

Convocation Assistant Protocol

1. Update form on website.
2. Track assistants as they RSVP.
3. Set up Assistant Appreciation BBQ.
4. Send information prior to convocation.
5. Assign roles to assistants.

Update form on website

1. Assistants complete a form on TRU convocation site to register for stage seating or assisting in convocation. There is an example of a form in the O:drive here: O:\Group Share\alumnifound\COMMON\Convocation\2019\Assistants
2. After receiving this form in the ceremonies@tru.ca inbox, track the registration and file the email to appropriate convocation folder with an assistant sub folder.

Tracking Assistants

Assistants must be tracked after registering so we know who is helping when and where! There are examples of different ways of tracking assistants in the O:drive here: O:\Group Share\alumnifound\COMMON\Convocation\2019\Assistants.

There were many spreadsheets created. Including a name tag list, assistant sign up list and assistants by ceremony to name a few.

Moving forward, I would recommend keeping track of assistants and stage seating by ceremony. I found the file labelled "convocation assistant by ceremony" the most practical. This is because the master sign up sheet will be sorted by each ceremony to ensure we have enough volunteers and to create a plan of who will help in each role.

Tracking required:

1. List for nametags
 - a. Stage seaters do not receive nametags
2. Convocation assistant by ceremonies (include stage seating in this list moving forward)
 - a. All assistants
 - b. All stage seaters

The following roles will require this information:

1. Lead in the gowning area- they will need to know how many gowners they have for each ceremony.
2. Lead in the VIP gowning area- they will need to know how many faculty are being seated on the stage in each area for each ceremony so there are enough seats.
3. Lead in the usher and grad seating are.

Information required for assistants:

- Name
- Email
- Department
- Date and time available to assist

Information required for Stage Seating:

- Name
- Email
- Department
- Date and times of ceremonies they will be attending

Assistant Appreciation BBQ

1. Book BBQ in the horticultural garden for assistants. BBQ takes place one week after convocation. Date must be approved by VP academic and provost.
2. Ensure a backup room is booked incase weather doesn't permit to be outside
3. Fill out an Archibus request for facilities to transport tables, chairs and extra garbage cans/recycling from CAC to gardens and back.
4. Accept RSVP's from assistants. Confirm final numbers one week prior to BBQ.

Information for Assistants

1. All assistants will receive an email prior to convocation with information relevant to assisting. The most recent email can be found in the O:Drive here: O:\Group Share\alumnifound\COMMON\Convocation\2019\Assistants
2. All gowners will receive a second email with more information about a gowning session. The head of gowning will send this email.

Assistants and Roles

1. Stage seating

Stage seating includes staff and faculty that will be sitting on stage during the ceremony. This also includes the platform party. The platform party are the the first two rows of the stage. Faculty members are seated in the last two rows on the stage. The maximum number we can sit in each row on the stage is 16. Members of the platform party include:

		Orator							
		Orator	Invocation	University Librarian	Associate Directors	Manager, University Governance		Valedictorian	University Registrar & Mace bearer
									MC
	Elder	Dean of Faculty	AVP	Dean of students	Hon- Doc recipient if applicable	Chancellor	President and Vice-Chancellor	Chair, Board of Governors	Provost & VP academic

2. Student Gowners

(One event coordinator to oversee student gowning area throughout commencements.)

Role

Role	Required Assistants	Notes
Assign students v-stole or hood	1	Event Coordinator role
Assign students a gown	2-3	
Pin students	4-7	
Give students cap	1	
Total	8-12	

Assistants required per ceremony

6-10 gowners per ceremony

Time requirement

- 1.5 hours before ceremony until ceremony commences
- minutes after ceremony ends to de-gown

3. Ushers

Role

Role	Required Assistants	Notes
Distribute Programs	2	
Assist with seating & directing traffic	2	
Total	4	

Time requirement

- 1.5 hours before ceremony until ceremony commences
- minutes after ceremony ends to assist with flow of traffic

