaluation of social programs and analysis of compensation programs. Ehrenberg earned his bachelor's degree in mathematical sciences from Binghamton before receiving his master's and doctoral degrees in economics from Northwestern University.

9 a.m. Sunday, May 18 – Harpur College of the Arts and Sciences

**Honorary degree recipient:** Richard Felder, a chemical engineer by training known for his expertise in teaching methods, will receive the doctor of science degree. Felder is the Hoechst Celanese Professor Emeritus of Chemical Engineering at North Carolina State University. Co-author of *Elementary Principles of Chemical Processes*, an introductory chemical engineering text among the most popular in the field, Felder has published more than 200 works on science and engineering education and chemical process engineering. He is co-director of the National Effective Teaching Institute with his wife and colleague, Rebecca Brent, offering workshops on effective teaching methods. Felder's methods involve inductive teaching, including inquiry-based learning, project-based learning and other student-centered methods that immediately involve students as active learners. He has been honored with numerous awards, including the R.J. Reynolds Award for Excellence in Teaching, Research and Extension; the AT&T foundation Award for Excellence in Engineering Education; the Chemical Manufacturers Association National Catalyst Award; and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers Institute Lectureship Award. In 2006, he was chosen as one of five Outstanding Engineering Educators of the Century by the Southeastern Section of the ASEE.

12:30 p.m. Sunday, May 18 - Professional schools: College of Community and Public Affairs, Decker School of Nursing, School of Management, Thomas J. Watson School of Engineering and Applied Science

**Honorary degree recipient:** Raymond Osterhout, a retired insurance executive and philanthropist, will receive the doctor of humane letters degree. He worked for Kemper Insurance before moving on to the reinsurance field. Osterhout rose to the position of president of the National Reinsurance Corp. before serving as chairman, president and CEO of American Independent Reinsurance Corp., part of Aetna Life and Casualty Co. After selling that firm, he worked for Swiss Reinsurance Corp. as group vice president and underwriting and marketing manager. He retired in 2002.

4 p.m. Sunday, May 18 - Harpur College of the Arts and Sciences

**Honorary degree recipient:** Theodore J. (Ted) Kooser, 13th poet laureate consultant to the Library of Congress and a Pulitzer Prize winner, will receive the doctor of letters degree. Kooser taught high school for a year before beginning graduate study in English at the University of Nebraska, while working full time for Bankers Life Nebraska. Kooser wrote poetry each day before heading for the office, publishing 11 full-length collections of poetry while rising to the position of vice president of Lincoln Benefit Life, from which he retired in 1999. His published works include *Official Entry Blank* (1969), *Sure Signs: New and Selection Poems* (1980), *Weather Central* (1994) and *Delights and Shadows* (2004), for which he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 2005. Also in 2005, Kooser published *The Poetry Home Repair Manual: Practical Advice for Beginning Poets*. In 2006, Kooser accepted the Binghamton University Milt Kessler Poetry Book Award for *Delights and Shadows*. He teaches poetry as a presidential professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

For more information, <http://commencement.binghamton.edu/>

