



REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENCEMENT TASK FORCE

MARCH 2019



Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| The Commencement Task Force Charge | 4 |
| Relevant Terms | 5 |
| Context | 6 |
| Process | 6 |
| Subcommittees | 7 |
| A Condensed History of UF Graduation Ceremonies | 8 |
| UF Graduation Venues | 9 |
| Themes and Recommendations | 10 |
| Appendix A: Commencement Task Force Members | 14 |
| Appendix B: A Chronology of Graduation Ceremonies at the University of Florida | 15 |
| Appendix C: Commencement Task Force Meeting Dates and Agendas | 19 |
| Appendix D: FALL 2018 Graduation Survey Results | 27 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commencement Task Force, comprised of students, faculty, and staff, was created in August of 2018 and charged with conducting a review of UF graduation ceremonies. The overall goal for the Task Force was to provide recommendations to ensure that UF graduation ceremonies celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. Throughout the Fall 2018 semester, the Task Force engaged in conversations with stakeholders, benchmarked with peer institutions, and brainstormed on how the University of Florida could elevate graduation to a level of preeminence. Through this process, we learned students want graduation ceremonies to be student-centric, celebratory, and accessible. Guided by a clear purpose and set of values, we believe graduation ceremonies at UF can strike a balance between tradition, efficiency, and most importantly, celebration.

The full report will provide readers with the process, context, and outcomes of the six-month (August 2018 – January 2019) efforts of the Task Force. In order to provide transparency, the outputs of this Task Force are in the format of themes and recommendations. The “Themes and Recommendations” section provides a fuller explanation of each theme and the corresponding recommendations. This summary contains only the recommendations:

- *UF graduation ceremony planning committees should adopt the proposed purpose statement and values that guide decisions related to any and all graduation activities*
- *Provide a mechanism for students to provide input and help select the graduation ceremony speakers. An example process can be found here:
http://commencement.syr.edu/preparing/suggest-a-speaker/?_ga=2.40476706.1687016421.1551725284-1413475475.1551725284*
- *Offer more events leading up to and during graduation weekend to emphasize the community’s collective achievement*
- *Utilize the full campus and campus community for graduation ceremonies. For example, extend the marshal opportunities to staff, encourage staff and faculty to volunteer at college recognition ceremonies and university-wide commencement*
- *For a university-wide commencement ceremony, UF should engage an artistic director to create a vision for the ceremony. Additionally, a line producer and a stage manager should be employed for the ceremony*
- *Explore the feasibility of an “award-show, two-stage” production design. This scalable endeavor would cost in order of magnitude, between \$500,000 - \$1,000,000 to launch, but would have a 10-year lifespan*
- *To command a stadium ceremony, UF should engage a “major” celebrity or public figure to both entertain and speak at the university-wide ceremony*
- *Be mindful of costs for which attendees are responsible when scheduling graduation and college-recognition ceremony dates and times. Extended days/nights in Gainesville can be cost-prohibitive to some families. UF should offer solutions to minimize extra costs on low-income families*

- *Find a production solution to ensure that all students' names are pronounced correctly*

- *Include and elevate special events that recognize specific populations on campus*
 - *For example:*
 - *UMOJA Graduation Ceremony*
 - *Hispanic & LatinX Graduation*
 - *Asian Excellence Graduation Ceremony*
 - *Lavender Graduation*
 - *Disability Resource Center Celebrating Access Ceremony*
 - *Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Graduation Reception*

- *In order to focus on collective experience for all graduates, minimize the number of awards given at recognition ceremonies and create other events to present awards*
- *Regularly seek input from students on college recognition ceremonies*
- *Marshals should not be limited to only faculty*
- *Incentivize faculty participation to encourage voluntary interest*
- *Standardize marshal selection criteria and processes*
- *Infuse training and assignment with positive value of marshal; ensure marshals understand that they are there to celebrate (rather than discipline) students*
- *Recognize marshals*
 - *Add recognition of marshals into ceremony*
 - *Follow service with thank you note from President Fuchs*
 - *Host a reception at University House or President's House after ceremony to thank marshals*

- *Evaluate the marshal training on a yearly basis*
- *Utilize existing or create an on-going Graduation committee charged with visioning, implementing, and evaluating the preeminent graduation experience.*
- *Continuously evaluate student and guest experience at graduation ceremonies*

THE COMMENCEMENT TASK FORCE CHARGE BY PRESIDENT FUCHS

The task force was charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

Other information about the charge and committee members can be found at:

<http://news.ufl.edu/articles/2018/05/rethinking-commencement.php>

RELEVANT TERMS

Commencement - A ceremony in which degrees are conferred.

Graduation Ceremony - An umbrella term to describe all ceremonies, across the university, related to graduation.

University-wide Commencement - A specific ceremony that recognizes all graduates across the university. University-wide commencement does not individually recognize students, but instead confers degrees by college. The UF President presides over this ceremony, which includes a commencement address by an invited guest speaker and an official welcome to the alumni association by the president of the alumni association.

College Recognition Ceremony - A ceremony hosted by an individual college that recognizes graduates only of that college. Individual students' names are read at this ceremony. These ceremonies are coordinated and hosted by colleges with guidance from the Director of Commencements. Degrees are not conferred at these ceremonies.

Combined Commencement Ceremonies - A commencement ceremony in which several, but not all, colleges are celebrated together. The UF President presides over these ceremonies, which include the conferring of degrees and individual recognition of each student.

Doctoral Commencement Ceremony - A university-wide ceremony in which only doctoral candidates are recognized. The UF President presides over this ceremony. Degrees are conferred and each doctoral candidate is individually recognized and hooded on stage. An internal (UF) speaker provides the commencement address.

