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Honorary Degree Award Citation for Richard Stowe

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Honorary Degree Awarded to Retiring Faculty

Richard S. Stowe, Professor of French

"'A door must be open or closed.' When the French poet and playwright, Alfred de Musset, dramatized that proverb in 1845, he transformed a scene from Parisian life into a metaphor that invites us to open the door of life. Besides Musset's figurative door, Richard Scribner Stowe, you have stood hospitably for more than three decades, welcoming young men and women to the study of language and literature. With human regard, you have introduced your students to form and content in the works of Flaubert, Hugo, Balzac, Zola, Moliere, and Proust. With tact, you have taught students to read and to express their own thoughts in French. With you linguistic gift and extensive knowledge of the vocal repertory, you taught students the diction of French song. You have written for a wider public about Merimee, Maeterlinck, and, of course, Musset. With wit and measure, you wrote a book about Alexandre Dumas, *père*, the author of *The Three Musketeers*, and 301 volumes of fiction, plays, poetry, travel books, commentary, memoirs, and a cookbook. With delight, you have accompanied students and alumni on trips to France, experiences that have elicited from them appreciation of your remarkable facility with the language, your deep understanding of the history and culture of France, and your talent for interpreting France to travelers. You are at home there. In Paris, Tours, and Lourmarin, you glimpsed the best and, like Plato in Athens, founded a city within yourself. Today, your students and colleagues for whom you have held open a door to the republic of letters join to express their admiration and gratitude.

By the authority vested in me, I now confer upon you the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, and admit you to its rights, its privileges, and its obligations."

Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 1990