

Welcome students, professors, administration, family members, alumni, and friends. I am so happy that you all made it here despite the abrupt end to senior year given COVID-19 (If over Zoom or similar platform, replace with: I am so happy you have all mastered your Zoom/other platform skills and are able to join me today despite the circumstance). For those of you who don't know me, my name is Emily Eidler, and I am honored to represent the Brandeis University Class of 2020.

For all of the seniors graduating today, raise your hand if you remember orientation: Coming out of your packed car, both nervous and excited, but calming down a bit after being greeted by a large group of extraordinarily peppy OLs wearing matching blue shirts with nicknames on the back. To me, orientation feels like just yesterday. However, think of everything that has happened since. The mailroom got a much needed makeover, the castle was knocked down and Skyline was built in its place, they got rid of the trays on the kosher side of the dining hall that were great for sledding down the library hill, and the pizza bagels disappeared from breakfast. We have been at Brandeis during a truly transformative time. We too have transformed. Remember when you used to go to the wrong Shapiro building all the time. Remember when you thought the 4th floor of the library was upstairs, rather than downstairs. Remember watching that video before even coming here: Sh*t Brandeis Students Don't Say. You now understand most of what they were talking about. You call Gertsenzang – Gzang; The Hoot Market -- The C-Store; Charles River – Grad; Shapiro Campus Center -- The SCC; Brandeis Emergency Medical Corps – BEMCO; and Health: Science, Society, and Policy – HSSP. You should be getting a Bachelor's degree today in Brandeis lingo and acronyms. But you have also exceeded expectations academically. You have taken UWS, Econ 2a, Bio 14, and Psych 10a. You have managed three

majors, four minors, and seven clubs. You have done all that while working at Lemberg and a lab. You really have accomplished so much since freshman year – oops I mean since being a first-year.

You also had many adventures outside of academics. Let's see how much you accomplished on your Brandeis bucket list even though our time here was cut a bit short. Raise your hand for every item you've accomplished. Here we go: gone to the Nasa Lab under the Rabb Step, been inside Kutz Bakery, told all your non-Brandeis friends that Central Perk is based off of Chums, argued with someone over which dining hall is better, gone sledding down the library hill, and won a shirt at midnight buffet. Wow! Your college experience has been so much more than just academics.

You all deserve a pat on the back, but so do all the people who helped get you here. Now, it has come to that point in the graduation speech where it's time to thank everyone who has made this journey possible. First, I want to thank all of the families who traveled here today. Though they may not have lived on campus with you, they still played an important role in getting you to where you are today. Next, I want to thank the Brandeis administration for running everything behind the scenes from welcoming us at convocation to handing us our diplomas today. And last, but definitely not least, I want to thank all of our wonderful professors. I went to the trusty ratemyprofessors.com to find the best of the best to shout out today. So here's to Don Katz, Jonathan Sarna, Jennifer Cleary, Michael Coiner, Derron Wallace, and Janet McIntosh. Thank you so much to making our Brandeis experience what it is. However, today we are not here to celebrate our outstanding professors. We are here to celebrating our amazing graduating class.

Class of 2020, wherever you go next, whether it be grad school, a lab, a tech company, a museum, a hospital, or anything else you can imagine, take Brandeis with you. Remember all that you learned and all the good times you had. Value and treasure them as you embark on your next

journey. Enjoy being in your 20s in the 2020s. Take advantage of everything you can. I congratulate you on all of your accomplishments here at Brandeis and wish you the best of luck in everything you do in the future. Thank you. Peace out 'deis! We're alums!