CONTEXT

Graduation ceremonies have taken place in various shapes and forms at the University of Florida since 1906. The location, style, and content of ceremonies has changed as the university has evolved from the early days of a men's only institution, to one of the top public institutions in the country. The evolution of graduation ceremonies has been caused by population needs and growth, as well as other incidents. At one of the 15 commencement ceremonies that took place in May 2018, a marshal serving as an usher, aggressively and physically rushed graduates as they were walking across the stage to receive recognition. The students impacted were disproportionately students of color, their opportunity to be recognized and celebrated in front of their families and the UF community was forcefully interrupted. The actions of the marshal and the inaction of the university officials on the commencement stage are not in line with UF's stated institutional values¹. In response to these incidents, President Fuchs appointed the Commencement Task Force.

PROCESS

Since August of 2018 the Task Force has met every two weeks as a large group and as subcommittees, in the weeks in between, to fulfill its charge. All meeting dates and meeting agendas can be found in Appendix C. To better understand the needs of the multiple stakeholders involved in commencement, the Task Force heard from members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Inc., College Deans, and participants and guests of the December 2018 Commencement ceremonies through a survey. The input provided by these groups and individuals helped shape the recommendations from the Task Force and offered valuable insight for the future of graduation ceremonies at the University of Florida. Task Force membership was appointed by President Fuchs and is comprised of students, faculty, and staff from across the University of Florida. A full list of members can be found in Appendix A.

¹ <http://news.ufl.edu/articles/2018/05/rethinking-commencement.php>
https://www.alligator.org/opinion/from-uf-president-kent-fuchs-re-conceptualizing-uf-s-graduation/article_033ac310-bd47-11e8-9d2b-8be82baf356f.html

SUBCOMMITTEES

To be as efficient and effective in evaluating the multiple areas that comprise the commencement experience, members of the Task Force were divided into five subcommittees. All sub-committees had specific charges, with the consistent focus on ensuring that all students are included in commencement ceremonies.

Best Practices/Benchmarking Subcommittee

The Best Practices Subcommittee was responsible for evaluating comparable and aspirational models of commencement and recognition ceremonies at both the university-wide and college level. The subcommittee provided recommendations to the Task Force on values and practices to adopt that will ensure UF ceremonies are celebratory and efficient.

Marshal Training Subcommittee

The Marshals Training Subcommittee was responsible for evaluating the roles and responsibilities of Marshals at commencement and recognition ceremonies. The subcommittee provided recommendations to the Task Force that will guide the values and principles of the training process for future Marshals.

The Graduates' Experience Subcommittee

The Graduates' Experience Subcommittee was responsible for gathering feedback and input from students on the graduation experience. This subcommittee provided recommendations to the Task Force regarding values and goals that enhance and support the student experience. These values and goals should guide the decision-making process when designing future graduation ceremonies.

Production Management Subcommittee

The Production Management Subcommittee was responsible for evaluating the production needs for graduation ceremonies. This subcommittee provided the Task Force recommendations that outline the most effective and efficient way to execute the ceremonies in a manner that balances efficiency, tradition, and celebration when ensuring appropriate production quality.

The Guest & Family Experience Subcommittee

The Guest Experience Subcommittee was responsible for seeking input from various stakeholders that attend graduation ceremonies. This subcommittee provided the Task Force insight and recommendations that will guide and enhance the guest experience at future UF graduation ceremonies.

A CONDENSED HISTORY OF UF GRADUATION CEREMONIES

This section of the report provides a condensed history of graduation ceremonies at UF over the last century. A full chronology, compiled by Carl Van Ness, UF Curator of Manuscripts and Archives, can be found in Appendix B.

If there is one theme to the history of graduation ceremonies at UF, it is the theme of change. Graduation ceremonies at the University of Florida began in 1906 and have existed in many forms and locations. As the university has changed, so has the face of graduation.

From 1906 to 1919, graduations were held off-campus. Most were held at the Tabernacle. (Photographic evidence indicates this was the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, which opened in 1907. That building was destroyed in a 1991 fire) A couple were held in the auditorium of Gainesville High School (now ACSB headquarters on University Ave).

The early years of graduation also had associated events held on campus or in town. “Oratorical contests” between the seniors and juniors took place until 1932. A baccalaureate sermon was held until at least the late 1950s. Senior Class Day, a celebration for the class, was a tradition early on. Later, there was a Senior Reception held at the president’s house. These events were possible because, at that time, the University of Florida was much smaller and more intimate.

During the years of 1906 through 1932, there was only one graduation per year for regular sessions with the ceremonies in 1920 through 1924 taking place in the gymnasium, now known as Ustler Hall. From 1925 through 1936, regular session ceremonies were held in the University Auditorium.

After 1937, summer ceremonies were conducted in the same manner as the other ceremonies with all colleges represented. However, summers were not considered regular sessions until after UF became coeducational in 1947. Early winter and summer graduations were often held in smaller venues. P. K. Yonge Auditorium was often used, as was the University Auditorium.

From the years 1937 – 1954, Spring (also known as regular session) graduations were held in the stadium. Between 1955 and 1963, Spring graduation ceremonies were held in Florida Gym.

Except for the years 1964-1969, one common ceremony for all graduates took place each semester. In the years of 1964 through 1969, one annual graduation for all three semesters was held in the stadium. The printed program notes indicated in which semester the student graduated.

For a period of time (1969- 1981), UF was on the quarter system. During this time, graduation ceremonies were held four times a year in the Florida Gymnasium. Professional schools held separate ceremonies in 1969.

