

Peptide-Catalyzed Conversion of Racemic Oxazol-5(4H)-ones into Enantiomerically Enriched α -Amino Acid Derivatives

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Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: We report the development and optimization of a tetrapeptide that catalyzes the methanolytic dynamic kinetic resolution of oxazol-5(4H)-ones (azlactones) with high levels of enantioinduction. Oxazolones possessing benzylictype substituents were found to perform better than others, providing methyl ester products in 88:12 to 98:2 er. The mechanism of this peptide-catalyzed process was investigated through truncation studies and competition experiments. High-field NOESY analysis was performed to elucidate the



solution-phase structure of the peptide, and we present a plausible model for catalysis.

INTRODUCTION

The alcoholytic dynamic kinetic resolution¹ (DKR) of oxazol-5(4*H*)-ones² (1) has proven to be an important method for the preparation of a wide variety of enantiomerically enriched α amino acid derivatives (2), including many that are nonproteinogenic (Scheme 1). This process takes advantage of the

Scheme 1



anomalously acidic oxazolone α -proton $(pK_a \approx 9)$,³ which allows for facile epimerization, and therefore rapid equilibration of enantiomers, through the aromatic oxazole enol intermediate.⁴ Design of a chiral catalyst that preferentially reacts with one enantiomer of 1 over the other establishes a Curtin– Hammett scenario, wherein the product distribution is governed by the difference in diastereomeric transition state energies. This process has been used to explore an array of asymmetric catalyst types (Figure 1).⁵ It is noteworthy that both transition metal complexes^{6,7} (3 and 4) and low molecular weight organic scaffolds^{8–11} (5, 6, and 7), as well as hydrolytic enzymes¹² (e.g., 8), have been demonstrated to be effective catalysts for the DKR of 1. Of particular interest is the diversity of reaction mechanisms—from Lewis acid⁶ and nucleophilic catalysis^{7,8} to bifunctional activation,^{8–11} through the operation



Figure 1. Several catalyst types that have been employed in the ringopening DKR of oxazolones $(1)^{.6,7,9-11,12a}$

of intricate catalytic triads¹²—that have been harnessed to control this intriguing process. We were drawn to this particular reaction as an inquiry into whether a purely peptide-based scaffold might be an effective catalyst for a DKR of this type. Stimulated by potential analogies between peptides and their enzymatic counterparts,¹³ we embarked on an investigation that has culminated in state-of-the-art levels of selectivity over a rather broad substrate scope for these intriguing reactions.

We began our study with scaffolds that likely take advantage of a well-defined, β -hairpin-like secondary structure.¹⁴ We,^{13,15} and others,¹⁶ have shown previously that a number of reactions may be catalyzed with significant selectivity when functional groups are disposed proximally to one another within such a framework. Catalyst scaffold 9 (Scheme 2), which contains a β dimethylaminoalanine (Dmaa) residue at the *N*-terminal (*i*)

Received: December 19, 2013 Published: February 12, 2014

The Journal of Organic Chemistry





position,^{15a,17} presented the possibility for general basemediated catalysis through the action of a side chain tertiary amine. In cases where the β -hairpin conformation is adopted, the backbone amides also provide the possibility for nominal bifunctional catalysis, wherein the amide O or NH may contribute as hydrogen bond acceptors or donors, respectively.^{13,15–17} Thus, we evaluated families of catalysts structurally related to scaffold **9** for their ability to effect the DKR of oxazolones **1** to provide optically enriched methyl esters **2**.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Catalyst Optimization^{*a,d*}

Table 1 summarizes the results of our efforts to optimize a peptidic catalyst for the methanolytic DKR of **1a** (Scheme 2). In the absence of catalyst, no conversion into methyl ester **2a** was observed under the reaction conditions described in Scheme 2 (entry 1). We were pleased to discover that catalyst **9a**, an archetypal β -hairpin that we had investigated previously in an unrelated transformation,^{15a} provided **2a** with 67:33 er, albeit with low conversion (entry 2). This promising initial result spurred a full optimization of scaffold **9**. Replacing the *C*-terminal methyl ester with a dimethyl amide protecting group was advantageous, providing **2a** in 47% conversion and 76:24 er (entry 3). This is presumably due to a strengthing of the NH_i to O_{i+3} hydrogen bond,¹⁸ perhaps providing **a** more defined secondary structure.

We next proceeded to optimize the i + 2 position of 9, and in so doing we ultimately discovered a rather uncommon i + 2residue that proved to be crucial to catalyst performance. Replacing Aib with cyclopentyl-substituted Cle provided a modest increase in conversion and er (entry 4), while both cyclopropyl-substituted Acpc (entry 5) and the mono- α substituted Phe¹⁹ (entry 6) were found to be deleterious relative to Cle. However, catalyst 9f, possessing an indanesubstituted Aic residue at the i + 2 position, provided **2a** in 84% conversion and 93:7 er (entry 7), a significant improvement over the other residues examined in this position. The reason for this improvement is not fully understood. However, in order to investigate its possible origins, we compared the ¹H NMR spectra of peptides 9b, 9c, and Aic-containing 9f (Figure 2).²⁰ The signal corresponding to NH_{Phe} of 9f is shifted downfield by 0.10 ppm relative to that of 9c and by 0.18 ppm relative to that of 9b. Similarly, the NH_{Aic} signal in 9f is downfield-shifted by 0.19 ppm relative to NH_{Cle} of 9c and by 0.27 ppm relative to NH_{Aib} of 9c. These rather dramatic downfield shifts suggest that the Aic-residue of 9f may influence the catalyst conformation, perhaps through a strengthening of intramolecular hydrogen bonds. Additional studies of the solution conformation of the catalyst are presented below.

Optimization of the i + 3 position allowed us to fine-tune the reactivity and selectivity of the catalyst. Using D-Phe in place of L-Phe decreased the conversion to 75% and the er to 91:9 (entry 8), while substitution with Gly, having no substitutents, was even more deleterious (entry 9). Catalyst 9i, with its ethyl-substituted Abu residue, provided 2a in 94% conversion and 96:4 er (entry 10). Both S-methyl cysteine (entry 11) and O-benzyl serine (entry 12) in the i + 3 position provided modest increases in conversion to 97% with no observable effect on the selectivity. Substitution with Leu provided a nearly 30% decrease in conversion and a decrease in er to 91:9 (entry 13). While Gly-containing 9h is a competent catalyst, these results show that an i + 3 side chain in the L-configuration and of appropriate size is required to achieve the highest levels of

entry	catalyst	i	i + 1	i + 2	<i>i</i> + 3	conversion ^b (%)	er ^c
1	none	-	_	_	_	0	n/a
2	9a	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aib	Phe-OMe	37	67:33
3	9b	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aib	Phe-NMe ₂	47	76:24
4	9c	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Cle	Phe-NMe ₂	55	79:21
5	9d	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Acpc	Phe-NMe ₂	37	75:25
6	9e	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Phe	Phe-NMe ₂	50	78:22
7	9f	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Phe-NMe ₂	84	93:7
8	9g	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	D-Phe-NMe ₂	75	91:9
9	9h	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Gly-NMe ₂	62	89:11
10	9i	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Abu-NMe ₂	94	96:4
11	9j	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Cys(Me)-NMe ₂	97	95:5
12	9k	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Ser(Bn)-NMe ₂	97	96:4
13	91	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Leu-NMe ₂	70	91:9
14	9m	Ac-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Leu-NMe ₂	51	87:13
15	9n	Ts-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic	Leu-NMe ₂	31	84:16
16	90	Boc-D-Dmaa	Hyp(Bn)	Aic	D-Ser(Bn)-NMe ₂	95	4:96
17	9p	Boc-Leu	D-Pro	Aic	Cys(Me)-NMe ₂	0	n/a

^{*a*}Reported results are the average of two trials. ^{*b*}Conversion is defined as the ¹H NMR integration of the product alpha signal relative to an internal standard in the crude reaction mixture. ^{*c*}Enantiomer ratios (S:R) were determined using chiral HPLC. ^{*d*}Abbreviations: Boc, *tert*-butoxycarbonyl; Dmaa, β -dimethylaminoalanine; Aib, α -aminoisobutyric acid; Cle, cycloleucine (1-aminocyclopentane-1-carboxylic acid); Acpc, 1-aminocyclopropane-1-carboxylic acid; Aic, 2-aminoindane-2-carboxylic acid; Abu, 2-aminobutyric acid (ethylglycine); Hyp, *trans*-4-hydroxyproline; Ac, acetyl; Ts, *para*-toluenesulfonyl (tosyl).



Figure 2. A comparison of the ¹H NMR spectra of peptides **9b**, **9c**, and **9f** (500 MHz, 0.02 M in CDCl_3). Compared to the other two peptides, the NH_{Phe} and NH_{*i*+2} signals of **9f** are significantly downfield-shifted. This behavior is consistent with a stronger intramolecular NH_{*i*+3} to O_{*i*} hydrogen bond in the Aic-substituted peptide, which may correlate to a more rigid secondary structure. The NH_{Dmaa} is also downfield-shifted in **9f**, which is consistent with a tighter NH_{Dmaa} to O_{Phe} hydrogen bond.

selectivity and conversion. In an attempt to further rigidify the secondary structure of **9**, catalysts **9m** and **9n** were synthesized possessing acetyl and tosyl *N*-terminal protecting groups, respectively. We expected these groups to acidify the amide NH of the *i* position, providing a stronger NH_{*i*} to O_{*i*+3} intramolecular hydrogen bond. However, both peptides performed worse than the analogous **91** (entries 14 and 15^{21}). Finally, *O*-benzyl-Hyp was substituted for Pro at the *i* + 1 position with no noticeable effect on reactivity or selectivity (entry 16). The *C*-isostere of **9***j*, with Leu at the *i* position, provided no conversion into **2a**, suggesting that the tertiary amine moiety of Dmaa was required for catalysis (entry 17).

Having identified peptide 9k as an effective catalyst for the DKR of 1a, we proceeded to optimize the reaction conditions. The selectivity of the 9k-catalyzed DKR of 1a remained fairly constant over a survey of 10 solvents, only fluctuating between 91:9 and 96:4 (Table 2, entries 1–10). Aromatic solvents (entries 4–7) provided the best results overall, while chlorinated solvents (entries 1–3) delivered comparable selectivities with significantly reduced conversion. Ethereal solvents (entries 8–10) provided the lowest conversions (10–44%), but the selectivity remained high (91:9 to 96:4 er). This was interesting given the ability of these ethereal solvents, especially THF, to compete for hydrogen bonds. Even methanol (entry 11), a highly competitive hydrogen-bonding solvent, furnished 2a with some selectivity (64:36 er).

Additional studies evaluating reaction conditions are presented in Table 3. Fortuitously, the conditions that we had already chosen for the catalyst optimization study above (Scheme 2) proved to be the most suitable. Taken together, the data presented in Tables 2 and 3 suggest the following: (1) the enantioselectivity of the **9k**-catalyzed reaction is not conversion dependent, as low-conversion reactions also exhibit high ers; and (2) the catalytic system is robust, in that it can provide high ers under a broad range of conditions.