4. VIP Gowners

(It is helpful to have one staff member from advancement available in VIP gowning throughout convocation)

Role

Pin & Gown VIP (Administration, Faculty and distinguished guests) in VIP gowning area

Role	Required Assistants	Notes
Assign students v-stole or hood	1	Advancement staff role
Pin & gown VIP	2-3	
Total	2-4	

Time requirement

- hours before ceremony until ceremony commences
- 30 minutes after ceremony ends to de-gown

5. Graduate seaters

Role

Seat students throughout ceremony

Role	Required Assistants	Notes
Line up students for procession	1-2	Advancement staff role
Count students for seating (Counters)	2	Helpful to have two consistent assistants to do this role.
Seat graduates (Graduate Seaters)	2	Helpful to have two consistent assistants to do this role. Alumni team assisted in this in past.
Directing graduates (Director)	1	Event coordinator or advancement staff role
Total	6-7	

Time requirement

- 30 minutes prior to ceremony
- Grad seaters required throughout ceremony
- Counters only required prior to ceremony

Graduate seating process by role

Line up students

1. Ensure students are lined up by program, alphabetical by last name for procession.
2. Ensure students follow procession in order.

Note: Dustin, Trisha and Daryl did this in Spring 2019.

Count students for seating

1. Count the students in numbers that coincide with the amount of chairs per row.
2. Give the first and last student in each row a card with the row number.
 - a. Cards are sorted by sections (left and right) and row numbers. Ex (L1 = left 1)
 - b. Always start with the left side.
3. Graduate seaters will lead their first rows to their seats.
4. The director will lead the remaining students, following the first two rows.

Note: Lee-Gaye Hicketts and Caroline Whitelaw did this in Spring 2019

Seat graduates

1. Seat graduates at beginning of ceremony
2. Direct students behind stage for conferring of diplomas
 - a. Students must leave in the order they were seated to remain in alphabetical order.
 - b. Always start with the left side.
3. Usher students to reception area

Note: David Johnson, Shane Rollans and alumni team did this in Spring 2019

Directing students

1. Lead third group of students (Left, Row 2) to be seated. The remaining students will follow.
2. Stop at the beginning of centre isle and ensure the first student in each row follows their assigned graduate seater. (Left will always follow one seater. Right will always follow the other seater).
3. Hold students at the beginning of the isle until their assigned seater can escort them.
4. After the ceremony commences, the MC will announce it is time for the students to receive their diplomas. The director's role is to communicate to the grad seaters when to escort their students behind the stage.

Ushering students to reception area

1. VIP will leave the stage first.
2. Students to follow VIP
3. One grad seater to direct students from the center isle.

Student ushers during ceremony

Role	Assistants required	Comments
Receiving grads after crossing stage	1	After students cross the stage and receive their diploma, it is helpful to have an assistant direct them to return to their seat
Usher at the end of center isle	1	It is helpful to have usher guide the students back to their seats up the center isle

5. Student check in- gowning room (Janet has done this in the past)

- After students check in with enrollment services they bring a card with their name and a barcode to a table outside of the gowning room.
- This card is given to an assistant.
- The assistant scans the card and keeps a tally of how many students signed in.
- This tells us the number of students that will be convocating in each ceremony. Communicate this number with the director of graduate seating. This ensures there is enough seats for all graduates.
- It is important to tell the students to return their gown and ensure the card with their name on it is returned or destroyed after the ceremony.
 - If the card is not returned or destroyed we will assume the gown has not been returned and the student will be charged.
- When students return their gown ask if they would like their card back. If not, destroy the card immediately.

6. Assistant check in

- There is an assistant check in area where assistants receive and return their nametags.
- In the past this station has been unmanned.
- Recommendations for the future:
 - Have a representative from advancement at assistant check in to welcome, thank, and answer questions for assistants.
 - Consider having an assistant area if a representative can be present throughout each ceremony. Area would include seating, coffee, refreshments and lunches.