The Stephen C. O’Connell Center is seen as the contemporary home of university graduation ceremonies, this location began holding ceremonies in December 1981. Although the O’Connell Center has provided a consistent location over the last 40 years, the type of ceremonies in the O’Connell Center has changed almost every seven to eight years. From 2004 to 2010, all colleges held separate college recognition ceremonies with no combined ceremonies. From 2011 through the present, each year the university held combined ceremonies during each semester in the O’Connell Center. In December of 2018, the university shifted the graduation ceremony model again to college recognition ceremonies taking place in various locations across campus, and one university-wide commencement in the stadium where all degrees were conferred.

From 1906 to 2019, University of Florida has seen immense change and growth, graduation ceremonies have attempted to keep up with that growth and provide ceremonies that celebrate all students.

UF GRADUATION VENUES

Graduation ceremony venues are decided based on several factors, below are specifics on capacity for the common graduation ceremony locations, as well as details on numbers of participants in each graduation season.

- The Exactech Arena in the Stephen C. O’Connell Center holds 8,136 seats in the stands; the floor will hold up to 1,200 students
- Ben Hill Griffin Stadium holds 80,044 seats in the stands; this number does not include the floor space that will hold up to 10,000 students
- The average undergrad invites 10 guests to graduation; the average master’s student invites 6 guests
- In the spring, UF currently graduates approximately 8,500 students in the 14 colleges that participate in our traditional graduation ceremonies, we have an 83 percent graduation participation rate. In the summer, UF currently graduates approximately 2,500 students in the 14 colleges that participate in our traditional graduation ceremonies, we have a 53 percent graduation participation rate. In the fall, UF currently graduates approximately 3,500 students in the 14 colleges that participate in our traditional graduation ceremonies, we have a 70 percent graduation participation rate.

THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section of the report outlines themes the Task Force gathered through benchmarking, stakeholder input, and the graduation survey. Each theme is accompanied by recommendations the Commencement Task Force crafted to address the theme.

UF graduation ceremonies should be guided by a purpose statement and stated values

As the University of Florida strives to be a top five public institution, the graduation experience should reflect this goal by adopting a purpose statement and values that guide decisions and changes made to graduation.

Recommendation

UF graduation ceremony planning committees should adopt the following proposed purpose statement and values that guide decisions related to any and all graduation activities

➤ **Purpose Statement: A Preeminent Graduation Experience**

Graduation ceremonies and commencement mark the beginning of students' new lives in the world. At the University of Florida, we strive to create a celebratory graduation experience that honors our esteemed graduates, their families, friends, and the UF community. Graduation at the University of Florida celebrates the tenacity and dedication graduates embodied to reach this important milestone in their academic career and enter the Gator Nation as alumnae.

➤ **Values: Graduation at the University of Florida will:**

- be student-focused and student-driven
- be meaningful for graduates, family and guests, and the UF community
- maintain a balance of tradition, celebration, and efficiency
- be accessible for all graduates and guests

Students want more transparency and participation in the designing of graduation ceremonies

Students expressed a desire for graduation to be student-focused, fun, and relevant. There is a desire to not fit into a mold, to be different, unique, and preeminent.

Recommendations

- *Provide a mechanism for students to provide input and help select the graduation ceremony speakers. An example process can be found here: http://commencement.syr.edu/preparing/suggest-a-speaker/?_ga=2.40476706.1687016421.1551725284-1413475475.1551725284*
- *Communicate the purpose of graduation and the rationale for the model before major changes are made*

UF is primed for a change in graduation culture

Graduation traditions provide both an anchor to the past and an opportunity to celebrate current students in ways they feel seen and honored. Benchmarking by the Task Force provided examples of how UF can transform graduation weekend into a larger, campus-wide, celebration.

Recommendations

- *Offer more events leading up to and during graduation weekend to emphasize the community's collective achievement of ushering students into another phase of life*
- *Utilize existing or create an on-going graduation committee charged with visioning and implementing a preeminent graduation experience that extends beyond the formal ceremonies*
- *Utilize the full campus, and campus community, for graduation ceremonies. For example, extend the Marshal opportunities to staff, encourage staff and faculty to volunteer at college recognition ceremonies and university-wide commencement*

Students want to feel individually recognized and have a unique graduation experience

Student representatives on the committee, and invited student guests to the Task Force, were emphatic that students want “their own time and their own moment” from their graduation experience. Students indicated that they wanted UF to move away from the “conveyor-belt” model of ushering students across the stage and move to a production design that allows for equal and adequate time for students to be uniquely recognized.

Recommendations

- *The University of Florida should engage an “artistic director” to create the “big picture” vision for the university-wide ceremony. Additionally, a “line producer” and a “stage manager” should be employed for the ceremony. To continue the “theatre” metaphor, President Fuchs is the “executive producer.”*

- *Explore the feasibility of an “award-show, two-stage” production design. This scalable endeavor would cost in order of magnitude, between \$500,000 - \$1,000,000 to launch, but would have a 10-year lifespan*
- *To command a stadium ceremony, UF should engage a “major” celebrity or public figure to both entertain and speak at the university-wide ceremony.*

Accessibility and inclusion

Data gathered by the December 2018 graduation survey, as well as input from students and the Deans, suggests that the current model may inadvertently negatively impact some students and families more than others. Travel and lodging to and from Gainesville, and the timing of the multiple ceremonies, put pressure on students and families to pick and choose which ceremonies to attend. Many students want to attend other graduation ceremonies to see their friends and community members walk across the stage. Some organizations have traditions before or after each ceremony to celebrate the individuals that graduated. These traditions are important to these communities.