Table 2. Effect of Solvent on Reactivity and Conversion a,b

entry	solvent ^c	conversion ^d (%)	er ^e
1	CH_2Cl_2	59	94:6
2	$Cl(CH_2)_2Cl$	80	95:5
3	CHCl ₃	76	96:4
4	C_6H_6	89	95:5
5	C_6F_6	98	95:5
6	PhCF ₃	>99	96:4
7	PhCl	94	95:5
8	THF	40	95:5
9	Et ₂ O	10	91:9
10	t-BuOMe	44	96:4
11	MeOH	>99	64:36

^{*a*}Reaction conditions: oxazolone 1a (1 equiv, 0.05 mmol), peptide 9k (20 mol %, 0.01 mmol), MeOH (5 equiv, 0.25 mmol), solvent (0.50 mL, 0.10 M), 4 °C, 24 h. ^{*b*}Reported results are the average of two trials. ^{*c*}All solvents were dried over 4 Å molecular sieves 48 h before use. ^{*d*}Conversion is defined as the ¹H NMR integration of the product alpha signal relative to an internal standard in the crude reaction mixture. ^{*e*}Enantiomer ratios (*S:R*) were determined using chiral HPLC.

Table 4 describes our exploration of the substrate scope. Each substrate was analyzed on a small (0.05-0.07 mmol) and large (0.30-0.58 mmol) scale. The small-scale reaction was always quenched in the vicinity of 24 h, and the conversion measured was used to assess whether the larger scale reaction should be allowed to stir longer. Enantioselectivities were consistent between the two scales in every case. We were pleased to discover that **9k** performed well in the methanolytic DKR of 14 different oxazolones **1a**-n.²² Of particular note, oxazolones possessing benzylic substitution at the 4-position were found to provide the best results in terms of selectivity (entries 1–16). It has been noted previously that oxazolones of this type racemize with an accelerated rate over alkyl-

Table 3. Optimization of Reaction Conditions^a

entry	x	loading (mol %)	$\operatorname{conc}_{(M)^b}$	temp (°C)	time (h)	conversion ^c (%)	er^d
1	4	20	0.10	4	24	96	96:4
2	3	20	0.10	4	24	96	96:4
3	2	20	0.10	4	24	83	96:4
4	3	20	0.05	4	24	44	96:4
5	3	20	0.20	4	24	>99	95:5
6	3	10	0.05	4	24	27	95:5
7	3	10	0.10	4	24	54	94:6
8	3	10	0.20	4	24	82	94:6
9	2	20	0.10	21	24	64	92:8
10	3	20	0.05	21	24	50	92:8
11	5	20	0.10	-40	24	16	96:4
12	3	20	0.20	-40	24	18	95:5
13	3	20	0.10	4	12	75	96:4

^{*a*}Reaction conditions: oxazolone **1a** (1 equiv, 0.05 mmol), peptide **9k** (20 mol %, 0.01 mmol), MeOH (*x* equiv, 0.25 mmol), PhMe (conc), temp, time. ^{*b*}Concentration with respect to **1a**. ^{*c*}Conversion is defined as the ¹H NMR integration of the product alpha signal relative to an internal standard in the crude reaction mixture. ^{*d*}Enantiomer ratios (S:R) were determined using chiral HPLC.

substituted oxazolones.^{4b} It is possible that this observation partially accounts for their increased conversion and selectivity, though interaction with the catalyst likely plays an important role, as well. Further evidence for this hypothesis is provided by

Table 4. Substrate Scope^a

oxazolone 1j, derived from aspartic acid, which also provides high conversion and er (entries 19-20). In general, alkylsubstituted oxazolones provided 2 in the lowest conversion and er (entries 17-18 and 23-28), though the leucine-derived oxazolone (1k) is a notable exception (entries 21–22). The structure-activity relationship highlighted with oxazolones 1k**n** may provide insight into the reaction mechanism. While γ disubstituted 1k performed well, γ -trisubstituted 1m provided 2m with significantly reduced er and conversion (entries 21 vs 25). Similarly, valine-derived 11 performed better than its β trisubstituted analogue (1n), though neither is particularly impressive in terms of conversion. It appears that β disubstitution and β/γ -trisubstitution is not well-tolerated by 9k. It is plausible that destabilizing syn-pentane type interactions in the tetrahedral intermediate of methanolysis, or even in the transition state leading to that intermediate, may account for this observation. However, oxazolone 1h provided **2h** in upward of 90:10 er, despite its β -disubstitution (entries 15-16). This may be due to the presumably increased acidity of the α -proton or to the presence of any groups for interaction with **9k**.

The high selectivity exhibited by catalyst 9k across a wide range of substrate types stimulated a desire to understand its mode of action. These issues were probed with an analysis of additional catalyst analogues, including several that were truncated to explore the influence of peptide miniaturization (Table 5). Dmaa monomers 10a and 10b provided very low

Entry	Oxazolone	Product	Scale (mmol)	Time (h)	Conversion ^b	Yield ^c	er ^d	Entry	Oxazolone	Product	Scale (mmol)	Time (h)	Conversion ^b	Yield ^c	er ^d
1	Ph M		0.05 e	24	94%		96:4	15	Ph O Ph O N≥∕	BzHNOMe	0.05	24	49%	-	91:9°
2	Ph 1a	`Ph 2a	0.50	24	90%	86%	96:4	16	Ph 1h	Ph Ph 2h	0.30	48	26%	19%	90:10 ^e
3	OT NO		0.05	23	96%	-	96:4	17	Ph O N N	BzHNOMe	0.05	23	36%	-	81:19
4	Ph 1b	2b	0.50	26	99%	78%	96:4	18	Ph 1i	2i ^{Ph}	0.50	48	50%	47%	81:19
5	S M	BZHN OMe	e 0.05	22	99%	-	96:4	19		BzHN OMe	0.05	22	94%	-	90:10
6	Ph 1c	2c	0.50	24	95%	84%	97:3	20	Ph 1j	2j ^{OMe}	0.47	25	99%	79%	90:10
7		BzHN	e 0.05	23	93%	-	94:6	21 ^r	Me	BzHN OMe	0.05	24	57%	-	91:9
8	Ph 1d		0.50	25	93%	84%	93:7	22 ^r	Ph 1k	Me Me 2k	0.50	48	60%	58%	93:7
9			0.05 H	23	94%	-	98:2	23'	Me O Me Me	BzHN	0.05	24	20%	-	80:20
10	Ph 1e	2e	0.50	26	99%	93%	97:3	24'	Ph 11	Me Me 21	0.58	48	30%	27%	83:17
11			0.05	24	69%	-	93:7	25 ^r	X		0.05	23	15%	-	79:21
t-B 12	uO∕∕∕ N≷∕ Ph 1f		0.50 t-Bu	45	92%	78%	93:7	26 ^ŕ	N≋(Ph 1m	- 2m	0.50	69	46%	33%	80:20
13		BzHN OMe	0.05	22	88%	-	88:12	27 ^r	N=C	BzHNOMe	0.07	24	5%	-	72:28
14	Ph 1g	2g	IO ₂ 0.50	30	94%	88%	88:12	28′	\ Ph 1n	2n	0.50	62	9%	5%	71:29

^{*a*}Substrate scope examined using optimized conditions: peptide 9k (20 mol %), MeOH (3 equiv), PhMe (0.10 M wrt 1), 4 °C, unless otherwise specified. ^{*b*}Conversion is defined as the ratio of ¹H NMR alpha signals (product to total alpha) in the crude reaction mixture. ^{*c*}Isolated yield after flash chromatography. ^{*d*}Enantiomer ratios were determined by chiral HPLC using an AD-H column, unless otherwise noted. ^{*e*}Enantiomer ratios were determined by chiral HPLC using an OD-H column. ^{*f*}S equiv of MeOH were used to promote conversion.

Table 5. Truncation Study^{*a,b*}

entry	catalyst	i	<i>i</i> + 1	<i>i</i> + 2	conversion ^c (%)	er^d
1	10a	Boc-Dmaa- NMe ₂	_	-	9	46:54
2	10b	Boc-Dmaa- Pyr ^e	-	-	10	44:56
3	10c	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro- NMe ₂	-	32	54:46
4	10d	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro- NHMe	-	24	56:44
5	10e	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic- NMe ₂	32	66:34
6	10f	Boc-Dmaa	D-Pro	Aic- NHMe	62	86:14

^{*a*}Reaction conditions: oxazolone **1a** (1 equiv, 0.05 mmol), peptide **10** (20 mol %, 0.01 mmol), MeOH (5 equiv, 0.25 mmol), PhMe (0.50 mL, 0.10 M), 4 °C, 24 h. ^{*b*}Reported results are the average of two trials. ^{*c*}Conversion is defined as the ¹H NMR integration of the product alpha signal relative to an internal standard in the crude reaction mixture. ^{*d*}Enantiomer ratios (*S:R*) were determined using chiral HPLC. ^{*c*}Pyr, 1-pyrrolidinyl.

conversion of 1a to 2a, but the er was nonracemic in favor of the opposite enantiomer provided by the tetramers examined previously (entries 1 and 2). Dimers 10c and 10d more than doubled the conversion, and interestingly provided equal and opposite enantioinduction compared with 10a and 10b (entries 3 and 4). To this point, there had been no noticeable effect of the C-terminal protecting group on reactivity and selectivity (entries 1-4). Trimer **10e**, possessing a dimethyl amide protecting group, provided 2a in the same conversion as dimer 10c with slightly elevated enantioinduction (entry 5). However, trimer 10f, possessing a C-terminal N-methyl amide protecting group, nearly doubled the conversion relative to 10e and provided 2a in 86:14 er (entry 6). These levels of conversion and enantioselectivity are comparable to those obtained with certain tetramers (Table 1). This suggests that the ability to form an NH_{i+3} to O_i hydrogen bond is important to enantioinduction and conversion. These observations also lend credence to our hypothesized β -hairpin structure and reinforce the notion that secondary structure is important to enantioselective catalysis in this system.

In order to gain further insight into the mechanism of action, we next subjected 9k to a competition experiment (Scheme 3). When triethylamine (20 mol %) was used to catalyze the DKR of 1a under the same conditions described in Scheme 2, racemic 2a was produced in 86% conversion. However, when 9k and triethylamine were used together (20 mol % of each), the reaction proceeded to quantitative conversion and an 83:17 er was observed in the product. These results suggest that 9k is able to out-compete triethylamine in the DKR of 1a. When peptide 9p (20 mol %), lacking the pendant tertiary amine base, was used with an equimolar amount of triethylamine, racemic 2a was formed in 78% conversion, suggesting that the pendant tertiary amine of 9k is important for organizing the transition state in the selective reaction.

Our mechanistic inquiry was extended to include an NMR study of the solution-phase conformation of **9k**. Using high-field ${}^{1}\text{H}-{}^{1}\text{H}-\text{NOESY}$ experiments, the correlations summarized in Figure 3a were observed. Of particular interest are the NOEs observed between β_{Ser} and β_{Dmaa} , NH_{Ser} and NH_{Dmaa} , NH_{Aic} and $\alpha_{\text{D-Pro}}$, and between *trans*-NMe_{Ser} and NH_{Dmaa} . These NOEs are consistent with a β -hairpin-type structure,²³ as shown

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Figure 3. (a) Representative NOEs observed in a 0.02 M solution of 9k in C_6D_6 . (b) The NOESY data are consistent with a hydrogenbonded, β -hairpin structure.

in Figure 3b. Furthermore, in the ¹H NMR spectrum of **9**k, the NH_{Ser} and NH_{Dmaa} signals are shifted significantly downfield at 7.93 and 6.92 ppm, respectively (in C_6D_6), consistent with intramolecular hydrogen bonds involving these protons. While we cannot be certain that the active catalyst adopts such a conformation, the data that we have accumulated herein show that the efficacy of this catalytic system improves as NMR signatures of β -turn-like character become more pronounced.

