

(DRAFT)

PLANNING A UNIVERSITY CEREMONY

(The following has been extracted and adapted from a Manual of University Ceremonies which was prepared for the University of the West Indies in 1997 and updated in 2009) – Joy Pilgrim

BASIC GUIDELINES

These basic rules can be adapted and applied to any university ceremony

1. GENERAL

The responsible office for University Ceremonies is the University Registrar

The planning of a university ceremony requires the involvement and commitment of representative of a cross-section of the university community and an obsessive attention to detail on the part of the Coordinator/Event Planner. To greater or lesser degree, a university ceremony will need the input of some or all of the following:

- The Chancellor (for Graduation Ceremonies and Special Convocations)
- The Pro-Chancellor (for Graduation Ceremonies, Matriculation Ceremonies and Special Convocation)
- The President (for Graduation Ceremonies, Matriculation Ceremonies and Special Convocations and Special Events)
- The Chairman of The Mico Foundation ????
- The Bursar
- The Registrar
- The Vice President Academic Affairs
- The Vice President Administration (for matters related to Maintenance Services)
- The Deans (for Graduation Ceremonies and Matriculation Ceremonies)
- The Academic Staff (for the Academic Procession)
- The Head of the Music Department
- The Head of the Visual Arts Department (for décor)
- The Public Relations Officer (for guest list, invitations and seating arrangements)
- The Student Services (for ushering)
- The Administrative, Technical and Support Staff
- The Security Services
- Any other person deemed necessary

2. THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- A Planning Committee shall be established as soon as the date of the ceremony is determined.
- A Coordinator shall be appointed (**OR** the Registrar can be the Coordinator)
- A Recording Secretary for the Planning Committee shall be appointed.
- The frequency with which the committee meets shall be determined by the amount of time there is between the decision to have a ceremony the date of the actual ceremony.
- A matrix setting out the areas of responsibility and authority of each person involved in the ceremony must be prepared and circulated to the Committee members and every one named in the schedule and to the Registrar, President and Bursar.
- At each meeting persons with assigned tasks must submit a status report.
- Using the previous year's experience, the Coordinator shall prepare a draft budget for discussion with the Registrar and the Bursar.
- If the ceremony is being held for the first time, the coordinator will have to create an estimate of costs being careful to include all hidden costs such as stationery, telephone calls, faxes, extra electricity charges, university transportation for delivery of invitations and payment of overtime, special cleaning of grounds / buildings etc.

3. THE INVITATIONS

- The Public Relations Office shall be responsible for the preparation of a comprehensive MASTER INVITATION LIST which must be kept up-to-date and can be tailored for any university event. The invitation list (for each event) will depend on the occasion and must be prepared by the Public Relations Officer and vetted by the Registrar, the President and Vice Presidents (as appropriate).
- Staff at all levels must be invited by e-mail
- Invitations to special guests should be sent out at least six weeks before the ceremony and enclosed reply cards and the option of replying by telephone. Replies not received by the deadline given, must be followed up on the telephone.
- In cases where the following persons are to be invited, letters signed by the president shall be sent to them as soon as the date of the ceremony is determined with a follow-up communication sent 3 – 6 week prior to the ceremony:

The Governor General
The Prime Minister

The Leader of the Opposition
The Minister of Education
The Minister of Finance
Any person being honoured e.g. Honorary Graduand

- The Invitation Cards must:
 - i) Bear the name of the invitee(s)
 - ii) State – the Function, the date and time, as well as, the location of the function
 - iii) State: “Please show this card to an Usher for proper seating”
 - iv) State the date by which a reply is expected
 - v) The telephone number / e-mail to which a response may be sent
 - vi) The dress code

4. PROTOCOL

Seating of Guests

- If in doubt about the greeting and seating of the Governor General (or any other Head of STATE) or Head of Government and diplomats, the person in charge of ushering should seek the advice of the Chief of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, ALWAYS keep in mind that University Protocol must blend with the protocol of the State. Bear in mind also that spouses of the Executive Management committee and Board of Governors must be given priority seats. VIP seating must also be reserved for the family of the Honorary Graduand, the Honorary Graduates and retired staff at all levels.
- Guests should be asked to be seated fifteen minutes before the scheduled start of the Ceremony. This should be stated on the Invitation Card.

Template of Invitation

1. Organization's Logo

2. Name of hosts

3. Phrasing the invitation

4. The kind of event

5. Purpose of event

6. Date

7. Time

8. Place

9. Dress

10. Where to reply

11. Special instruction

The Mico University College
*requests the pleasure of your company
at its Valedictory Service*

*on Sunday, May 4, 2014
at 4:00 p.m.*

*in the quadrangle at The Mico University College
1A Marescaux Road,
Kingston 5.*

*R.S.V.P. no later than
to contact name
Contact address
Contact phone number and
E-mail address*

Dress: Semiformal

Please show this card to an usher for proper seating