GFC Standing Committee Report

Committee: Convocation Ceremony Committee

For the Period of July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Members: Richelle Marynowski (Committee Chair), Miranda Unruh (Convocation Coordinator, On Leave), Kit Sibbet (Convocation Coordinator), Jodie Gallais, Terry Whitehead, Kathy Greenwood, Kathleen Massey, Natasha Buis Deering, Kali McKay, Romany Craig, Maurice Needham, Wayne Lippa, Armin Escher, Alejandro Figueroa, Jade Oldfield

Meeting Overview: This committee is responsible for overseeing all Convocation ceremonies. During the 2025-2026 reporting year, the committee oversaw the Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 convocation ceremonies. Highlights of the year include the graduation of **1,908** students, including five honorary degree recipients, and the University's largest Spring Convocation to date with 1,600 graduates. The committee also implemented GradRoll to complement StageClip, introduced a brief explanation of the significance of cords of distinction during the opening remarks rather than announcing distinctions for individual graduates, and continued efforts to streamline ceremonies while enhancing the graduate experience.

August 18, 2025 – The committee debriefed the Spring 2025 ceremonies, reviewing accessibility improvements, ceremonial logistics, and the first ceremony announcement required during a ceremony. Members also noted the strong response rate to the graduate and alumni survey through StageClip.

September 15, 2025 – The committee focused on planning for Fall Convocation. Key discussions included introducing professional name-reading software, recognizing Indigenous names upon request, and revising the recognition of cords of distinction by incorporating their significance into the opening remarks rather than announcing distinctions individually to improve ceremony flow and logistics.

November 26, 2025 – The committee debriefed the Fall ceremony and reviewed the successful implementation of name-reading software. Members discussed opportunities to further improve ceremony efficiency, including reducing the time between graduates and preparing for increased attendance at Spring Convocation.

April 30, 2026 – The committee focused on planning for Spring Convocation, including temporary staffing arrangements during Miranda's leave, updates to photography of grads as they cross the stage, a bus from Calgary to Lethbridge to accommodate Calgary Campus students, and logistical planning to accommodate record graduate numbers.

June 17, 2026 – The committee welcomed Kit Sibbet as Convocation Coordinator during Miranda's leave and debriefed the Spring 2026 ceremonies. Members reviewed the response to technical issues with the name-reading software, identifying the need for additional training and formal contingency procedures. The committee also confirmed that distinctions will continue to be recognized collectively rather than announced individually and discussed upcoming leadership transitions, including the search for new Marshals and preparations for the upcoming Chancellor transition.

Richelle Marynowski

Richelle Marynowski, Chief Marshal & Committee Chair

Kit Sibbet, Convocation Coordinator