Figure 4 presents a plausible model for the interaction between peptide 9k and the substrate that is able to account for the absolute stereochemistry of the products. The β -turn structure of 9k in Figure 4b is adapted from a previously reported X-ray structure of a related peptide (Figure 4a).²³ Given the results of previous theoretical and mechanistic studies on analogous systems,²⁴ it is possible that 9k acts to bind and stabilize the zwitterionic, tetrahedral intermediate of methanolysis.^{25,26} In a preliminary NMR complexation study, no change in the chemical shifts of 9k or oxazolone 1a were observed in a 1:1 solution relative to individual spectra acquired at the same concentration and temperature. This result is consistent with the hypothesized model, as it suggests that the catalyst does not dock with the oxazolone itself to any appreciable degree. Furthermore, it seems as though a bifunctional catalyst such as 9k would be well-poised to accelerate the formation of a zwitterionic intermediate through backbone hydrogen bonding^{26,27} and general base catalysis.



Figure 4. (a) A previously reported X-ray crystal structure showing a D-Pro-Aib-containing β -hairpin structure (ref 23). Side chains were omitted for clarity. (b) Plausible model that accounts for the absolute stereochemistry of products **2**.

Mechanistically, it is plausible that the tertiary amine moiety of 9k directs methanol to 1 and stabilizes charge as it develops in the tetrahedral intermediate (Figure 4b). The catalyst interacts preferentially with (S)-1, which may benefit from a minimization of destabilizing *syn*-interactions between the base-delivered methoxy group and the side chain. Furthermore, the side-chain of (S)-1 points away from the Dmaa-residue, leaving the site of catalysis sterically unencumbered. Tertiary amine-catalyzed proton transfer to the oxazole N, followed by ring-opening, provides (S)-2 as observed.

CONCLUSION

In summary, we have developed a simple tetrapeptide that catalyzes the enantioselective ring-opening DKR of oxazolones **1** with state-of-the-art levels of selectivity. The substrate scope addressed by the catalyst is also rather broad. Structural analysis of the catalyst allows for the derivation of a self-consistent mechanistic model that accounts for the absolute sense of asymmetric induction. The culmination of these concepts allows analogies to be drawn between the low molecular weight peptide and far more complex enzymes, which seem to operate through multifunctional mechanisms that often exploit non-covalent interactions to stabilize charge development in transition states.²⁶ In this sense, the presently reported system may mimic an important aspect of enzymatic chemistry.²⁸

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

Solution Phase Synthesis of Peptides 9a–p and 10a–f. The solution phase synthesis of peptides 9a–p was accomplished using the *N-tert*-butoxycarbonyl (Boc) protecting group strategy (see Scheme S1 in the Supporting Information).^{4c,29} Boc-L- β -Dimethylaminoalanine (Boc-Dmaa-OH) was synthesized according to a literature procedure.³⁰ All other amino acid residues and coupling reagents were purchased from commercial suppliers. Yields are not optimized. Once synthesized, peptides were stored at 0 °C to prevent epimerization and other adverse side-reactivity. Peptide 9k was characterized fully (*vide infra*). Peptides 9a–j, 9l–p, and 10a–f were characterized by HRMS (see Supporting Information).

Representative Synthesis and Characterization of Peptide 9k. *Installation of C-Terminal Protecting Group.* Boc-Ser(Bn)-OH (2.00 g, 6.77 mmol), dimethylamine hydrochloride (690 mg, 8.46 mmol), EDC·HCl (1.62 g, 8.46 mmol), and HOBt·H₂O (1.30 g, 8.46 mmol) were added to a round-bottom flask. The solid mixture was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (33.8 mL, 0.20 M), and the resulting solution was allowed to stir at rt as *i*-Pr₂NEt (2.94 mL, 16.9 mmol) was added slowly. The pale yellow solution was allowed to stir at rt overnight. After 14 h, the solution was poured into a separatory funnel and washed with approximately 100 mL of 10% aqueous (w/v) citric acid. The organic layer was separated and subsequently washed with 100 mL each of saturated aqueous NaHCO₃, water, and brine. The organics were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide a clear, yellow oil (2.23 g, > 99% crude yield). The identity of Boc-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂ was confirmed by UPLC–MS. MS exact mass calculated for $[C_{17}H_{26}N_2O_4 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 323.19, found 323.29 (ESI+).

Deprotection 1. Crude Boc-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂ was then treated with 10 mL of 4 M HCl in 1,4-dioxane to cleave the Boc group. The resulting yellow solution was allowed to stir at rt for 1 h, before HCl and 1,4-dioxane were removed in vacuo. Residual 1,4-dioxane was removed by coevaporation with CH_2Cl_2 to provide 1.75 g (99% crude yield) of H-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂·HCl as a white foam, which was dried thoroughly under reduced pressure before being carried forward to the next coupling step.

Peptide Coupling 1. H-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂·HCl (1.75 g, 6.77 mmol) was added to a round-bottom flask, along with Boc-Aic-OH (2.15 g, 7.74 mmol), EDC·HCl (1.62 g, 8.46 mmol), and HOBt·H₂O (1.30 g, 8.46 mmol). The solid mixture was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (33.8 mL, 0.20 M), and the resulting solution was allowed to stir at rt as *i*-Pr₂NEt (2.94 mL, 16.9 mmol) was added slowly. The deep yellow solution was allowed to stir at rt for 42 h, after which the solution was poured into a separatory funnel and washed with 100 mL of 10% aqueous (w/ v) citric acid. The organic layer was separated and subsequently washed with 100 mL each of saturated aqueous NaHCO₃, water, and brine. The organics were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide an off-white foam (3.13 g, 96% crude yield). The identity of Boc-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂ was confirmed by UPLC–MS. MS exact mass calculated for [C₂₇H₃₅N₃O₅ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 482.26, found 482.39 (ESI+).

Deprotection 2. Deprotection of the crude dipeptide Boc-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂ was accomplished in the same manner as described in Deprotection 1 (vide supra) to provide H-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂·HCl (2.72 g, 6.50 mmol) as a white foam.

Peptide Coupling 2. The coupling of H-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂·HCl (2.72 g, 6.50 mmol) to Boc-D-Pro-OH (2.15 g, 9.97 mmol) was performed using the procedure detailed in Peptide Coupling 1, above. Boc-D-Pro-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂ was isolated as a white foam (3.39 g, 90% crude yield), the identity of which was confirmed by UPLC-MS. MS exact mass calculated for $[C_{32}H_{42}N_4O_6 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 579.31, found 579.52 (ESI+).

Deprotection 3. Deprotection of the crude tripeptide Boc-D-Pro-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂ was accomplished in the same manner as described in Deprotection 1 (vide supra) to provide H-D-Pro-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe₂·HCl (3.02 g, 5.86 mmol) as a pale yellow foam.

Peptide Coupling 3. H-D-Pro-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe2·HCl (3.02 g, 5.86 mmol), Boc-Dmaa-OH (1.70 g, 7.33 mmol), and HBTU (2.78 g, 7.33 mmol) were added to a round-bottom flask. The solid mixture was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (29.3 mL, 0.20 M), and the resulting solution was allowed to stir at rt as i-Pr2NEt (2.55 mL, 14.7 mmol) was added slowly. The yellow solution was allowed to stir at rt for 38 h, after which the solution was poured into a separatory funnel and washed with about 100 mL of saturated aqueous NaHCO₃. The organic layer was separated and subsequently washed with 100 mL each of water and brine. The organics were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide a deep yellow oil. The crude product was loaded onto a flash purification system for reverse-phase column chromatography (120 g column, 30-100% MeOH/H₂O over 16 column volumes with 3 column volume pre- and postrun equilibrations, 45 mL min⁻¹ flow, collection $\lambda = 210$ nm, monitored $\lambda = 245$ nm, 16 × 150 mm test tubes with 21 mL fractions). Fractions were pooled, concentrated in vacuo, and dried by coevaporation thrice with CH2Cl2 to provide Boc-Dmaa-D-Pro-Aic-Ser(Bn)-NMe2 (9k, 2.18 g, 54% yield) as white foam: ¹H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ 7.42 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.35-7.20 (m, 5H), 7.19-7.09 (m, 4H), 6.25 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 1H), 5.26 (td, J = 8.2, 5.8 Hz, 1H), 4.51 (q, J = 12.0 Hz, 2H), 4.40-4.33 (m, 2H), 3.89 (d, J = 16.8, 1H), 3.84-3.80 (m, 1H), 3.72 (AMX, $J_{AX} = 6.2$ Hz, $J_{MX} = 5.9$ Hz, $J_{AM} = 16.3$ Hz, $\nu_{AM} = 56.1$ Hz, 2H), 3.52 (m, 2H), 3.33 (d, J = 16.7, Hz, 1H), 3.12 (d, J = 17.8 Hz, 1H), 3.10 (s, 3H), 2.94 (s, 3H), 2.53 (AMX, J_{AX} = 6.7 Hz, J_{MX} = 7.5 Hz, J_{AM} = 12.4 Hz, ν_{AM} = 130.7 Hz, 2H), 2.26 (s, 6H), 2.22–2.18 (m, 1H), 2.08–1.99 (m, 2H), 1.91–1.81 (m, 2H), 1.42 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.5, 171.5, 171.4, 170.4, 155.9, 141.4, 139.3, 138.3, 128.4, 127.6, 127.5, 127.0, 126.7, 124.8, 124.4, 79.6, 77.4, 77.2, 76.9, 73.3, 70.8, 67.2, 60.8, 60.0, 50.8, 48.5, 47.3, 45.8, 45.5, 42.6, 37.6, 36.0, 28.5, 27.8, 25.0; IR (film, cm⁻¹) 3296, 3243, 3213, 3184, 2929, 2860, 2773, 2250, 1684, 1632, 1522, 1453, 1404, 1366, 1307, 1274, 1165, 1098, 1051, 1025; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{37}H_{52}N_6O_7 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 693.3976, found 693.3971 (ESI+); $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +38.8$ (c = 1.0, CHCl₃).

N-Terminal Modification in Peptides 9m–n. Deprotection 4. Following Peptide Coupling 3, Boc-Dmaa-D-Pro-Aib-Leu-NMe₂ (91, 100 mg, 0.16 mmol) was dissolved in 3 mL of 4 M HCl in 1,4-dioxane solution and allowed to stir at ambient temperature for 1 h, after which HCl and 1,4-dioxane were removed in vacuo. The resulting salt was carried forward assuming quantitative yield (96 mg, 0.16 mmol).

