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## **In-person Spring 2020 Convocation cancelled as University of Lethbridge seeks alternative**

In prioritizing the health and well-being of students and the community at large, the University of Lethbridge is working to develop an alternate plan to celebrate the achievements of its Spring 2020 graduates — officially cancelling today the in-person convocation ceremonies scheduled for May 28 and 29, 2020.

In-person convocation traditionally includes four large ceremonies over the course of two days, as well as an Indigenous celebration, Chancellor’s Dinner, and new alumni and other events. An expected 1,400 students will graduate this spring and with each ceremony attracting approximately 2,000 guests, including friends and family, the gatherings would far exceed current Alberta Health directives.

“This decision was not made lightly,” says Kathleen Massey, the University’s associate vice-president (students). “Watching our students develop throughout their time at the University of Lethbridge and then seeing them cross the stage in cap and gown is an important moment of celebration for them and for us.”

Convocation is a campus-wide event full of pageantry and tradition, with morning and afternoon ceremonies on both May 28 and 29, celebrating graduates from all of the U of L’s Faculties and schools.

“Our students have worked so hard over the course of their time here at the U of L and convocation is that opportunity to celebrate and reflect on all that has been accomplished,” says Massey. “Beyond that, it’s a significant family occasion. Our students know they could not have achieved this life milestone without the love and support of so many people and convocation is a time to say thank you as they share in their achievements.”

Massey says a team of colleagues at the University is working together to plan an alternative to the in-person events typically held in May so, “We can celebrate the remarkable achievements of our graduates and welcome them to the uLethbridge alumni family.”

She admits it is not only students and families who will be impacted by today's announcement, but the University community as a whole.

"Our faculty and staff truly love convocation. It really is why we are all here, to see our students reach their goals and we revel in their achievements," says Massey. "There is never a shortage of volunteers who just want to be part of the ceremonies and the atmosphere on campus is so uplifting. We all need something like this in our lives right now, and we're working hard to find alternatives to celebrate this special time."

The University will communicate with its graduates as more information becomes available.

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