Recommendations

- *Be mindful of costs for which attendees are responsible when scheduling graduation and college-recognition ceremony dates and times. Extended days/nights in Gainesville can be cost-prohibitive to some families. UF should offer solutions to minimize extra costs on low-income families*
- *Find a production solution to ensure that all students’ names are pronounced correctly*
- *Include and elevate special events that recognize specific populations on campus*
 - *For example:*
 - *UMOJA Ceremony*
 - *Hispanic & LatinX Graduation*
 - *Asian Excellence Graduation Ceremony*
 - *Lavender Graduation*
 - *Honors Graduation*
 - *CVSS*
 - *Disability Resource Center Celebrating Access Ceremony*
 - *Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Graduation Reception*

Colleges vary on preparedness for hosting on college recognition ceremonies

The change in model from combined ceremonies to individual college recognition ceremonies impacted colleges differently. Some have historically offered a college level ceremony, while others organized their first in many years. The opportunity to promote the uniqueness of each college was been embraced by several colleges and offered the chance to highlight the college community and traditions distinctive to each.

Recommendations

- *Regularly seek input from students on college recognition ceremonies*
- *Minimize the number of awards given at recognition ceremony to retain focus on graduates*

Participation of Marshals is inconsistent across colleges and departments

Marshaling service is viewed by some faculty as an unwanted obligation and an unappreciated service. The causes of this problem are likely the lack of standardization in the process of marshal selection across the university, the low visibility of the value of the service, and the limited recognition for work completed. Although training is “mandatory,” many faculty cannot (or do not) make it. Often, those who do attend find the training confusing and feel unprepared even if they do attend.

Recommendations

- *Incentivize faculty participation to encourage voluntary interest*
- *Standardize marshal selection criteria and processes*
- *Infuse training and assignment with positive value of marshal; ensure marshals understand that they are there to celebrate (rather than discipline) students*
- *Recognize marshals by:*
 - *Identifying marshals during the graduation ceremony*
 - *Follow service with a thank-you from President Fuchs*
 - *Host a reception at the University House or President’s House to thank marshals and other volunteers for their service*
- *Marshals should not be limited to just faculty*
- *Consider college committees to staff required marshals*
- *Evaluate the marshal training on a yearly basis*

Graduation is evolving, it should be evaluated for effectiveness and relevancy

Graduation at UF is evolving, as are students. To best address the changes and ensure student participation graduation should be a collective effort and reviewed by a diverse group of UF students, faculty, and staff.

Recommendation

- *Utilize existing or create an on-going graduation committee charged with visioning, implementing, and evaluating the preeminent graduation experience*
- *Continuously evaluate student and guest experience at graduation ceremonies*

APPENDIX A: COMMENCEMENT TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Melissa Andrade – Student Government Senator

Will Atkins – Associate Dean of Students and Senior Director, Multicultural Diversity Affairs

Florida A Bridgewater-Alford – Communications Outreach Strategist, Integrated Communication and Marketing

Sebastiano Cocco - Student

Nicky Ennis – Assistant Professor, Department of Clinical and Health Psychology

Antonio Farias – Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Advisor to the President

Scott Francis – Director, Gator Clubs and Affiliate Groups

Matthew Gardener – Student

Dr. Gillian Lord – Professor and Chair, Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies

Ian Green – 2018 Student Body President & Task Force Co-Chair

Tafari Green Coffie – Student

Fennzia Guerrier – Student

LB Hannahs – Special Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs

Melanie Hechavarria – Vice President of the Black Student Union

Brian Jose – Director, UF Performing Arts

Stanley Kaye – Professor, School of Theatre & Dance

Dr. Tony Offerle – Associate Professor, School of Music

Dr. Dave Parrott – Vice President for Student Affairs & Task Force Co-Chair

Dr. Leslie Pendleton – Senior Director, Retention and Success Initiatives

Dr. Katheryn Russel-Brown – Chesterfield Smith Professor of Law & Director, Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations

Keith Saint – Graduate Student

Dakota Stanford – Student, U Matter, We Care Ambassador

James Tyger – Senior Director, Student Government Advising and Operations

Dr. Hans van Oostrom -- Associate Professor and Director, Institute for Excellence in Engineering Education

Dr. Katherine Vogel Anderson – Clinical Associate Professor, College of Pharmacy, Chair of the Faculty Senate

APPENDIX B: A CHRONOLOGY OF GRADUATIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Compiled by:

Carl Van Ness

Curator of Manuscripts and Archives

George A. Smathers Libraries

University of Florida

1906-1919: Graduations were held off-campus. Most were held at the Tabernacle (Photographic evidence indicates this was the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, which opened in 1907. That building was destroyed in a 1991 fire and a couple were held in the auditorium of Gainesville High School (now ACSB headquarters on University Ave.

1906-unknown: Over the years, there have been events held on campus or in town that were associated with graduations. They held "oratorical contests" between the seniors and juniors until 1932. A baccalaureate sermon was held until at least the late 1950s. There was Senior Class Day, which was basically a celebration for the class. Later, there was a senior reception held at the president's house. Of course, the university was smaller and more intimate.

1906 – 1932: Only one graduation per year for regular sessions.

1920-1924: Graduations were held in the gymnasium, now Ustler Hall.

1925 – 1936: Regular session graduations were held in the University Auditorium.

1926 – present: Summer graduations. Summer semesters were coeducational and, initially, the students were all teachers. After 1937, summer ceremonies were conducted in the same manner as the other ceremonies and all the colleges were represented. However, summers were not considered regular sessions until after UF became coeducational in 1947.

1933 - present: Winter graduations. Early winter and summer graduations were often held in smaller venues. P. K. Yonge Auditorium was often used as was the University Auditorium.

1937 – 1954: Spring graduations held in stadium.

1933 – 2001: Except for the years 1964-1969, one common ceremony for all graduates each semester.

1955 – 1963: Spring graduations held in Florida Gym.

1964 – 1969: One annual graduation for all three semesters held in stadium. Printed program notes in which semester the student graduated.