Acetylation (9m). H-Dmaa-D-Pro-Aic-Leu-NMe2:2HCl (96 mg, 0.16 mmol) was suspended in 0.80 mL of dry CH₂Cl₂ and treated with i-Pr2NEt (0.11 mL, 0.64 mmol). The resulting solution was cooled to 0 °C over an ice bath and allowed to stir vigorously as Ac₂O (19 μ L, 0.20 mmol) was added slowly. The flask was sealed with a septum and purged with N2. The reaction solution was allowed to warm to rt over 2 h, after which the solution was poured into a separatory funnel, diluted to 10 mL with additional \dot{CH}_2Cl_2 , and washed once with 20 mL of saturated aqueous NaHCO3 and once with 20 mL of H2O. The combined organics were dried over anhydrous Na2SO4, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide a clear, colorless oil. The crude product was loaded onto a flash purification system for reverse-phase column chromatography using the same method described above in Peptide Coupling 3. The appropriate fractions were pooled, concentrated in vacuo, and dried by coevaporation with CH₂Cl₂ to provide 9m (54 mg, 0.095 mmol, 59% yield) as a white foam.

Tosylation (9n). H-Dmaa-D-Pro-Aic-Leu-NMe₂·2HCl (96 mg, 0.16 mmol) was tosylated following the above acetylation procedure using TsCl (45 mg, 0.20 mmol) in place of Ac₂O. Workup and purification by the same method provided 9n (81 mg, 0.12 mmol, 74% yield) as an off-white foam.

Synthesis of Boc- $L-\beta$ -Dimethylaminoalanine (Boc-Dmaa-**OH).** Boc-L- β -Aminoalanine.³⁰ Boc-L-Asn-OH (10.0 g, 43.1 mmol) was added to a 500 mL round-bottom flask equipped with a large stir bar. The white solid was suspended in 120 mL of a 2:2:1 (v/v/v)solution of MeCN, EtOAc, and water and allowed to stir at 0 °C over an ice bath. PhI(OAc)₂ (16.7 g, 51.7 mmol) was added slowly to the cloudy, white suspension at 0 °C. The flask was sealed with a septum, and the reaction was allowed to warm to rt over 4 h under an atmosphere of N₂. Within a few minutes, the white suspension became a clear, pale yellow solution. Within an hour, a white solid precipitate began to form. After 4 h, the white suspension was cooled to 0 °C over an ice bath for an additional 30 min to promote precipitation. The white solid was collected by vacuum filtration through a Büchner funnel, washing with 200 mL of EtOAc. The product was allowed to dry on high vacuum for multiple hours, providing Boc-L- β -aminoalanine (5.58 g, 63% yield) as a white powdery solid: ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 4.06 (t, J = 6.5 Hz, 1H), 3.15 (ABX, J_{AX} = 6.8 Hz, J_{BX} = 6.2 Hz, J_{AB} = 12.4 Hz, ν_{AB} = 19.2 Hz, 2H), 1.46 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): § 174.7, 158.0, 80.9, 53.9, 43.1, 28.7; MS exact mass calculated for $[C_8H_{16}N_2O_4 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 205.12, found 205.13 (ESI+).

Boc-ι-β-Dimethylaminoalanine. Boc-*ι-β*-Aminoalanine (1.88 g, 9.19 mmol) was added to a round-bottom flask containing a magnetic stir bar. Palladium (10% on activated charcoal, 188 mg, 10 mass%) was added to the flask, and the solid mixture was carefully treated with formaldehyde (37% aq, 1.71 mL, 23.0 mmol). The flask was filled with N₂, and methanol (40 mL) was added slowly to the slurry. The resulting black suspension was allowed to stir vigorously. The flask was sealed with a septum, evacuated, and filled with H₂ from a balloon. Five rounds of filling and evacuating were performed. After the final evacuation, the flask was again filled with H₂, and the reaction was allowed to stir 48 h at rt under positive H₂ pressure (from a balloon). After 48 h, the heterogeneous reaction mixture was vacuum filtered

through a plug of Celite to remove Pd/C, washing with MeOH. The filtrate was concentrated in vacuo, and residual solvent was removed by coevaporation with CH₂Cl₂ to provide a flaky, white solid. ¹H NMR analysis confirmed the structure of the crude product. The white solid product was triturated thrice with Et₂O and dried under reduced pressure, providing clean Boc-Dmaa-OH (1.90 g, 89% yield) to be used in peptide synthesis: ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 12.0 (bs, 1H), 5.78 (d, *J* = 4.7 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (q, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (m, 2H), 2.85 (s, 6H), 1.38 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.6, 155.7, 79.7, 58.6, 50.9, 44.2, 28.5; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₀H₂₀N₂O₄ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 233.15, found 233.13 (ESI+).

Synthesis of Oxazolones 1. All oxazolone substrates 1 were previously known compounds. They were synthesized from commercially available amino acids in a precedented two-step sequence. The amino acids were first acylated with benzoyl chloride using the Schötten-Baumann conditions.^{7,31} The resulting *N*-benzoyl amino acids were cyclodehydrated to oxazolones 1 with acetic anhydride in refluxing $CH_2Cl_2^{9a,32}$ or with EDC·HCl at 0 °C in $CH_2Cl_2^{.33}$ Please consult the Supporting Information for additional synthetic details and characterization.

Synthesis of N-Benzoyl Amino Acids 1a'-n'. General Procedure A.^{7,31} Amino acid (1.0 equiv) was added to a roundbottom flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar and was suspended in 2 M aqueous NaOH (0.20 M solution). The resulting mixture was allowed to stir vigorously at 0 °C over an ice bath. Benzoyl chloride (1.05 equiv) was then added dropwise with a syringe. The mixture was allowed to warm to rt over 1–3 h, after which the reaction was again cooled to 0 °C and quenched by acidification to pH < 2 with 1 M aqueous HCl. A white/off-white precipitate formed instantly upon acidification. The mixture was allowed to stand at 0 °C for 15 min before the precipitate was collected by vacuum filtration and subsequently recrystallized from hot EtOH/H₂O. The resulting crystalline solid was collected by vacuum filtration, rinsed with H₂O, and dried on high vacuum for multiple hours to provide N-benzoyl amino acids 1'.

General Procedure B.^{7,31} The reaction was performed in the same manner as in General Procedure A, except an extractive workup was performed. After acidification with 1 M aqueous HCl to pH < 2, the organics were extracted thrice with Et₂O. The combined organics were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide a white/off-white solid, which was subsequently recrystallized from hot EtOH/H₂O. The resulting crystalline solid was collected by vacuum filtration, rinsed with H₂O, and dried on high vacuum for multiple hours to provide N-benzoyl amino acids 1'. *General Procedure C.^{7,31}* Amino acid (1.0 equiv) was added to a

General Procedure C.^{7,31} Amino acid (1.0 equiv) was added to a round-bottom flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar and was suspended in 2 M aqueous Na₂CO₃ (0.25 M solution). The resulting mixture was allowed to stir vigorously at 0 °C over an ice bath. Benzoyl chloride (1.05 equiv) was then added dropwise with a syringe. The mixture was allowed to warm to rt overnight, after which the reaction was again cooled to 0 °C and quenched by acidification to pH < 2 with 1 M aqueous HCl. No precipitate formed. The aqueous solution was extracted thrice with CH₂Cl₂. The combined organic layer was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide a white solid, which was dissolved in a minimal amount of MeOH and loaded onto a reverse-phase flash purification system (120g C18 column, 0 to 60% MeOH/H₂O linear gradient, 50 mL min⁻¹ flow rate). The appropriate fractions ware removed by coevaporation with CH₂Cl₂, providing N-benzoyl amino acids 1'.

N-Benzoyl-DL-phenylalanine (1*a*'). Title compound was synthesized from DL-phenylalanine (10.00 g, 60.5 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 40% (fine, white powder); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.77–7.59 (m, 2H), 7.56–7.44 (m, 1H), 7.45–7.37 (m, 2H), 7.30–7.20 (m, 4H), 7.19–7.12 (m 1H), 4.78 (dd, *J* = 8.2, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.24 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 5.0 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 8.2 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 13.8 Hz, ν_{AM} = 105.7 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 176.4, 169.6, 139.1, 135.7, 132.6, 130.5, 129.5, 129.3, 128.2, 127.5, 56.7, 38.7; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₆H₁₅NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 270.11, found 270.11 (ESI+).

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N-*Benzoyl*-*D*-*β*-(2-*furyl*)*alanine* (**1b**'). Title compound was synthesized from D-*β*-(2-*furyl*)*alanine* (750 mg, 4.83 mmol) according to General Procedure B above with the following modifications: (1) the reaction concentration was 0.24 M wrt the amino acid. Yield: 42% (fluffy white solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.81–7.69 (m, 2H), 7.56–7.49 (m, 1H), 7.47–7.41 (m, 2H), 7.38 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.30 (dd, *J* = 3.0, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.17 (d, *J* = 3.1 Hz, 1H), 4.97–4.74 (m, 1H), 3.28 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 4.8 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 9.3 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 15.5 Hz, ν_{AM} = 59.7 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.4, 170.1, 152.6, 143.1, 135.2, 132.8, 129.5, 128.3, 111.3, 108.4, 53.4, 30.7; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₄H₁₃NO₄ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 260.09, found 260.10 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-ι-β-(2-thienyl)alanine (1c'). Title compound was synthesized from *ι-β-(2-thienyl)alanine* (1.00 g, 65.84 mmol) according to General Procedure B above with the following modifications: (1) 1.1 equiv of benzoyl chloride were used; (2) the reaction concentration was 0.97 M wrt the amino acid; (3) the reaction was allowed to run overnight (12–14 h). Yield: 62% (flaky white solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.82–7.75 (m, 2H), 7.56–7.50 (m, 1H), 7.49–7.40 (m, 2H), 7.22 (dd *J* = 4.6, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.96–6.88 (m, 2H), 4.89–4.76 (m, 1H), 3.48 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 4.4 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 9.1 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 15.0 Hz, ν_{AM} = 79.7 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.2, 170.0, 140.4, 135.4, 132.8, 129.5, 128.4, 127.8, 127.4, 125.4, 55.7, 32.3; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₄H₁₃NO₃S + H]⁺ requires *m/z* = 276.07, found 276.06 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-L-β-(1-naphthyl)alanine (1d'). Title compound was synthesized from L-β-(1-naphthyl)alanine (1.00 g. 4.65 mmol) according to General Procedure B above with the following modifications: (1) 1.1 equiv of benzoyl chloride were used; (2) the reaction concentration was 0.93 M wrt the amino acid; (3) the reaction was allowed to run overnight (12–14 h). Yield: 67% (white solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 8.23 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.89–7.84 (m, 1H), 7.76 (d, *J* = 8.1, 1H), 7.69–7.64 (m, 2H), 7.55 (ddd, *J* = 8.5, 6.8, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.52–7.45 (m, 2H), 7.46–7.29 (m, 4H), 5.01 (dd, *J* = 9.7, 4.7 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 4.7 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 9.7 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 14.3 Hz, $ν_{AM}$ = 196.3 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 175.3, 170.7, 135.9, 135.7, 135.2, 133.8, 133.1, 130.3, 129.8, 129.1, 129.0, 128.8, 127.7, 127.1, 126.7, 124.9, 55.5, 35.9; MS exact mass calculated for [C₂₀H₁₇NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 320.13, found 320.13 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-O-tert-butyl-L-tyrosine (1f'). Title compound was synthesized from *O-tert*-butyl-L-tyrosine (712 mg, 3.00 mmol) according to General Procedure A above with the following modifications: (1) the reaction concentration was 0.41 M wrt the amino acid; (2) after 1 h, the aqueous solution was acidified with 1 M HCl until pH 4; (3) recrystallized from EtOH/H₂O at 0 °C overnight. Yield: 68% (colorless needle-like crystals); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.72–7.68 (m, 2H), 7.53–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.44–7.39 (m, 2H), 7.21–7.17 (m, 2H), 6.93–6.87 (m, 2H), 4.88–4.81 (m, 1H), 3.20 (AMX, J_{AX} = 5.1 Hz, J_{MX} = 9.7 Hz, J_{AM} = 13.9 Hz, ν_{AM} = 118.8 Hz, 2H), 1.28 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.8, 170.2, 155.3, 135.4, 133.9, 132.7, 130.8, 129.5, 128.3, 125.2, 79.5, 55.6, 37.6, 29.1; MS exact mass calculated for [C₂₁H₂₅NO₄ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 342.17 Found 342.17 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-L-(4-nitro)phenylalanine (1g'). Title compound was synthesized from L-(4-nitro)phenylalanine (1.00 g, 4.76 mmol) according to General Procedure A with the following modifications: (1) the reaction concentration was 0.24 M wrt the amino acid. Yield: 68% (white, flaky solid); ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 8.18–8.12 (m, 2H), 7.75–7.70 (m, 2H), 7.56–7.48 (m, 3H), 7.46–7.39 (m, 2H), 4.95 (dd, *J* = 9.8, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.37 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 5.0 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 9.9 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 14.0 Hz, ν_{AM} = 93.9 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.1, 170.2, 148.3, 147.0, 135.1, 132.9, 131.4, 129.5, 128.3, 124.4, 55.0, 38.0; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₆H₁₄N₂O₅ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 315.10, found 315.10 (ESI+).

