

## Update on 2020 Commencement

October 23, 2019

Dear Campus Community,

In my June [message](#) to campus, I thanked everyone who helped contribute to our 65<sup>th</sup> commencement ceremonies and further described the set of challenges related to next year's commencement that need to be addressed.

Since that time, we have engaged in multiple campus discussions and reviewed feedback from hundreds of graduates who participated in commencement ceremonies, in order to help inform options for 2020. In planning for next year, the following activities will continue largely unchanged from previous years:

- UCR will host a series of special ceremonies to celebrate our many diverse and first-generation students, their communities, and their traditions. These ceremonies include Raza Graduation, Black Graduation, Native Graduation Banquet, Asian Pacific Student Programs Graduation, Lambda Celebration, and several others. These ceremonies typically occur over a two-week period leading up to the formal campus-wide commencements.
- The Graduate Division Hooding Ceremony and School of Medicine Commencement and Hippocratic Oath Ceremony will remain in the Student Recreation Center.

Following are a set of proposed ceremonies and celebrations that we are considering for next year:

- To address repeated concerns from graduates and families regarding heat and sun exposure, length of ceremonies, obstructed views, security, and crowd control, we would hold UCR's formal commencement ceremonies at the Toyota Arena in Ontario. **In response to student feedback, names would be individually announced as students walk across the stage.** These ceremonies would also include many of UCR's longstanding traditions, including the Pipe Band and graduate procession. We would plan to hold all three campus-wide ceremonies in a single day during the weekend, rather than over a five- or six-day period, which can be challenging for family and friends who work during the week.

- During this same weekend, many colleges, schools, and departments would hold additional celebrations, both on- and off-campus, to honor their graduates. These activities may include a formal procession, alumni and student speakers, presentation of student awards, announcement of student names, and receptions with faculty, staff, family, and friends.
- To supplement the above activities, UCR would host a Grad and Family Night Celebration for graduates, along with their families and friends, to visit campus for an open house-style event. There would be a range of activities for everyone to celebrate and reflect upon their UCR experience (e.g., special tours, artistic performances, and photo booths).

While many of these proposed changes may be significant, our overarching goal would be to preserve UCR's most cherished traditions by offering a variety of high-quality graduation ceremonies and celebrations that our students and their families deserve.

We will continue listening to faculty, staff, student, and alumni input regarding next year's planned commencement ceremonies. If you wish to provide input, please submit your ideas and suggestions to this [online form](#) by November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Sincerely,



Kim A. Wilcox  
Chancellor



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