

<b>TYPE:</b>	Administrative
<b>TITLE:</b>	Convocation
<b>NO.:</b>	ADMIN-241
<b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b>	Executive Vice President, Academic
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Durham College Leadership Team
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	October 2023
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## 1. Introduction

Convocation ceremonies publicly recognize students' successful completion of their programs of study. These ceremonies highlight a meaningful transition point for graduates, their families, friends and the Durham College (DC) community. Through convocation ceremonies, DC celebrates the hard work and achievements of its graduates with the conferring of credentials and presentation of awards.

## 2. Purpose

This policy and procedure support consistent practices in the preparation, planning and implementation of convocation ceremonies at DC.

## 3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

## 4. Policy statements

- 4.1. Convocation ceremonies will be held annually in the Spring and Fall.
- 4.2. All members of DC are encouraged to attend convocation and participate in convocation ceremonies.
- 4.3. Only students who have successfully completed all requirements in their programs of study may be recognized at convocation ceremonies.
- 4.4. Graduates from post-secondary or apprenticeship programs approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) or any DC program with a minimum of 205 course hour requirements will be invited to attend a convocation ceremony.
- 4.5. [Honorary credentials](#), employee emeritus awards and alumnus of distinction awards may be presented once per calendar year at the Spring or Fall convocation ceremonies.

## 5. Procedure

### 5.1. Scheduling of Convocation

- 5.1.1. Convocation ceremonies will take place in the Spring and Fall each year. In consultation with the Durham College Leadership Team, the dates for convocation are determined five (5) years in advance in order to ensure maximum attendance.

### 5.2. Ceremonies

- 5.2.1. The Office of the Registrar (RO) will determine the appropriate number of ceremonies required for each convocation, and assign academic Faculties to each ceremony.

### 5.3. Invitations

- 5.3.1. Electronic invitations are sent to:

- Members of the platform party;
- Faculty; and
- Special guests.

- 5.3.2. Indigenous coaches in the First Peoples Indigenous Centre will communicate with the Traditional Knowledge Keeper/Elder to invite and coordinate their attendance at convocation ceremonies.

### 5.4. Guests

- 5.4.1. Graduates are encouraged to invite as many guests as they wish to their convocation ceremony.

### 5.5. Elements of a Convocation Ceremony

- 5.5.1. Each convocation ceremony will include the following:

- Procession
- Welcome
- Playing of the National Anthem
- Land acknowledgement
- President's remarks
- Board of Governors' remarks
- Alumni Association remarks
- Guest Speaker remarks
- Conferring of credentials
- Adjournment of convocation
- Recession

## 5.6. Platform Party

5.6.1. The platform party will consist of the following members:

- President
- Chair, Board of Governors
- Members of the Board of Governors
- Executive Vice President, Academic
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Dean of Students
- Associate Vice President, Academic (Administration)
- Associate Vice President, Academic (Enrolment and International Education)
- Associate Vice President, Development and Alumni Affairs
- Executive Deans
- Dean, International Education
- Dean, Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Associate Dean(s) (for their Faculty's ceremony only)
- Traditional Knowledge Keeper/Elder
- President, Durham College Alumni Association or designate
- President, Durham College Students Association or designate
- President Emeritus
- President, Ontario Tech
- Special award recipients (honorary credential, alumni of distinction, employee emeritus)
- Guest speaker

## 5.7. Faculty Participation

5.7.1. All members of DC are encouraged to attend convocation and participate in the convocation ceremonies. Employees from academic Faculties may participate in the graduate honour guard procession and be seated in designated areas on the floor of the event.

## 5.8. Awarding of Credentials to Family Members by College Employees

5.8.1. Any DC employee who is an immediate family member (spouse, mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle) of a graduate may present their graduate's credential to them. Prior recipients of emeritus awards and Board Chairs are also granted this privilege.

5.8.2. The DC community is notified of this opportunity in advance of a convocation ceremony and must notify the RO if they wish to participate.

## 5.9. Presentation of Major Awards

5.9.1. The following major awards are acknowledged at Spring convocation ceremonies:

- The Governor General's Academic Medal and the W. Bruce Affleck Memorial Scholarship;
- A Durham College Medal for the highest-ranking graduate in:
  - One-year post-secondary programs
  - Two-year post-secondary programs
  - Three-year post-secondary programs
  - Three-year degree programs
  - Four-year degree programs
  - Apprenticeship programs
- The Doris and Gordon Willey Founder's Cup for Excellence; and
- The President's Award of Excellence in Student Leadership.

## 5.10. Alumnus of Distinction

5.10.1. The Alumnus of Distinction Award honours the extraordinary contributions DC graduates make to society while achieving career success. Alumnus of Distinction awards are selected by the Alumni Association's Board of Directors.

## 5.11. Ceremony Livestreaming

5.11.1. Each convocation ceremony will be live-streamed via the internet. A recording will be made available for viewing and/or downloading, free of charge, after each convocation ceremony.

## 5.12. American Sign Language Interpreters

5.12.1. American Sign Language interpreters will be broadcast on screen during each ceremony.

## 5.13. Regalia

5.13.1. The President, Board Chair, Executive Vice President, Academic, and Chief Administrative Officer will wear gowns designed for the event.

5.13.2. The Traditional Knowledge Keeper/Elder may choose to wear their traditional regalia.

5.13.3. Other members of the platform party and all DC employees may choose to wear the colours of their alma maters, or black robes and Durham College colours.

5.13.4. Graduates will wear black robes and graduation collars. Exceptions include:

- Indigenous students, who may choose to wear their traditional regalia; and
- Active military personnel, who may choose to wear their dress uniform.

5.14. Graduate Department

5.14.1. Graduates will be informed of ceremony expectations prior to their convocation ceremony. Graduates who do not comply with these expectations will be ineligible to participate in the convocation ceremony.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

6.1. It is the responsibility of the Executive Vice President, Academic to ensure that this policy and procedure is fully implemented.

6.2. It is the responsibility of graduates to invite guests, meet published timelines and abide by department expectations.

## **7. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations**

7.1. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

7.2. Any participants in the convocation ceremonies (graduates, faculty, staff, and members of the platform party) indicating that they require special services will be accommodated.

7.3. Interpreters are available for all convocation ceremonies to accommodate the hearing impaired. The name of each graduate, along with their academic program is displayed on a video display wall as they cross the stage.

## **8. Non-compliance implications**

8.1. Convocation is the public recognition of DC's graduating students. As such, it is critical that ceremonies are planned and executed with the highest degree of professionalism.

8.2. Failure to ensure only students who have successfully completed the requirements of their programs of study are eligible to convocate may have a negative impact on the reputation of the College.

**9. Related forms, legislation or external resources**

None