N-BenzoyI-L-\beta,\beta-diphenylalanine (1h'). Title compound was synthesized from *L-\beta,\beta*-diphenylalanine (1.00 g, 4.14 mmol) according to General Procedure A with the following modifications: (1) the reaction concentration was 0.41 M wrt the amino acid. Yield: 60% (fluffy, white solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.55–7.51 (m,

2H), 7.48–7.42 (m, 1H), 7.42–7.37 (m, 4H), 7.37–7.31 (m, 2H), 7.30–7.23 (m, 4H), 7.22–7.11 (m, 2H), 5.53 (d, J = 11.4 Hz, 1H), 4.61 (d, J = 11.3 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.3, 170.2, 142.3, 142.3, 135.4, 132.6, 129.5, 129.5, 129.5, 129.4, 129.4, 128.3, 128.0, 127.8, 57.5, 54.6; MS exact mass calculated for [C₂₂H₁₉NO₃ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 346.14, found 346.15 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-L-homophenylalanine (1*i*'). Title compound was synthesized from L-homophenylalanine (896 mg, 5.00 mmol) according to General Procedure A with the following modifications: (1) the reaction concentration was 0.50 M wrt the amino acid. Yield: 59% (white, granular solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.87–7.82 (m, 2H), 7.58–7.51 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.44 (m, 2H), 7.36–7.19 (m, 4H), 7.20–7.10 (m, 1H), 4.58 (dd, *J* = 9.6, 4.7 Hz, 1H), 2.86–2.69 (m, 2H), 2.32–2.23 (m, 1H), 2.21–2.11 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 175.5, 170.5, 142.3, 135.4, 132.8, 129.6, 129.5, 128.5, 127.1, 117.3, 53.9, 34.3, 33.4; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₇H₁₇NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 284.13, found 284.13 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-L-aspartic acid β -methyl ester (1j'). Title compound was synthesized from L-aspartic acid β -methyl ester (1.03 g, 6.97 mmol) was synthesized using General Procedure C. Yield: 16% (white, flaky solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.86–7.79 (m, 2H), 7.61–7.51 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.43 (m, 2H), 4.98 (dd, J = 7.5, 5.5 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 2.98 (AMX, J_{AX} = 7.0 Hz, J_{MX} = 9.3 Hz, J_{AM} = 20.5 Hz, ν_{AM} = 57.8 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 172.8, 170.0, 135.1, 132.9, 129.6, 128.4, 52.4, 52.4, 36.9; MS exact mass calculated for [$C_{12}H_{13}NO_5 + H$]⁺ requires m/z = 252.09, found 252.17 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-DL-leucine (1*k'*). Title compound was synthesized from DL-leucine (5.00 g, 38.1 mmol) according to General Procedure B with the following modifications: (1) 0.95 equiv of benzoyl chloride was used; (2) the reaction concentration was 1.66 M wrt the amino acid; (3) EtOAc was used to extract the aqueous layer after acidification. Yield: 61% (white powder); ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.88–7.80 (m, 2H), 7.57–7.50 (m, 1H), 7.49–7.41 (m, 2H), 4.67 (dd, *J* = 10.4, 4.2 Hz, 1H), 1.91–1.63 (m, 3H), 0.99 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 5.7 Hz, 6H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 176.2, 170.5, 135.4, 132.8, 129.5, 128.5, 52.6, 41.4, 26.3, 23.4, 21.8; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₃H₁₇NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 236.13, found 236.13 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-DL-valine (11'). Title compound was synthesized from DL-valine (5.00 g, 42.7 mmol) using General Procedure A with the following modifications: (1) the product was recrystallized from hot H₂O instead of EtOH/H₂O. Yield: 72% (white, granular solid); ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.87–7.81 (m, 2H), 7.58–7.51 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.42 (m, 2H), 4.51 (d, *J* = 6.3 Hz, 1H), 2.29 (o, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 1H), 1.05 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 6H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.9, 170.7, 135.5, 132.8, 129.5, 128.5, 59.8, 31.8, 19.7, 18.9; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₂H₁₅NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 222.11, found 222.11 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-L-β-tert-butylalanine (1*m*'). Title compound was synthesized from *L-β-tert-butylalanine* (500 mg, 3.44 mmol) according to General Procedure B with the following modifications: (1) 1.1 equiv of benzoyl chloride was used; (2) the reaction concentration was 1.0 M wrt the amino acid. Yield: 63% (white, flaky solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.87–7.81 (m, 2H), 7.57–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.49–7.42 (m, 2H), 4.73 (dd, J = 9.4, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 1.87 (ABX, J_{AX} = 2.5 Hz, J_{BX} = 9.8 Hz, J_{AB} = 14.5 Hz, ν_{AB} = 30.7 Hz, 2H), 1.02 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 176.5, 170.1, 135.5, 132.7, 129.5, 128.4, 51.7, 45.7, 31.6, 30.0; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₄H₁₉NO₃ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 250.14, found 250.14 (ESI+).

N-Benzoyl-DL-tert-leucine (1*n*'). Title compound was synthesized from DL-*tert-leucine* (5.00 g, 38.1 mmol) according to General Procedure B with the following modifications: (1) the reaction concentration was 1.59 M. Yield: 49% (white, flaky solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.84–7.79 (m, 2H), 7.57–7.52 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.42 (m, 2H), 4.56 (s, 1H), 1.01 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 174.2, 170.5, 135.6, 132.8, 129.6, 128.5, 62.4, 35.3, 27.3; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₃H₁₇NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 236.13, found 236.13 (ESI+).

Synthesis of Oxazolones 1a–n. General Procedure A.^{9a,32} N-Benzoyl amino acid 1' (1.0 equiv) was added to a round-bottom flask

equipped with a magnetic stir bar and subsequently suspended in dry CH_2Cl_2 (0.10 M solution). The suspension was allowed to stir vigorously at rt as Ac_2O (2.0 equiv wrt 1') was added slowly with a syringe. A reflux condenser was affixed to the flask, and the suspension was stirred at reflux overnight under an atmosphere of N₂. After 12–14 h, the suspension had often become a clear, colorless or pale yellow solution. The solution was allowed to cool to rt before solvent was removed in vacuo. Acetic acid byproduct was removed by coevaporation three times each with PhMe and CH_2Cl_2 . The resulting crude product was loaded onto a silica column in CH_2Cl_2 and purified by flash chromatography using a suitable EtOAc/hexanes gradient (as determined by TLC). The appropriate fractions were pooled, concentrated under reduced pressure, and dried on high vacuum to afford oxazolone 1.

General Procedure B.³³ N-Benzoyl amino acid 1' (1.0 equiv) was added to a round-bottom flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar and subsequently suspended in dry CH_2Cl_2 (0.10 M solution wrt 1'). The suspension was cooled to 0 °C over an ice bath as EDC·HCl (1.1 equiv wrt 1') was added portionwise. The flask was sealed, and the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to rt overnight under an atmosphere of N₂. After 12-14 h, the suspension had often become a clear, colorless or pale yellow solution. The solution was diluted to double the initial volume with CH₂Cl₂ and poured into a separatory funnel containing an approximately equal volume of H₂O. The layers were separated, and the organic layer was washed sequentially with saturated aqueous NaHCO3 and H2O (equal volume of each relative to the organics). The combined organics were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo to provide a white solid. The crude product was loaded onto a silica column in CH2Cl2 and purified by flash chromatography using a suitable EtOAc/hexanes gradient (as determined by TLC). The appropriate fractions were pooled, concentrated under reduced pressure, and dried on high vacuum to afford oxazolone 1.

4-Benzyl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1a). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-DL-phenylalanine (1a', 6.567 g, 24.4 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 89% (white solid); TLC R_f = 0.48 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.95–7.86 (m, 2H), 7.51–7.47 (m, 1H), 7.45–7.38 (m, 2H), 7.29–7.22 (m, 4H), 7.22–7.15 (m, 1H), 4.66 (dd, J = 6.8, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (AMX, J_{AX} = 5.0 Hz, J_{MX} = 6.8 Hz, J_{AM} = 14.0 Hz, ν_{AM} = 92.6 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.5, 161.7, 135.4, 132.7, 129.6, 128.7, 128.4, 127.9, 127.2, 125.8, 66.5, 37.3; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₆H₁₃NO₂ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 252.10, found 252.11 (ESI+).

4-(2-Furylmethyl)-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1b). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-D-β-(2-furyl)alanine (1b', 520 mg, 2.01 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 88% (pale yellow solid); TLC $R_f = 0.41$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.99–7.93 (m, 2H), 7.60–7.53 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.42 (m, 2H), 7.29 (dd, J = 1.9.0.8 Hz, 1H), 6.26 (dd, J = 3.2, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.17 (dd, J = 3.2, 0.9 Hz, 1H), 4.70 (dd, J = 6.3, 5.5 Hz, 1H), 3.35 (AMX, $J_{AX} = 5.4$ Hz, $J_{MX} = 6.4$ Hz, $J_{AM} = 15.3$ Hz, $\nu_{AM} = 58.1$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.5, 162.5, 149.8, 142.3, 133.1, 129.0, 128.22, 126.0, 110.7, 108.2, 64.7, 30.3; MS exact mass calculated for $[C_{14}H_{11}NO_3 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 242.08, found 242.08 (ESI+).