1969- 1981: UF on quarter system and graduations are held 4 times a year in Florida Gymnasium.

1969 – present: Professional schools hold separate ceremonies.

1981- present: Ceremonies in O'Connell Center beginning in December 1981.

1992 – present: No religious component to agenda.

2002 – 2003: Multiple ceremonies in several venues held in spring and fall. Programs are shorter with awards being spread out. Engineering, Business and CLAS hold their own ceremonies. Smaller colleges do combined ceremonies. Summers stay the same until 2005.

Spring 2004: Convocation held on Reitz Union lawn the night before the graduation ceremonies. This included keynote address (McCain) and some of the awards and honorary degrees.

Springs 2004 -2010: All colleges hold separate ceremonies, no combined ceremonies.

Falls 2005 – 2011: Two combined ceremonies

Summers 2005 - 2008: Two combined ceremonies over one day.

Springs 2007 - 2011: Separate advanced degree ceremony. CLAS holds 2 ceremonies.

Falls 2007 - 2011: Separate advanced degree ceremony.

Summers 2009 - 2011: Separate advanced degree ceremony and one university wide ceremony.

Spring 2011: CLAS does two ceremonies, one with CJC and the other with COEd. CBA, CHHP, and CPHHP do combined. CALS, Eng and Fine Arts hold separate ceremonies.

Spring 2011: Doctoral a week before others. Masters and specialists on Friday night. CLAS in morning and afternoon ceremonies. One combined on Saturday night. Another combined-on Sunday. CALS, DCP, Engineering, CFA, and Nursing hold individual ceremonies.

Summers 2012 - 2018: Doctoral on Friday night and everyone else on Saturday.

Falls 2012 - 2015: Doctoral on Friday night and two combined on Saturday.

Spring 2012: Doctoral a week before others. Master's and Specialists on Friday for colleges not doing combined ceremonies. CALS, CDCP, COE, CFA, CJC and CON do individual ceremonies over 3 days. Saturday morning: CPHHP and ½ CLAS. Saturday afternoon: COEd and ½ CLAS. Saturday evening: CBA and CHHP.

Spring 2013: Doctoral a week before others. Master's and Specialists on Friday for colleges not doing combined ceremonies. CALS, DCP, COE, CON hold separate ceremonies over 3 days. Saturday morning and afternoon: 2 CLAS ceremonies. Saturday evening: CBA, COEd, CPHHP. Sunday afternoon: CFA, CHHP, CJC.

Spring 2014: Doctoral a week before others. Master's and Specialists on Friday for colleges not doing combined ceremonies. CALS, DCP, COE, CON hold separate ceremonies over 3 days.

Saturday morning: CBA, COEd, CPHHP. Saturday afternoon: CJC, CFA, CHHP. Sunday: 2 CLAS ceremonies.

Spring 2015: Ben Hill Griffin Stadium: Thursday evening: Doctoral: Friday evening: CALS, CBA, COEd. Saturday evening: CPHHP, CJC, CHHP. Sunday evening: CLAS. Arts, Engineering and Nursing hold separate ceremonies.

Spring 2016: Ben Hill Griffin Stadium: Thursday, April 28 in the evening: Doctoral ceremony. Friday, April 29th evening: CALS, HHP, JOU, and HWCoE (Master's) together. Saturday, April 30th evening: Arts, PHHP, EDU, NUR, WCBA together. Sunday, May 1 evening: Med (Master's), Pharm (Master's), CLAS, Vet Med (Master's) together. Phillips Center: Saturday, April 30: DCP. Sunday, May 1: HWCoE Bachelors, divided into 3 ceremonies throughout the day.

Fall 2016 in the O'Connell Center: Friday afternoon: Doctoral ceremony. Saturday morning: CALS, HHP, JOU, CLAS, Pharm & Med together. Saturday afternoon: Arts, WCBA, DCP, COE, HWCoE, NUR, Med & PHHP together. This is when the jumbotron was introduced to the ceremonies.

Spring 2017 in the O'Connell Center: Friday, April 28 after noon: Doctoral Ceremony. Friday, April 28 evening: Master's Ceremony. Saturday, April 29: morning ½ of CLAS and Arts together; afternoon ½ of CLAS and NUR together; evening CALS Master & Bachelor. Sunday, April 30: morning DCP, EDU, HHP & JOU together; afternoon PHHP & WCBA together; evening HWCoE bachelor's. Monday, May 1 afternoon HWCoE master's.

Fall 2017 in the O'Connell Center: Friday, December 15 afternoon Doctoral ceremony. Saturday, December 16 morning: CALS, HHP, JOU, CLAS, Med, Pharm, and Vet Med together; afternoon: Arts, DCP, EDU, HWCoE, PHHP and WCB.

Spring 2018 in the O'Connell Center: Friday, May 4 morning doctoral ceremony; afternoon Master's only for Arts, DCP, HHP, JOU, Med, Pharm, PHHP, Vet Med and WCB together; evening Master's only EDU, HWCoE and CLAS. Saturday, May 5 morning Bachelor's only ½ CLAS and Arts together; afternoon Bachelor's only ½ CLAS and NUR; evening CALS Master's and Bachelor's. Sunday, May 6 morning Bachelor's only EDU, PHHP and WCB together; afternoon Bachelor's only DCP, HHP and JOU together; Bachelor's only HWCoE.

Spring 2019: A University-Wide Commencement all-degrees ceremony in Ben Hill Griffin Stadium on Saturday, May 4. A Doctoral Commencement ceremony in the O'Connell Center on Friday, May 3.

