**Convocation Ceremony - Overview**

Graduates of John Abbott College who completed their studies in summer 2014, fall 2014 or winter 2015 are invited to attend their graduation ceremony at John Abbott College on June 11, 2015. All guests must be seated before the procession begins at 6:20 p.m. sharp, with the ceremony starting at 6:30.

The ceremony will be held outside on the Oval in front of the Herzberg Building if the weather is nice. If it rains, the ceremony will take place in the Casgrain Building gymnasium and there will be two air-conditioned locations in the College where the ceremony will be broadcast live.

After the ceremony, graduates and their guests are invited to a reception. Convocation generally lasts about 3 hours, including the reception.

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**Convocation Q & A**

**When is Convocation?**
Each June, John Abbott College holds a Convocation ceremony to present ceremonial certificates to its graduating students. Family, friends and faculty are welcome to attend these joyous events and join graduates as they celebrate and receive recognition for their academic achievements.

This year, Convocation will take place on **Thursday, June 11th, 2015**. The procession of academic staff and graduates will begin at 6:20 p.m. with the ceremony beginning at 6:30. It is very important that graduates arrive before 5:20 p.m. at the latest to pick up their cap and gown and to be marshalled correctly into the procession order.

**Who can attend Convocation?**
Graduates of John Abbott College who completed their studies in summer 2014, fall 2014 or winter 2015 will receive an invitation to attend Convocation from the Registrar's Office in April 2015. Potential graduates of winter 2015 who find they must take additional courses to fulfill their program requirements will not be eligible to participate in this year’s Convocation ceremony.

**How do I inform the College that I plan to attend?**
The invitation you will receive in April has a tear-off response slip at the bottom. Simply fill it out clearly and include the number of guests you plan to bring. Return this slip by mail and be sure to include your cheque or money order in payment of the $50.00 Convocation fee.

Please note that by attending this event, you understand that photos will be taken, and that the College may use them in any future publications.
Where is the ceremony held?
The ceremony is held outside on the Oval in front of the Herzberg building if the weather is nice. If it is raining the ceremony is held in the Casgrain building gymnasium with two air-conditioned locations in the College where the ceremony will be broadcasted live.

Do I need tickets for the ceremony?
Yes. If the ceremony has to be moved indoors due to weather conditions, a maximum of 2 guests per student will be permitted in the Casgrain gymnasium and tickets will be required for entry to the gym. Up to 2 additional guests per student will be able to watch the broadcast of the ceremony from the comfort of 2 air-conditioned locations in the College.

Details regarding distribution of tickets will be announced before mid-May.

I have a large family - is there a waiting list for additional tickets?
No.

If the weather is nice, can I bring more people?
We are always hopeful for great weather conditions. If the ceremony is held outside, your 4 guests may all sit together. However, if the ceremony has to be moved into the gymnasium, only 2 guests will be permitted into the gymnasium with your other guests being directed to either the Theatre or the Agora where they may watch the broadcast of the ceremony.

You will be advised via an automated Omnivox telephone message on the morning of Convocation as to the location (Oval or Gymnasium) of that evening’s Convocation ceremony. An announcement will also be posted on the John Abbott website, the John Abbott Portal and a Twitter announcement will be made. If the event is outdoors, all of your guests may be seated in the same location.

Must I remain for the entire ceremony?
Yes, out of respect for your fellow graduates please remain in your seat until the end of the Ceremony.

How long is the ceremony?
The ceremony will last approximately 2 hours and will be followed by a reception.

Will families and friends be able to buy flowers on-site to present to their graduates?
Yes, for your convenience, a local flower company will be here with bouquets of roses for sale.

Do I have to wear an academic gown?
All graduates will wear a black gown and cap. These are picked up on the evening of convocation in the Agora. Later in the evening, after you have returned these two items, you will be able to keep your Graduating Class 2015 tassel as a souvenir.
What do I do after I have picked up my cap and gown?
All the graduates will be asked to congregate in the Agora. A member of the Registrar's Office will call your row number and you will be instructed where to line up in preparation for marching in.