2-Phenyl-4-(2-thiophenylmethyl)oxazol-j5(4H)-one (1c). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-L-β-(2-thienyl)alanine (1c', 600 mg, 2.18 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 61% (pale yellow oil); TLC R_f = 0.43 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.00–7.92 (m, 2H), 7.62–7.52 (m, 1H), 7.52–7.41 (m, 2H), 7.12 (dd, *J* = 5.1, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 6.97–6.90 (m, 1H), 6.90 (dd, *J* = 5.1, 3.5 Hz, 1H), 4.70 (dd, *J* = 6.0, 4.7 Hz, 1H), 3.54 (AMX, J_{AX} = 4.7 Hz, J_{MX} = 6.0 Hz, J_{AM} = 15.0 Hz, $ν_{AM}$ = 44.2 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.0, 162.3, 136.5, 132.8, 128.8, 128.0, 127.1, 126.8, 125.7, 125.2, 66.2, 31.3; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₄H₁₁NO₂S + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 258.06, found 258.06 (ESI+).

4-(1-Naphthalenylmethyl)-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1d). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-L- β -(1-naphthyl)alanine

(1d', 600 mg, 1.88 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 76% (yellow oily solid); TLC $R_f = 0.44$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.22–8.14 (m, 2H), 7.93–7.89 (m, 2H), 7.86 (dd, J = 8.3, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.61–7.48 (m, 4H), 7.47–7.40 (m, 3H), 4.83 (dd, J = 7.9, 5.1 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (AMX, $J_{AX} = 5.1$ Hz, $J_{MX} = 7.9$ Hz, $J_{AM} = 14.5$ Hz, $\nu_{AM} = 156.5$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.8, 161.8, 134.0, 132.8, 132.0, 132.0, 128.9, 128.8, 128.2, 128.1, 128.0, 126.2, 125.9, 125.8, 125.5, 123.9, 66.3, 34.8; MS exact mass calculated for $[C_{20}H_{15}NO_2 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 302.12, found 302.12 (ESI+).

4-((*1H*-3-IndolyI)methyI)-2-phenyloxazoI-5(4H)-one (1e). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyI-L-tryptophan (1e', 1.00 g, 3.24 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 66% (off-white solid); TLC R_f = 0.20 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.19 (s, 1H), 8.05–8.00 (m, 2H), 7.89–7.81 (m, 1H), 7.68–7.60 (m, 1H), 7.58–7.51 (m, 2H), 7.45–7.37 (m, 1H), 7.30–7.24 (m, 2H), 7.22 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 4.89 (dd, *J* = 6.3, 4.9 Hz, 1H), 3.60 (AMX, J_{AX} = 4.8 Hz, J_{MX} = 6.2 Hz, J_{AM} = 14.8 Hz, ν_{AM} = 61.7 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 178.2, 161.9, 136.1, 132.7, 128.8, 128.0, 127.5, 126.0, 123.5, 122.2, 119.7, 119.3, 111.1, 109.8, 66.7, 27.4; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₈H₁₄N₂O₂ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 291.11, found 291.12 (ESI+).

4-(4-(tert-Butoxy)benzyl)-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1f). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-O-tert-butyl-L-tyrosine (1f', 600 mg, 1.76 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 97% (clear, pale yellow oil); TLC R_f = 0.42 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.91–7.85 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.45–7.38 (m, 2H), 7.18–7.10 (m, 2H), 6.88–7.81 (m, 2H), 4.66 (t, *J* = 5.5 Hz, 1H), 3.25 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 4.9 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 6.1 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 14.0 Hz, ν_{AM} = 79.8 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.8, 161.7, 154.6, 132.7, 130.2, 130.0, 128.8, 127.9, 125.9, 124.1, 78.5, 66.7, 36.8, 28.9; MS exact mass calculated for [C₂₀H₂₁NO₃ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 324.16, found 324.16 (ESI+).

4-(4-Nitrobenzyl)-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1g). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-L-(4-nitro)phenylalanine (1g', 600 mg, 1.91 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 78% (off-white solid); TLC R_f = 0.24 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.20–8.08 (m, 2H), 7.96–7.85 (m 2H), 7.62–7.54 (m, 1H), 7.53–7.42 (m, 4H), 4.73 (dd, *J* = 6.9, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.38 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 5.0 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 7.0 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 14.0 Hz, ν_{AM} = 101.1 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.0, 162.4, 147.5, 143.1, 133.3, 130.7, 129.0, 128.1, 125.5, 123.8, 66.0, 37.0; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₆H₁₂N₂O₄ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 297.09, found 297.09 (ESI+).

4-Benzhydryl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1h). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-L-diphenylalanine (1h') according to General Procedure B above. Yield: undetermined (off-white powder); TLC R_f = 0.50 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.02–7.96 (m, 2H), 7.75–7.69 (m, 2H), 7.65–7.56 (m, 1H), 7.57–7.47 (m, 2H), 7.49–4.71 (m, 2H), 7.40–7.30 (m, 3H), 7.30–7.22 (m, 2H), 7.25–7.16 (m, 1H), 5.24 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 4.88 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.5, 161.8, 141.1, 138.3, 132.8, 129.5, 128.8, 128.7, 128.3, 128.0, 127.4, 127.1, 125.9, 69.5, 52.7; MS exact mass calculated for [C₂₂H₁₇NO₂ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 328.13, found 328.14 (ESI+).

4-Phenethyl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1i). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-L-homophenyl-alanine (1i', 800 mg, 2.80 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 76% (clear, colorless oil); TLC R_f = 0.44 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.11–7.93 (m, 2H), 7.69–7.54 (m, 1H), 7.54–7.44 (m, 2H), 7.40–7.07 (m, 5H), 4.40 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 5.8 Hz, 1H), 2.88 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 2.47–2.33 (m, 1H), 2.24–2.11 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 178.4, 161.9, 140.3, 132.9, 128.9, 128.7, 128.0, 126.5, 126.0, 64.6, 33.3, 31.6; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₇H₁₅NO₂ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 266.12, found 266.12 (ESI+).

Methyl 2-(5-oxo-2-phenyl-(4H)oxazolyl)acetate (1j). Title compound was synthesized from *N*-benzoyl-L-aspartic acid β-methyl ester (1j', 278 mg, 1.11 mmol) according to General Procedure A above. Yield: 63% (clear, colorless oil); TLC $R_f = 0.19$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.99 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.56 (t,

J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.47 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 4.61 (t, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.66 (s, 3H), 3.08 (AMX, J_{AX} = 4.5 Hz, J_{MX} = 5.6 Hz, J_{AM} = 17.3 Hz, ν_{AM} = 47.0 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.6, 169.8, 163.1, 133.0, 128.9, 128.1, 125.8, 61.8, 52.4, 35.1; MS exact mass calculated for $[C_{12}H_{11}NO_4 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 234.08, found 234.08 (ESI+).

4-Isobutyl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1k). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-DL-leucine (1k', 1.00g, 4.25 mmol) according to General Procedure B above. Yield: 66% (white solid); TLC $R_f = 0.44$ (10% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.03-7.96 (m, 2H), 7.59-7.52 (m, 1H), 7.50-7.43 (m, 2H), 4.40 (dd, J = 8.9, 5.7 Hz, 1H), 2.14-1.98 (m, 1H), 1.83 (ddd, J = 13.6, 7.8, 5.7 Hz, 1H), 1.67 (ddd, J = 13.7, 9.0, 6.3 Hz, 1H), 1.02 (dd, J = 11.4, 6.7 Hz, 6H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 179.0, 161.5, 132.7, 128.8, 127.9, 126.1, 64.0, 40.9, 25.3, 22.8, 22.2; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₃H₁₅NO₂ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 218.12, found 218.12 (ESI+).

4-Isopropyl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1I). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-DL-valine (1I', 1.00 g, 4.52 mmol) according to General Procedure B above. Yield: 72% (clear, colorless oil); TLC R_f = 0.40 (10% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.04–7.98 (m, 2H), 7.61–7.54 (m, 1H), 7.51–7.45 (m, 2H), 4.29 (dd, *J* = 4.36, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 2.39 (m, 1H), 1.15 (dd, *J* = 6.8, 0.9 Hz, 3H), 1.02 (dd, *J* = 6.8, 0.9 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.9, 161.8, 132.8, 128.9, 128.0, 126.1, 70.9, 31.4, 18.9, 17.7; MS exact mass calculated for $[C_{12}H_{13}NO_2 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 204.10, found 204.11 (ESI+).

4-Neopentyl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1m). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-L-tert-butylalanine (1m', 250 mg, 1.00 mmol) according to General Procedure B above. Yield: 94% (white solid); TLC R_f = 0.65 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.03–7.95 (m, 2H), 7.59–7.52 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.42 (m, 2H), 4.39 (dd, *J* = 9.8, 3.3 Hz, 1H), 1.77 (AMX, *J*_{AX} = 3.3 Hz, *J*_{MX} = 9.8 Hz, *J*_{AM} = 14.1 Hz, ν_{AM} = 144.4 Hz, 2H), 1.10 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 180.0, 160.9, 132.6, 128.8, 127.9, 126.3, 63.6, 45.9, 31.0, 29.8; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₄H₁₇NO₂ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 232.13, found 232.14 (ESI+).

4-tert-Butyl-2-phenyloxazol-5(4H)-one (1n). Title compound was synthesized from N-benzoyl-DL-tert-leucine (1n', 1.00 g, 4.25 mmol) according to General Procedure B above. Yield: 88% (white solid); TLC R_f = 0.62 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.07–7.96 (m, 2H), 7.59–7.52 (m, 1H), 7.50–7.43 (m, 2H), 4.07 (s, 1H), 1.14 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.0, 161.3, 132.7, 128.8, 128.0, 126.1, 74.1, 36.0, 26.3; MS exact mass calculated for [C₁₃H₁₅NO₂ + H]⁺ requires *m*/*z* = 218.12, found 218.12 (ESI+).

General Procedures for the DKR of Oxazolones 1. All vials, flasks, and magnetic stir bars were oven-dried overnight before use in DKR experiments. Peptides 9 (and truncated peptides 10) and reaction conditions were screened using the small-scale procedure detailed below (0.05 mmol of 1a). 2,3-Dimethylnaphthalene (3.9 mg, 0.025 mmol) was used as an internal standard. Competition experiments (Scheme 3) were also performed using the small-scale procedure, with triethylamine (20 mol % wrt 1a) added to the reaction mixture along with peptide 9k or 9p. The substrate scope was examined on small scale (0.05 mmol of 1), as well as on a larger scale (0.50 mmol of 1). The 0.05 mmol scale reactions were quenched after 22-24 h. Conversion was determined by ¹H NMR of the crude reaction mixture and is defined as the ratio of product α -signal integration (α_{pdt}) to the total α -signal integration $(\alpha_{sm} + \alpha_{pdt})$. The 0.50 mmol scale reactions were allowed to stir longer than 24 h if the conversion of the small-scale counterparts (which were started at the same time) was low at the 24 h mark. Additional MeOH (5 equiv) was used for less reactive, alkyl-substituted substrates (1k-n). Results were consistent between the two scales in every case. Isolated yields are only reported for the scale-up reactions.

Small (0.05 mmol) Scale Procedure. Peptide 9k (6.9 mg, 0.01 mmol, 20 mol %) was added to a 4 mL vial, followed by oxazolone 1 (0.05 mmol, 1.0 equiv). The solid mixture was dissolved in PhMe (0.50 mL, 0.10 M solution). The resulting clear colorless solution was allowed to stir at 4 °C (cold room) as MeOH (6.1 μ L, 0.15 mmol, 3

equiv) was added to the solution. The PTFE-lined vial cap was replaced and tightened, and the solution was allowed to stir at 4 °C. The reaction was quenched after 22–24 h by concentration in vacuo to remove excess MeOH and solvent. Conversion was determined by ¹H NMR as described above. The crude reaction mixture was then purified by filtration through a pipet silica plug (1 × 7 cm, 50% EtOAc/hexanes). The fractions containing both starting material and product were pooled together and concentrated in vacuo to provide a clear, colorless oil. Analytical HPLC analysis was performed to assess the er of both the starting material and product.

