

GFC Convocation Committee – ANNUAL REPORT (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)
Prepared by the Chief Marshal Olu Awosoga and Acting/new Convocation Coordinator Trish
Jackson/Heather Fudge
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Overview: This committee is responsible for overseeing all Convocation Ceremonies, approving the schedule of events, order of proceedings, citations for honorary degree recipients and award winners. In this 50th Anniversary year, the committee oversaw the Fall 2016 and the Spring 2017 Ceremonies. Highlights of the past year include the **1668** students who graduated over the five ceremonies. We introduced a short video clip illustrating the procedure to be expected by graduands in receiving their degrees, diplomas and certificates and where to stand on the platform. We updated the Convocation guidelines and protocols. The university tartan was added to the University symbol on the spring 2017 program, and the 50th Anniversary branding was a theme throughout the documents produced.

Meetings: The GFC Convocation Committee met four times this year.

September 16, 2016: There was discussion on citations & Order of Proceedings, Order of Conferral, Order of Canada Recognition, Convocation guidelines & Protocols and schedule of events for the fall 2016 ceremony. In addition, at this meeting, there was some early discussion of new kilt for the Piper to showcase the uLethbridge tartan. The committee approved all documents after completing necessary adjustments in preparation for fall convocation.

November 22, 2016: We were particularly delighted to have Chancellor Janice Varzari join us for this meeting, as we made some crucial decisions about updating the Convocation Program. We expressed our appreciation to the former Convocation Coordinator – Sarah Faulkner. There was discussion on Platform seating guideline, an overview of the 50th anniversary activities, Protocols & Convocation guidelines and fall 2016 Convocation review. The committee approved a new platform seating arrangement and proposed cover/design for the spring convocation program.

February 15, 2017: To ensure that the celebration of the 50th anniversary is incorporated into the 2017 Convocation ceremonies, logo and tartans will be displayed in the gym. “Let it Shine On” will be performed live by John Wort Hannam during the spring ceremonies. A simplified version of the Order of Proceedings was introduced to reduce the amount of paper used in planning and execution of Convocation; electronic copies will be made available to all stakeholders. A sub-committee was set up to review and report back to GFC Convocation on the way to address problem of large number of students who complete their programs in December but will have to wait six months before being awarded their credentials in the spring ceremony. (Suggestion: An in-house conferral process by the Chancellor may enable them to pursue their future endeavors.) The Chief Marshal sought input on expanding and improving last year’s efforts to increase faculty attendance. Institutional analysis provided 2017-2019 graduate projections to aid future Convocation planning.

May 8, 2017: We welcome our new Convocation Coordinator – Heather Fudge. As per usual for the final meeting before the Spring Ceremonies, this meeting focused on updating the committee on the final preparations, approximate attendance information, as well as a sneak peek of the new Program. Musical selections were concluded but decision on Cultural/Religious Regalia was postpone for further consultations. The committee endorsed

a new podium display featuring the uLethbridge Tartan alongside a display of traditional Blackfoot symbols envisioned by elder Francis First Charger. The Board Chair (or delegate) is now assigned a speaking role to read the citation for the “Board of Governor’s Teaching Chair” and make the presentation of this award.

Summary

Graduates:	
Fall 2016	240
Spring 2017	1428
TOTAL	1668

Graduates who attended Convocation

Fall 2016	165
Spring 2017	1093
TOTAL	1258

Elements of the 50th anniversary were incorporated for Spring 2017 Convocation, including

- The print materials were designed using the gold elements attached to the UL50 branding
- John Wort Hannam performed “Let it Shine On” with the University Wind Orchestra (arrangement by Paul Walker) in three of the four ceremonies
- 50th anniversary banners were hung at the main entrance
- A 50th anniversary backdrop was provided in the photo area alongside the mace display
- Speeches presented to the graduands highlighted themes related to this significant milestone
- The Chancellor hosted a luncheon for current and past Chancellors, Board Chairs and Presidents

We are pleased to inform the committee that all ceremonies were completed to time as scheduled; it is a testament to the efficiency of the staff in charge of that process!

Upcoming:

In 2017/2018, the GFC Convocation Committee will continue to meet regularly to oversee the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 Ceremonies. We expect to welcome new members of the GFC Convocation committee.