College recognition ceremonies as follows: Thurs., May 2: Vet Med (Small Animal Hospital); Friday, May 3: Med (Harrell Medical Education Building), PHARM (HPNP Reception Hall), NUR (Phillips Center), DCP (Phillips Center); WCB (OConnell Center); Sat, May 4: CALS (O'Connell Center), JOU (O'Connell Center), EDU (Phillips Center), Arts (Phillips Center); Sun., May 5: CLAS (Stadium), PHHP (O'Connell Center), HHP (O'Connell Center), HWCoE -Bachelors (O'Connell Center); Mon., May 6: HWCoE -Masters (O'Connell Center)

Also, the colleges and programs on their own academic curriculums had their own ceremonies at the following times and locations: May 17: Law (O'Connell Center), Dentistry (Phillips Center); May 18: Medicine MDs (Phillips Center), Pharmacy (O'Connell Center); May 25: Vet Med (Phillips Center); June 22: Medicine PAs (University Auditorium)

APPENDIX C: COMMENCEMENT TASK FORCE MEETING DATES AND AGENDAS

Meeting dates:

- Friday, August 24, 4– 5 p.m.
- Friday, September 21, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Friday, October 12, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Friday, October 26, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Friday, November 9^h, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Friday, November 30, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Friday, January 11, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Friday, January 25, 8:30 – 10 a.m.
- Friday, February 8, 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- Thursday, February 21, 3 – 4:30 p.m.

Commencement Task Force Meeting
Friday, August 24, 2018
226 Tigert Hall
Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Discussion- Charge from President Fuchs
3. Desired Outcomes
4. Framework
5. Subcommittees
6. Interviews of Stakeholders
7. Future Meetings
 - a. Frequency
 - b. Location
8. Role Definition
9. Baseline Data
10. Final Report Deadline

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
September 21, 2018
Agenda

1. Meeting Protocol
2. Subcommittee Appointment and Charges
 - a. Role & Scope of Committees
 - b. Task Force Meetings vs. Subcommittee Meetings
3. AAU Commencement Comparison
4. Meeting Time & Flexibility

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
October 12, 2018
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Co-Chair Updates
2. Guests: Representatives from NPHC
3. Subcommittee Update
 - a. Summary of Outcomes from Meetings
 - b. Goals and Objectives of Subcommittee
 - c. Action Plan and Timeline for Meeting Goals
 - d. Other
4. Goals for Next Time

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
October 26, 2018
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Co-Chair Updates
2. Guests:
 - a. Dean Cammy Abernathy
 - b. Dean Chimay Anumba
 - c. Dean Diana McFarlin
 - d. Dean Onyekwere Ozuzu
 - e. Associate Dean Joe Spillane
3. Subcommittee Updates
4. Goals for Next Time

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
November 9, 2018
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Co-Chair Updates
2. Benchmarking Questions Generation
3. Subcommittee Updates
4. Draft Commencement Purpose Statement
5. Draft Recommendations Deadline- December 7

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
November 30, 2018
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Co-Chair Updates
2. Subcommittee Updates
3. Subcommittee Work Time
4. Meetings in SP19

Next Meeting is Friday, December 7 from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

- Draft recommendations are due to Canvas site before meeting

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
January 11, 2019
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Welcome back from co-chairs
2. President Fuchs
3. Review draft report
4. Review survey results

Next Meeting is Friday, January 25 from 8:30 to 10 a.m.

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
January 25, 2019
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Co-chairs updates
2. Subcommittee time
 - a. Review Survey Data
 - b. Work on edits to recommendations
 - i. Commencement Purpose Statement
 - c. Craft any appendixes for final report
3. Final recommendations (and any related appendixes) to LB (uploaded through Canvas) by Friday, February 8

Next Meeting is Friday, February 8 from 2. to 3:30 p.m.

Commencement Task Force Meeting
135 Tigert Hall
Main Conference Room
February 8, 2019
Agenda

Task Force Charge:

The task force is charged with conducting a review of UF commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies. The goal is to have ceremonies that celebrate and are meaningful for all graduates. A balance will be sought between efficiency, tradition and celebration. In addition to reviewing changes implemented for the university-wide August 2018 commencement and changes planned for December 2018 and May 2019, the task force will recommend principles, values and goals to serve as a guide for all of UF's numerous commencements and graduation recognition ceremonies.

1. Co-chairs updates
2. Subcommittee updates
3. Commencement variation option
4. Final recommendations (and any related appendixes) to LB (uploaded through Canvas) by, today, Friday, February 8. Next draft of the full report to be provided on Thursday, February, 21.

Next Meeting is Thursday, February 21 from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

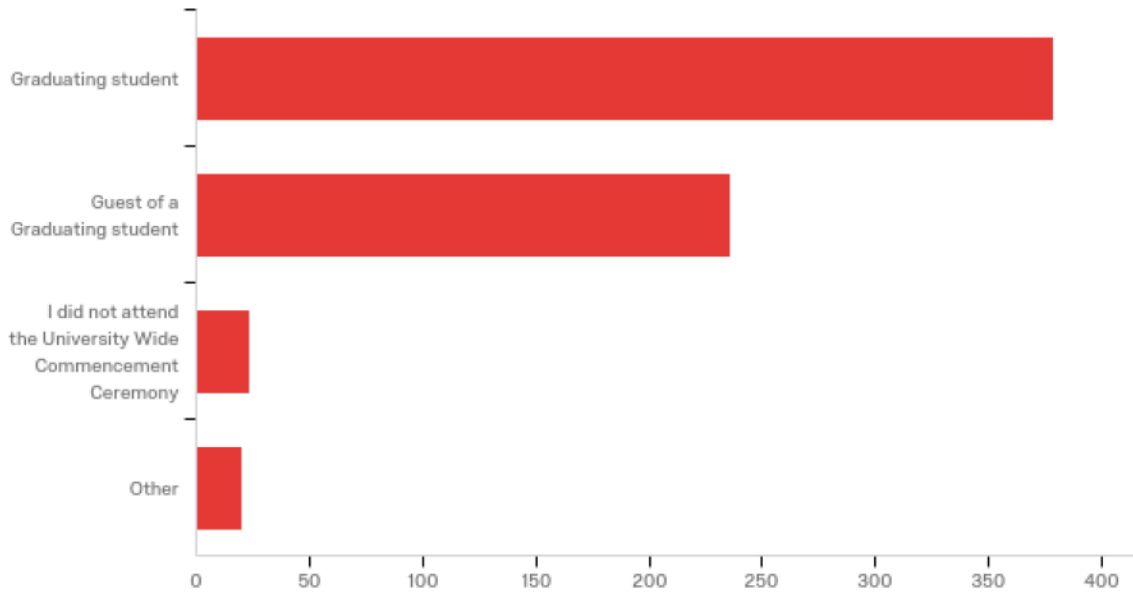
APPENDIX D: FALL 2018 GRADUATION SURVEY RESULTS