Scale-Up (0.50 mmol) Procedure. Peptide 9k (69.3 mg, 0.10 mmol, 20 mol %) was first added to an oven-dried round-bottom flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Oxazolone 1 (0.50 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added next, and the solid mixture was dissolved in PhMe (5.0 mL, 0.10 M solution). The resulting solution was allowed to stir at 4 °C (cold room) as MeOH (61 μ L, 1.5 mmol, 3 equiv) was added to the solution with a syringe. The flask was sealed, and the solution was allowed to stir at 4 °C for 24-70 h depending on the substrate. The reaction was quenched by concentration in vacuo, and conversion was assessed by crude ¹H NMR (vide supra). The crude reaction mixture was then loaded onto a silica column in CH₂Cl₂ and purified by flash chromatography using an appropriate EtOAc/hexanes gradient chosen on the basis of TLC. The fractions containing product were pooled and concentrated in vacuo. Adventitious solvent was removed by coevaporation with CH_2Cl_2 before the product was allowed to dry under a vacuum overnight. ¹H and ¹³C NMR confirmed the structure of the methyl ester product. Analytical HPLC was performed to assess the er of both the remaining starting material and product.

Racemic Standard Procedure A. Oxazolone 1 (1 equiv, 0.050 mmol) was added to an oven-dried vial equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The substrate was dissolved in a 0.02 M solution of Et₃N in PhMe (0.50 mL, 0.10 M solution). The resulting solution was allowed to stir at 4 °C (cold room) as MeOH (10.1 μ L, 0.25 mmol) was added to the solution. The PTFE-lined vial cap was replaced and tightened, and the solution was allowed to stir at 4 °C for 24 h. The reaction was quenched by concentration in vacuo to remove excess MeOH, Et₃N, and PhMe. The crude reaction mixture was then purified by filtration through a pipet silica plug (1×7 cm, 50% EtOAc/hexanes, isocratic). The fractions containing starting material and product were pooled together and concentrated in vacuo. Analytical HPLC analysis was performed to assess the er of both the remaining starting material and product to ensure that both were indeed racemic (vide infra for substrate-specific HPLC methods). Note: In a number of cases, an unidentified side product was present in the HPLC trace, eluting just before the first product peak.³

*Racemic Standard Procedure B.*³⁵ Racemic *N*-benzoyl amino acid 1' (1 equiv) was added to an oven-dried round-bottom flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The white solid was dissolved in a 3:1 (v/v) PhMe/MeOH solution (0.15 M wrt 1'), and the resulting clear, colorless solution was allowed to stir at rt. The flask was sealed with a septum, and a N₂ inlet was added. (Trimethylsilyl)diazomethane (TMSCHN₂, 2.0 M in hexanes, 1.1 equiv) was added dropwise to the stirring solution at rt, causing evolution of a gas. Additional TMSCHN₂ was added until the pale yellow color persisted. The solution was allowed to stir 20 min at rt before the reaction was quenched by addition of excess silica. The pale yellow solution became clear and colorless. The reaction mixture was filtered to remove silica, and the filtrate was concentrated in vacuo to provide white granular solid. Analytical HPLC analysis was performed to assess the er of the product (vide infra for substrate-specific HPLC methods).

N-Benzoyl-L-phenylalanine methyl ester (2*a*). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1a (126 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.22$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 94% (0.050 mmol scale, 24 h); 90% (0.50 mmol scale, 24 h). Yield: 86% isolated (white solid), 97% brsm; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.80–7.69 (m, 2H), 7.56–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.47–7.38 (m, 2H), 7.35–7.24 (m, 3H), 7.20–7.11 (m, 2H), 6.71 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 5.12 (dt, *J* = 7.7, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.29 (ABX, $J_{AX} = 5.7$ Hz, $J_{BX} = 5.6$ Hz, $J_{AB} = 13.8$ Hz, $\nu_{AB} = 27.2$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.1, 166.9, 136.0, 134.0, 131.8, 129.4, 128.7,

128.7, 127.2, 127.1, 53.6, 52.5, 38.0; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{17}H_{17}NO_3 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 284.1287, found 284.1261 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% *i*-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.0 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 96:4 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 12.6$ min, major $t_R = 15.4$ min); 96:4 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 12.5$ min, major $t_R = 15.4$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-β-(2-furyl)alanine methyl ester (2b). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1b (121 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.16$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 96% (0.050 mmol scale, 23 h); 99% (0.50 mmol scale, 26 h). Yield: 78% isolated (white solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) & 7.79-7.68 (m, 2H), 7.54-7.48 (m, 1H), 7.46-7.39 (m, 2H), 7.33 (dd, J = 1.9, 0.8 Hz, 1H), 6.79 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.29 (dd, *J* = 3.2, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.10 (dd, *J* = 3.1, 0.8 Hz, 1H), 5.05 (dt, *J* = 7.6, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.31 (ABX, J_{AX} = 5.0 Hz, J_{BX} = 4.8 Hz, J_{AB} = 15.3 Hz, $\nu_{AB} = 17.0$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.8, 167.0, 150.5, 142.4, 134.1, 131.9, 128.7, 127.2, 110.5, 108.2, 52.8, 52.1, 30.8; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{15}H_{15}NO_4 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 274.1079, found 274.1044 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% i-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.0 mL min $^{-1}$ flow, 20 $^{\circ}\mathrm{C}$ uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 96:4 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R}$ = 12.5 min, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 15.9 min); 96:4 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R}$ = 12.5 min, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 15.8 min).

N-Benzoyl- $L-\beta$ -(2-thienyl)alanine methyl ester (2c). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1c (129 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.17$ (20%) EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 99% (0.050 mmol scale, 22 h); 95% (0.50 mmol scale, 24 h). Yield: 84% isolated (yellow oily solid); ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.82–7.73 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.47–7.39 (m, 2H), 7.17 (dd, J = 5.1, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 6.94 (dd, J = 5.2, 3.4 Hz, 1H), 6.80 (dd, J = 3.4, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 6.79 (bs, 1H), 5.09 (dt, J = 7.5, 4.8 Hz, 1H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.52 (ABX, $J_{AX} = 5.0$ Hz, $J_{BX} =$ 4.8 Hz, J_{AB} = 14.9 Hz, ν_{AB} = 16.0 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.6, 167.0, 137.3, 133.9, 131.9, 128.7, 127.2, 127.2, 127.0, 125.1, 53.5, 52.7, 32.2; HRMS exact mass calculated for [C₁₅H₁₅NO₃S $(+ H)^+$ requires m/z = 290.0851, found 290.0881 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% i-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.0 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 $^\circ\text{C}$ uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 96:4 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R} = 13.2$ min, major $t_{\rm R} = 16.6$ min); 97:3 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R} = 13.0$ min, major $t_{\rm R} = 16.4$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-β-(1-napthyl)alanine methyl ester (2d). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1d (151 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.14$ (20%) EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 93% (0.050 mmol scale, 23 h); 93% (0.50 mmol scale, 25 h). Yield: 84% isolated (off-white, foamy solid), 90% brsm; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.18 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (dd, J = 7.6, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.72-7.63 (m, 2H), 7.58–7.21 (m, 7H), 6.93 (d, J = 7.9 H, 1H), 5.24 (q, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (ABX, J_{AX} = 6.4 Hz, J_{BX} = 6.5 Hz, J_{AB} = 14.8 Hz, ν_{AB} = 13.0 Hz, 2H), 3.63 (s, 3H); 13 C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.3, 167.1, 133.9, 133.7, 132.4, 132.2, 131.6, 128.8, 128.4, 128.0, 127.4, 127.0, 126.3, 125.7, 125.2, 123.5, 53.6, 52.2, 35.0; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{21}H_{19}NO_3 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 334.1443, found 334.1473 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% i-PrOH/ hexanes eluent, 1.0 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 94:6 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R}$ = 14.2 min, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 18.1 min); 93:7 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R}$ = 14.2 min, major $t_{\rm R} = 18.1$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-tryptophan methyl ester (2e). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone **1e** (145 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.05$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 94% (0.050 mmol scale, 23 h); 99% (0.50 mmol scale, 26 h). Yield: 93% isolated (off-white, foarny solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.22 (s, 1H), 7.71–7.65 (m, 2H), 7.56 (dt, J = 8.0, 0.9 Hz, 1H), 7.50–7.45 (m, 1H), 7.41–7.33 (m, 3H), 7.19 (ddd, J = 8.2, 7.0, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.08 (ddd, J = 8.1, 7.1, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.68 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (dt, J = 7.7, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.46 (ABX, $J_{AX} = 5.2$ Hz, $J_{BX} = 4.7$ Hz, $J_{AB} = 14.8$ Hz, $\nu_{AB} = 13.0$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.5, 167.1, 136.3, 134.0, 131.8, 128.7, 127.8, 127.2, 122.9, 122.4, 119.9, 118.8, 111.4, 110.2,

53.6, 52.6, 27.8; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{19}H_{18}N_2O_3 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 323.1396, found 323.1375 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% EtOH/hexanes eluent, 0.70 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 98:2 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 49.2$ min, major $t_R = 61.3$ min); 97:3 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 50.2$ min, major $t_R = 61.5$ min).

N-Benzoyl-O-tert-butyl-L-tyrosine methyl ester (2f). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1f (162 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.11$ (20%) EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 69% (0.050 mmol scale, 24 h); 92% (0.50 mmol scale, 45 h). Yield: 78% isolated (white solid), 85% brsm; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.75-7.63 (m, 2H), 7.56-7.46 (m, 1H), 7.45-7.36 (m, 2H), 7.10-6.99 (m, 2H), 6.97-6.88 (m, 2H), 6.54 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 5.05 (dt, J = 7.6, 5.7 Hz, 1H), 3.74 (s, 3H), 3.21 (ABX, J_{AX} = 6.0 Hz, J_{BX} = 5.5 Hz, J_{AB} = 13.9 Hz, ν_{AB} = 23.4 Hz, 2H), 1.32 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.2, 166.9, 134.1, 131.9, 130.7, 129.9, 128.8, 127.1, 124.4, 78.6, 53.7, 52.5, 37.4, 29.0; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{21}H_{25}NO_4 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 356.1862, found 356.1821 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% i-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.0 mL min $^{-1}$ flow, 20 $^{\circ}\mathrm{C}$ uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 93:7 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R}$ = 10.1 min, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 13.2 min); 93:7 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R} = 10.2$ min, major $t_{\rm R} = 13.5$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-(4-nitro)phenylalanine methyl ester (2g). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1g (148 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. The oxazolone substrate was difficult to dissolve, so the reaction solution was prestirred at RT before addition of MeOH at 4 °C. Addition of MeOH helped to dissolve the reactants. TLC $R_f = 0.33$ (50% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 88% (0.050 mmol scale, 22 h); 94% (0.50 mmol scale, 30 h). Yield: 88% isolated (off-white, flaky solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) & 8.15–7.99 (m, 2H), 7.74–7.60 (m, 2H), 7.50–7.41 (m, 1H), 7.40–7.32 (m, 2H), 7.30–7.20 (m, 2H), 6.64 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 5.05 (dt, J = 7.1, 5.7 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.31 (AMX, $J_{AX} = 6.0$ Hz, J_{BX} = 5.5 Hz, J_{AM} = 13.8 Hz, ν_{AM} = 68.4 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.6, 167.0, 147.4, 144.0, 133.6, 132.2, 130.4, 128.9, 127.1, 123.8, 53.5, 52.9, 37.9; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{17}H_{16}N_2O_5 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 329.1137, found 329.1128 (ESI +); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% EtOH/hexanes eluent, 0.70 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 88:12 er (0.050 mmol scale, major $t_{\rm R} = 68.6$ min, minor $t_{\rm R} = 81.7$ min); 88:12 er (0.50 mmol scale, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 69.6 min, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 82.7 min).