How do I know where to go on the evening of Convocation?
The invitation you will receive in April will explain when to arrive and where to go to pick up your cap and gown. When you pick up the cap and gown, you will also receive a card with your name and program on it as well as your seating position. This card is very important. You must have it with you when you approach the stage (see below).

How will I know when it is my turn to walk on stage?
A Marshal will instruct you when it is your turn to go on stage. You will present the card you received at the gown pick-up to the person who will announce your name. You will then walk across the stage and shake the hand of the Director General who will give you your ceremonial certificate. You will then continue across the stage and exit from the opposite side. You will be directed to proceed immediately back to your seat and to remain seated until all of your fellow graduates have received their certificates.

Is the ceremonial certificate I receive at convocation my official DEC diploma?
No. The ceremonial certificate you receive at convocation is a souvenir diploma prepared by the college for your graduating class. If you have completed a DEC program, your official DEC diploma that is issued from the Ministry of Education will be received at the college approximately 6 months after you have graduated. For AEC graduates, you will have already received your attestation from the college.

How do I receive my official DEC diploma?
As soon as the college receives your DEC diploma from the Ministry of Education you will be notified by mail. It is important to keep your address up-to-date in your Omnivox account after graduation so that we can communicate this information to you. You may pick up your diploma or we will mail it to you upon request. For AEC graduates, you will have already received your attestation from the college.

- **In Person Pickup**
  If you choose to pick up your diploma in person, you must come to the Registrar's Office and present the diploma notification that was mailed to you. A proxy may also pick up the diploma with a signed letter of permission stating the graduate's I.D. number, degree and telephone number or accompanied with the diploma notification.

- **Mailing of Diplomas**
  If a student makes a request to have his/her diploma mailed, the request must be accompanied by a money order for $10.00 to cover the cost.
What if I do not attend the ceremony?
If you do not attend the ceremony but would like to receive your ceremonial certificate, you must return the response slip at the bottom of the invitation along with your cheque or money order, indicating that you will not be attending but would like to receive your ceremonial certificate. These certificates will be mailed out to graduates 1-2 week(s) after the ceremonies.

Convocation Day Information

Graduates are to report to the Agora by 5:00 p.m. to pick up their cap and gown. As the proceedings are lengthy, graduates are advised to eat before arriving.

Starting at 5:40 p.m. in the Agora, a member of the Registrar's Office will call out the graduates' row numbers in processional order within your program. The graduates are provided with their row number when they pick up their cap and gown. Graduates will line up as instructed by the ushers.

Faculty members are asked to assemble outside the Staff Lounge H-101, no later than 5:45 p.m. At the directed time, as directed by an academic marshal, the academic party will lead the processional into the Convocation area. Dais guests will be directed to take their places on stage. All other attending faculty and staff will be directed to the faculty seating area. All will remain standing until after the singing of the national anthem.

Following the entrance of the academic party, graduates will march into the graduate seating area accompanied by the strains of traditional processional music. During the procession, march briskly and follow the instructions of your academic marshal. Remain standing in front of your seats until after the singing of the national anthem. You will be directed when it is time to sit down.

Graduates should wear their caps at all times except during the singing of the national anthem, when the gentlemen are asked to remove theirs. The correct way to wear a cap is to have the larger part of the skull of the cap at the back of the head, with the top board parallel to the ground. The tassel should be worn on the right side of the cap until the student receives their ceremonial certificate, when it will be moved over to the left side.

During the presentation of the certificates, the Director General will shake hands with each graduate and the Academic Dean will present the graduate with their ceremonial certificate.

The ceremony generally lasts for 2 hours after which the graduates and audience are requested to remain in place until the platform party has left the stage. The audience will continue to remain in place while academic marshals lead the faculty, followed by the graduates, away in the recessional accompanied by the strains of traditional recessional music. The reception will take place thereafter. All participants and their guests are invited to attend.