

GFC Convocation Committee – ANNUAL REPORT (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021)

Prepared by the Chief Marshal Noella Piquette and Convocation Coordinator Heather Fudge  
August 16, 2021

- Members:** Noella Piquette (Chair), Mike Mahon, Charles Weaselhead, Kathleen Massey, Heather Fudge, Lauren Zink, Jonathan Diaz, Richelle Marynowski, Katharina Stevens, Jason Shriner, Jodie Gallais, Sheena Olson, Natasha Buis Deering, Marlene Taylor, Annette Bright, Lyndsay Montana, Kali McKay and Abigail Shakespeare
- 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. This year the committee oversaw the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 ceremonies. The highlights of the past year include the **1686** students who graduated and the two virtual celebrations that were held due to the on-going Covid-19 Pandemic.
- Meetings:** The GFC Convocation Committee met 8 times this year, much higher than an average year due to the pandemic and the many discussions required to navigate changes.
- July 20, 2020 (Virtual):** A summary of Spring 2020 Convocation was provided to the committee and data was shared from the first ever virtual celebration. The virtual celebration included Convocation-in-a-box, a special celebration video, congratulations messages and videos from faculty and staff, student stories shared on the website and social platforms, and a social media campaign for students to share their celebration from home.
- The committee also discussed Fall 2020 and approved a motion for the alternate plans to be used for the Fall Convocation as well, should the pandemic persist. Lastly, the committee began discussing the invitation for grads to return for an in-person experience in the future and the logistics required for that.
- October 7, 2020 (Email vote):** The committee received a motion by email to recommend to General Faculties Council to retroactively approve the addition of the concentration to the parchment for Doctor of Philosophy Education. The Faculty of Education does not have departments and having a PhD identified with a specific concentration such as “Counselling Psychology” or “Formal & Distributive Leadership” is important for the field. The motion was approved.
- The committee also agreed to revisit this topic to discuss the addition of concentrations and/or majors on parchments for other students in the future.
- November 30, 2020 (Virtual):** The committee approved the addition of a new hood for the combined degree BFA – New Media and BSc. The new Bachelor hood will have brown and golden yellow braids.
- The committee approved the Order of Conferral for Spring and Fall 2021 Convocation which included the addition of new Graduate certificate and diploma programs. The committee continued their discussions about adding majors and concentrations to parchments and decided to handle Graduate and Undergraduate parchments separately

and to investigate more about timelines, workload, etc. and to present this to the committee at a future meeting.

The Registrar's Office shared information about a new virtual credential the university would be piloting called MyCreds. uLethbridge students would soon have access to a digital parchment and in the future, digital transcripts, which would allow documents to easily be shared around the world.

The President's Office provided a short update regarding the awarding of Honorary Degrees outside of a convocation ceremony while restrictions continue due to the pandemic. There has also been a name change for the Distinguished Teaching Award to the University of Lethbridge Teaching Excellence Award.

**December 9, 2020 (Email vote):** Following the November 30 meeting, the Convocation Office was informed that two programs from the Dhillon School of Business (Post-Bachelor Certificate in Accounting Fundamentals and Post-Bachelor Certificate in Advanced Accounting) were missing from the Order of Conferral and would need to be added for 2021. The committee approved the revised Order of Conferral for Spring and Fall 2021.

**January 29, 2021 (Virtual):** The committee approved a motion to recommend to General Faculties Council the addition of majors and concentrations to uLethbridge parchments for Graduate programs, effective Fall 2021. The committee also approved a motion to accept the graduate and undergraduate parchment calendar updates. The group discussed Spring 2021 Convocation and reviewed four different options for hosting the ceremony while the pandemic is on-going. The options were: 1. Virtual ceremony and Convocation-in-a-box, 2. Outdoor in-person ceremonies, 3. Indoor or outdoor in-person ceremonies with no guests, 4. Drive-in style ceremonies. The committee felt it would be best to stay with a virtual format and would prepare a proposal for a vote in February.

**February 19, 2021 (Email vote):** The committee received a motion by email and approved the alternate plans for Spring 2021 Convocation. The convocation would be virtual again due to the pandemic and would include a celebration video, zoom celebrations, on-campus photo opportunities if possible, and convocation-in-a-box.

**May 7, 2021 (Virtual):** The committee approved a motion to recommend to General Faculties Council the addition of majors to uLethbridge parchments for Undergraduate programs, effective Fall 2021. The committee also approved a motion to recommend to General Faculties Council the approval of a new parchment for Bachelor of Nursing that would include the addition of the Lethbridge College logo, signatures, and wording to reflect the collaboration of the two institutions. This new parchment would come into effect for the February 2022 conferral. The committee reviewed and approved the award citations for Spring 2021.

Chief Marshal, Noella Piquette, announced she would be going on a leave starting July 1 and then retiring in 2022. The transfer of the mace would occur during the filming for

the Spring 2021 virtual celebrations and Michelle Hogue would become the new Chief Marshal.

The Convocation Coordinator and President's Office provided an update about Spring 2021 including plans for the virtual celebration as well as virtual awards ceremony and virtual Chancellor's reception.

**May 11, 2021 (Email Vote):** The committee approved additional citations for the faculty and volunteer awards for Spring 2021 Convocation.

Summary: Graduates:  
Fall 2020 – 211  
Spring 2021 – 1475  
**TOTAL – 1686**

Graduates who attended Convocation:  
Fall 2020 – 211\*  
Spring 2021 – 1475\*  
**TOTAL – 1686\***

\* no ceremonies were held in-person. A celebration was presented virtually and each graduate was sent "convocation-in-a-box".

Upcoming: In 2021/2022, the GFC Convocation Committee will continue to meet regularly to oversee Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 ceremonies. We are planning for Fall 2021 to be our first in-person ceremony since the pandemic began. An invitation has been extended to those who missed their ceremony in 2020 and Spring 2021. We expect to host an additional celebration ceremony this fall for alumni to cross the stage and celebrate with family, friends, and uLethbridge faculty and staff.