N-Benzoyl- ι - β , β -diphenylalanine methyl ester (**2h**). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1h (96 mg, 0.30 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. The oxazolone substrate was difficult to dissolve, so the reaction solution was prestirred with gentle heating before addition of MeOH at 4 °C. Even so, the solution was largely heterogeneous (cloudy, pale-yellow solution). TLC R_f = 0.16 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 49% (0.050 mmol scale, 24 h); 26% (0.30 mmol scale, 38 h). Yield: 19% isolated (white, foamy solid), 75% brsm; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.55–7.49 (m, 2H), 7.43–7.36 (m, 1H), 7.33–7.11 (m, 12H), 6.37 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 5.55 (t, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 4.55 (d, J = 8.4 H, 1H), 3.48 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 172.4, 167.3, 140.1, 139.6, 133.9, 131.9, 129.0, 128.7, 128.7, 128.6, 128.3, 127.5, 127.3, 127.1, 127.1, 55.7, 53.7, 52.3; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{23}H_{21}NO_3 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 360.1600, found 360.1570 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralcel OD-H column, 10% i-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.00 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 91:9 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R}$ = 9.2 min, major $t_{\rm R}$ = 18.6 min); 90:10 er (0.30 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R} = 9.0$ min, major $t_{\rm R} = 17.9$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-homophenylalanine methyl ester (2i). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone **1i** (133 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. The reaction solution was no longer homogeneous after 48 h at 4 °C. The cloudy, white suspension became a clear solution again upon warming to rt. TLC R_f = 0.12 (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 40% (0.050 mmol scale, 22 h); 50% (0.50 mmol scale, 48 h). Yield: 47% isolated (white solid), 76% brsm; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.77–7.68 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.47 (m, 1H), 7.47–7.39 (m, 2H), 7.33–7.24 (m, 2H), 7.24–

7.17 (m, 3H), 6.71 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 4.91 (td, J = 7.4, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 2.75 (m, 1H), 2.35 (m, 1H), 2.17 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 173.0, 167.1, 140.8, 134.0, 131.9, 128.7, 128.7, 128.5, 127.2, 126.3, 52.7, 52.6, 34.1, 31.9; HRMS exact mass calculated for [C₁₈H₁₉NO₃ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 298.1443, found 298.1422 (ESI +); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% *i*-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.00 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 81:19 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 11.5$ min, major $t_R = 14.1$ min); 81:19 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 11.7$ min, major $t_R = 14.4$ min).

N-Benzoyl-dimethyl-*L*-aspartate (2*j*). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1j (109 mg, 0.47 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.19$ (40% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 94% (0.050 mmol scale, 22 h); 99% (0.47 mmol scale, 25 h). Yield: 79% isolated (white solid); ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.83–7.77 (m, 2H), 7.54–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.47–7.40 (m, 2H), 7.24 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 5.06 (dt, *J* = 8.3, 4.5 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.06 (AMX, $J_{AX} = 4.2$ Hz, $J_{BX} = 4.5$ Hz, $J_{AM} = 17.3$ Hz, $\nu_{AM} = 75.7$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.8, 171.4, 167.0, 133.7, 132.0, 128.8, 127.3, 53.0, 52.2, 49.0, 36.2; HRMS exact mass calculated for [C₁₃H₁₅NO₅ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 266.1028, found 266.1022 (ESI +); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% EtOH/hexanes eluent, 0.70 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 90:10 er (0.47 mmol scale, major $t_R = 45.4$ min, minor $t_R = 67.8$ min); 90:10 er (0.47 mmol scale, major $t_R = 45.4$ min, minor $t_R = 68.9$ min).

N-Benzoyl-1-leucine methyl ester (2k). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 1k (109 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.08$ (10% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 57% (0.050 mmol scale, 24 h); 60% (0.50 mmol scale, 48 h). Yield: 58% isolated (white solid), 95% brsm; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.80–7.74 (m, 2H), 7.50–7.43 (m, 1H), 7.41–7.35 (m, 2H), 6.73 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.84 (td, J = 8.6, 4.8 Hz, 1H), 3.73 (s, 3H), 1.78–1.60 (m, 3H), 0.95 (dd, J = 8.8, 5.9 Hz, 6H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 173.8, 167.2, 134.0, 131.7, 128.6, 127.2, 52.4, 51.2, 41.8, 25.1, 22.9, 22.1; HRMS exact mass calculated for [$C_{14}H_{19}NO_3 + H$]⁺ requires m/z = 250.1443, found 250.1428 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% *i*-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.00 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 91:9 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 7.2$ min, major $t_R = 9.5$ min); 93:7 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 7.2$ min, major $t_R = 9.5$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-valine methyl ester (21). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone 11 (118 mg, 0.58 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.22$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 20% (0.050 mmol scale, 24 h); 30% (0.58 mmol scale, 48 h). Yield: 27% isolated (white solid), 86% brsm; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.86–7.76 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.49 (m, 1H), 7.48–7.40 (m, 2H), 6.63 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.79 (dd, J = 8.7, 4.9 Hz, 1H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 2.34–2.22 (m, 1H), 1.00 (dd, J = 11.8, 6.9 Hz, 6H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.8, 167.4, 134.3, 131.8, 128.7, 127.1, 57.6, 52.4, 31.8, 19.1, 18.1; HRMS exact mass calculated for [C₁₃H₁₇NO₃ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 236.1287, found 236.1295 (ESI +); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% *i*-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.00 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 80:20 er (0.050 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 7.1$ min, major $t_R = 9.4$ min).

N-Benzoyl-L-β-tert-butylalanine methyl ester (2m). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone **1m** (116 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.20$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 15% (0.050 mmol scale, 46 h); 30% (0.58 mmol scale, 69 h). Yield: 33% isolated (white solid), 79% brsm; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.81–7.72 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.47 (m, 1H), 7.46–7.39 (m, 2H), 6.45 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 4.88 (td, J = 8.8, 3.5 Hz, 1H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 1.75 (AMX, $J_{AX} = 3.8$ Hz, $J_{BX} = 9.0$ Hz, $J_{AM} = 14.4$ Hz, $\nu_{AM} = 122.4$ Hz, 2H), 1.01 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 174.1, 167.0, 134.2, 131.9, 128.7, 127.1, 52.5, 50.5, 46.5, 31.0, 29.8; HRMS exact mass calculated for [C₁₅H₂₁NO₃ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 264.1600, found 264.1572 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% *i*-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.00 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 79:21 er (0.050 mmol scale,

minor $t_{\rm R} = 6.6$ min, major $t_{\rm R} = 9.8$ min); 80:20 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_{\rm R} = 6.7$ min, major $t_{\rm R} = 9.9$ min).

N-Benzoyl-1-tert-leucine methyl ester (2n). Title compound was synthesized from oxazolone **1n** (109 mg, 0.50 mmol) according to the Scale-Up Procedure above. TLC $R_f = 0.29$ (20% EtOAc/hexanes, UV). Conversion: 5% (0.070 mmol scale, 24 h); 9% (0.50 mmol scale, 62 h). Yield: 5% isolated (yellow oil), 92% brsm; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.83–7.77 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.50 (m, 1H), 7.48–7.42 (m, 2H), 6.64 (d, J = 9.3 Hz, 1H), 4.71 (d, 9.3 Hz, 1H), 3.76 (s, 3H), 1.06 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.7, 167.5, 134.7, 132.1, 129.0, 127.4, 60.2, 52.3, 35.6, 27.1; HRMS exact mass calculated for [C₁₄H₁₉NO₃ + H]⁺ requires m/z = 250.1443, found 250.1442 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% *i*-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.00 mL min⁻¹ flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 72:28 er (0.070 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 5.9$ min, major $t_R = 7.9$ min); 71:29 er (0.50 mmol scale, minor $t_R = 5.8$ min, major $t_R = 7.7$ min).

Assignment of Absolute Stereochemistry of 1a. N-Benzoyl-Lphenylalanine methyl ester. N-Benzoyl-L-phenylalanine (500 mg, 1.86 mmol) was added to an oven-dried round-bottom flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The white solid was dissolved in a 3:1 (v/v)PhMe/MeOH solution (12.4 mL, 0.15 M wrt Bz-L-Phe-OH), and the resulting clear, colorless solution was allowed to stir at ambient temperature. The flask was sealed with a septum, and a N2 inlet was added. (Trimethylsilyl)diazomethane (TMSCHN₂, 1.02 mL, 2.05 mmol) was added dropwise to the stirring solution at rt, causing evolution of a gas. Additional TMSCHN₂ was added until the pale yellow color persisted. The solution was allowed to stir 20 min at rt before the reaction was quenched by addition of excess silica. The pale vellow solution became clear and colorless. The reaction mixture was filtered to remove silica, and the filtrate was concentrated in vacuo to provide white granular solid (488 mg, 93% yield). The product was shown to be spectroscopically consistent with 2a: ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.77–7.71 (m, 2H), 7.55–7.48 (m, 1H), 7.46–7.40 (m, 2H), 7.34–7.24 (m, 3H), 7.19–7.12 (m, 2H), 6.61 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 5.11 (dt, J = 7.5, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.28 (ABX, $J_{AX} = 5.8$ Hz, $J_{BX} = 5.5$ Hz, $J_{AB} = 13.9$ Hz, $\nu_{AB} = 32.0$ Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.2, 166.9, 136.0, 134.0, 131.9, 129.5, 128.7, 128.7, 127.3, 127.1, 53.7, 52.5, 38.0; HRMS exact mass calculated for $[C_{17}H_{17}NO_3 + H]^+$ requires m/z = 284.1287, found 284.1273 (ESI+); HPLC (Chiralpak AD-H column, 10% i-PrOH/hexanes eluent, 1.0 mL \min^{-1} flow, 20 °C uniform column temperature, 230 nm) 100:0 er ($t_{\rm R}$ = 15.6 min); $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ = +90.9 (*c* = 1.0, CHCl₃); literature $[\alpha]_D^{24}$ = +98.1 (*c* = 1.0, CHCl₃).³⁶

ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

HRMS data for peptides 9a-p and 10a-f, ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra of compounds 9k and 2a-n, HPLC traces of 2a-n, and high-field (2D-)NMR characterization of 9k. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A.J.M. gratefully acknowledges support from the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program. Early aspects of this study were supported by the National Science Foundation (CHE-0848224). We would like to thank Dr. Eric Paulson for assistance with high-field NMR experiments.

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(21) It was later observed that tosylated 9n had epimerized, which may partially account for its low selectivity.

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