The Fall 2018 Graduation Survey was the first large-scale survey administered to graduates and their guests about their experience with graduation. The survey was sent to all graduates and shared across the university’s social media. The survey was open from December 15th 2018 through January 19th 2019.

Final Report

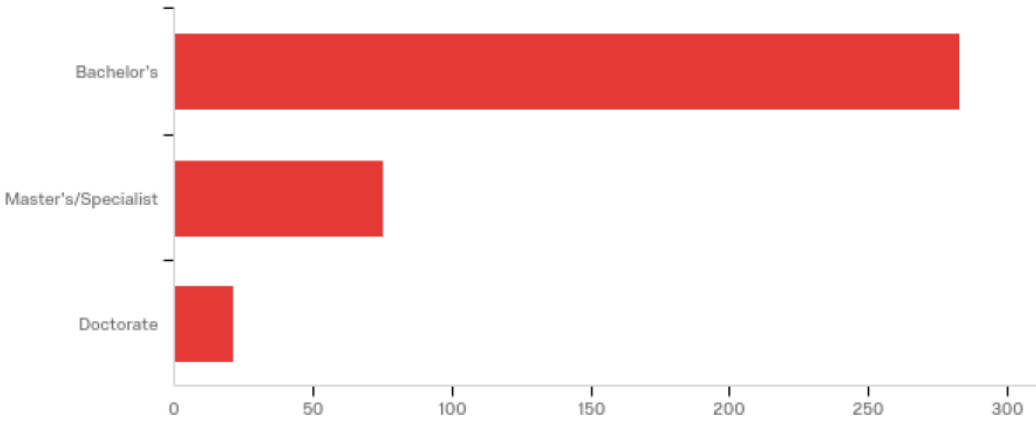
Fall 2018 Commencement Survey

Q2 - At the University Wide Commencement Ceremony, you were a...



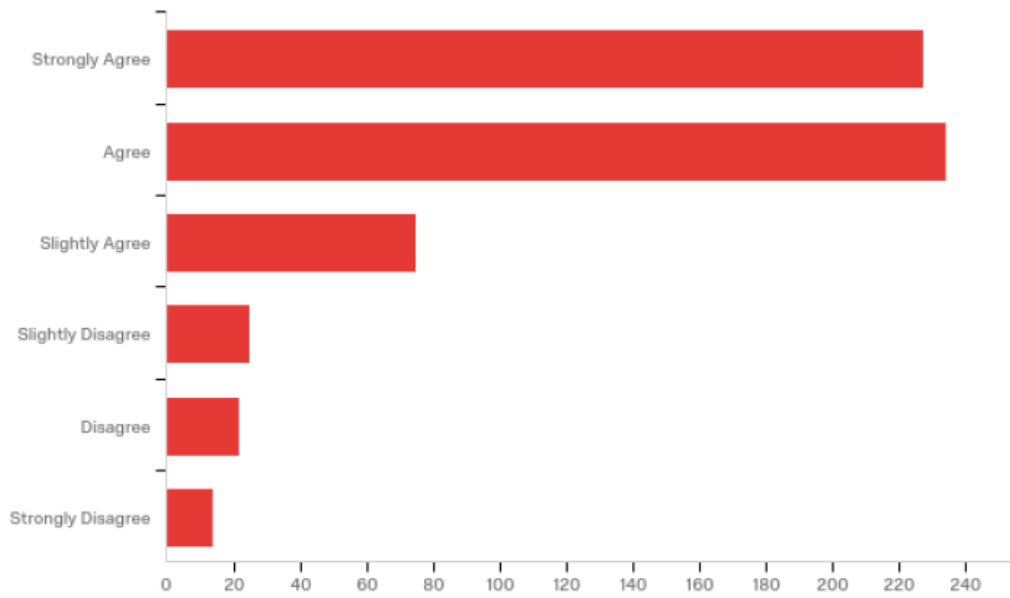
| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|--|--------|-------|
| 1 | Graduating student | 57.60% | 379 |
| 2 | Guest of a Graduating student | 35.87% | 236 |
| 4 | I did not attend the University Wide Commencement Ceremony | 3.50% | 23 |
| 3 | Other | 3.04% | 20 |
| | Total | 100% | 658 |

Q4 - What was your degree level?



