

GFC Convocation Committee – ANNUAL REPORT (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020)

Prepared by the Chief Marshal Noella Piquette and Convocation Coordinator Heather Fudge
September 8, 2020

Members: Noella Piquette (Chair), Mike Mahon, Charles Weaselhead, Kathleen Massey, Heather Fudge, Lauren Zink, Andrew Gammack, Richelle Marynowski, David Scott, Jason Shriner, Jodie Gallais, Sheena Olson, Natasha Buis Deering, Marlene Taylor, Annette Bright, Lyndsay Montina, 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 2019 and Spring 2020 ceremonies. The highlights of the past year include the **1728** students who graduated over the five ceremonies and celebrating convocation virtually for the first time.

Meetings: The GFC Convocation Committee met 4 times this year.

September 18, 2019: As this was the first meeting of the year, the territorial Blackfoot statement was shared. The committee also reviewed the powers & duties and introduced each member. The order of conferral for Fall 2019 was approved. The committee voted to present all combined degrees together as a single category. The award citations and order of proceedings for the fall ceremony were also approved. The committee reviewed the schedule of events and the RSVP numbers for the fall ceremony. A summary of Spring 2019 convocation was also presented to the committee.

December 11, 2019: The committee approved changes to the language used in the order of proceedings and the calendar regarding the official grad list to state that it is compiled and maintained by the Registrar's Office. The committee also approved new regalia hoods for the new Master of Health Services Management program and new Graduate diploma and certificate programs. A summary of Fall 2019 Convocation was shared with the committee.

March 31, 2020 (Virtual): The committee met virtually for the first time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An announcement had been released to students and the public that the Spring 2020 Convocation ceremonies would be cancelled and that alternate plans would take place. Students were sent a survey regarding their experience and thoughts on an alternate plan. The committee discussed alternate plan options and used the student feedback that had been received to drive the ideas and form a plan. The committee developed a proposal to be presented to President's Executive for approval.

April 3, 2020 (Virtual): The committee met virtually again to make the final approvals for the alternate plans for Spring 2020 Convocation. The committee also learned that some of the graduate timelines would be changing due to adjustments with the pandemic and classes moving online for students. The alternate plans of a virtual celebration and convocation-in-a-box were approved. Every graduate would receive a box full of items

that they would normally get on the ceremony day (parchment, cap/tassel, alumni pin, commemorative program, honour cords, and Indigenous stole). A celebration video would be created and shared later in June. Student stories and congrats messages from faculty and staff would also be shared.

Summary: Graduates:
Fall 2019 – 272
Spring 2020 – 1456
TOTAL – 1728

Graduates who attended Convocation:
Fall 2018 – 189
Spring 2020 – 1456*
TOTAL – 1645*

* no ceremonies were held in-person. A virtual celebration was presented online and each graduate was sent “convocation-in-a-box”.

Upcoming: In 2020/2021, the GFC Convocation Committee will continue to meet regularly to oversee Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 ceremonies. We know that the in-person Fall ceremony will also be cancelled and a virtual celebration will take place instead. At this time, we are unsure how the pandemic will affect the ceremonies in 2021.