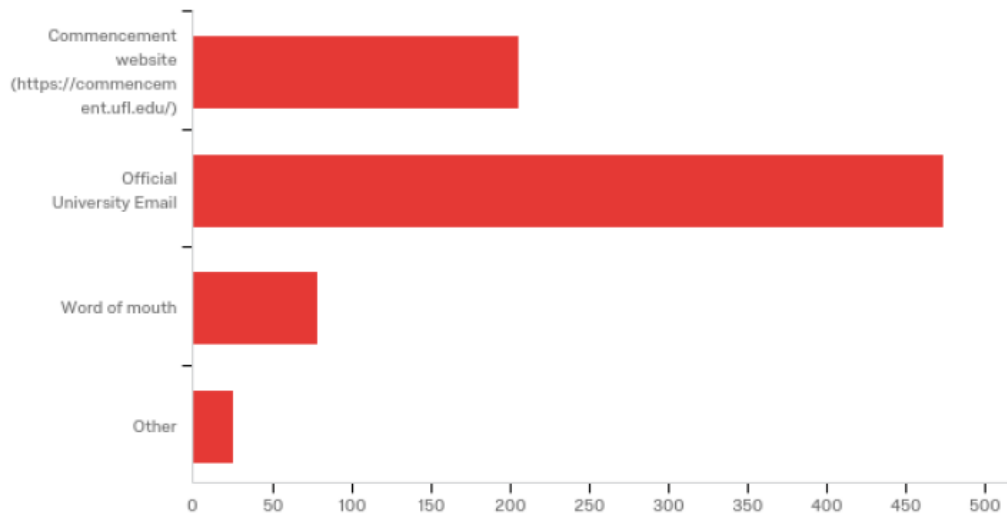
| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---------------------|--------|-------|
| 1 | Bachelor's | 74.67% | 283 |
| 2 | Master's/Specialist | 19.79% | 75 |
| 3 | Doctorate | 5.54% | 21 |
| | Total | 100% | 379 |

Q5 - I felt adequately informed about the University Wide Commencement Ceremony



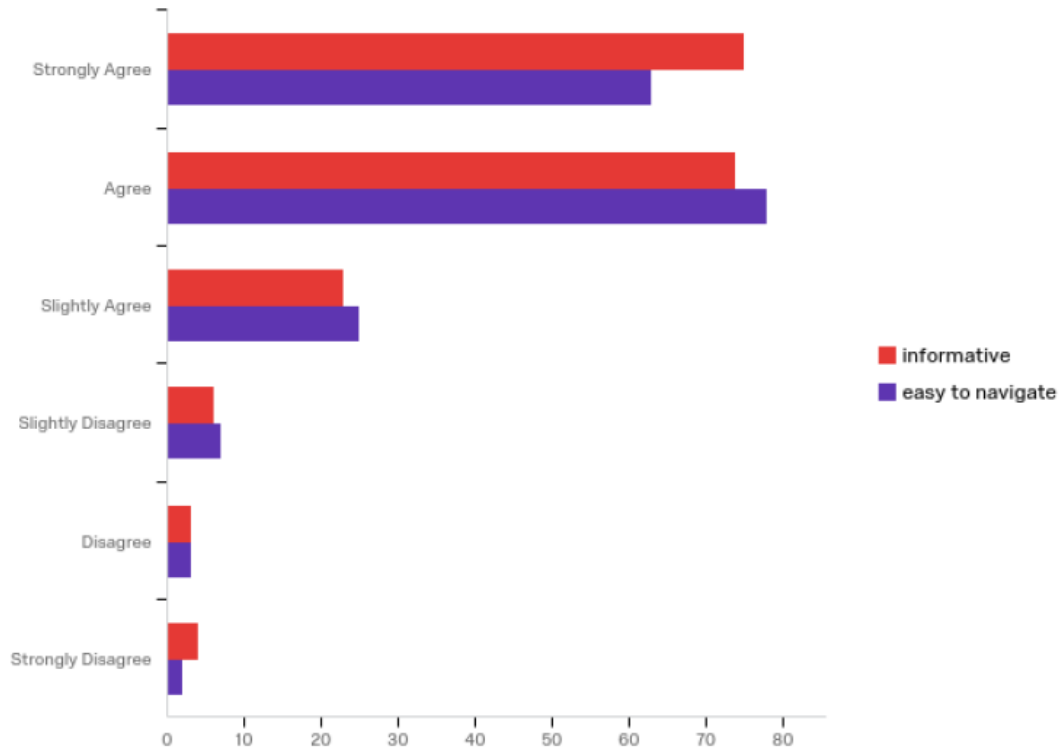
| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|-------------------|--------|-------|
| 6 | Strongly Agree | 38.02% | 227 |
| 5 | Agree | 39.20% | 234 |
| 4 | Slightly Agree | 12.56% | 75 |
| 3 | Slightly Disagree | 4.19% | 25 |
| 2 | Disagree | 3.69% | 22 |
| 1 | Strongly Disagree | 2.35% | 14 |
| | Total | 100% | 597 |

Q7 - Where did you primarily receive information about commencement?



| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|--|--------|-------|
| 1 | Commencement website (https://commencement.ufl.edu/) | 26.24% | 206 |
| 2 | Official University Email | 60.38% | 474 |
| 3 | Word of mouth | 10.06% | 79 |
| 4 | Other | 3.31% | 26 |
| | Total | 100% | 785 |

Q8 - Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: The commencement website (<https://commencement.ufl.edu/>) was...



| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|------------------|---------|---------|------|---------------|----------|-------|
| 1 | informative | 1.00 | 6.00 | 5.08 | 1.07 | 1.14 | 185 |
| 2 | easy to navigate | 1.00 | 6.00 | 5.04 | 0.99 | 0.98 | 178 |

| # | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Slightly Agree | Slightly Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | informative | 40.54% 75 | 40.00% 74 | 12.43% 23 | 3.24% 6 | 1.62% 3 | 2.16% 4 | 185 |
| 2 | easy to navigate | 35.39% 63 | 43.82% 78 | 14.04% 25 | 3.93% 7 | 1.69% 3 | 1.12% 2 | 178 |