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# Faculty Attendance at Graduations and Honors Day

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# Faculty Attendance at Graduations and Honors Day

Submitted by James Braselton

2/21/2014

865-9869

## Question:

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Why are faculty expected to be in attendance at Graduations and Honors Day? Other than being being visible, they do nothing other than sit and watch. What is the purpose of their attendance?

## Rationale:

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The Provost's office requests attendance at these events. But, we see a steadily declining number of faculty willing to participate in these events. Some faculty do enjoy participating in these events. At graduations, I suggest that there be a few rows in the back for faculty. Similar arrangements can be made at the Graduate Ceremony.

Regardless, what is the purpose of having faculty attend? I like to attend when I have students graduate. I do not see what is served by faculty attending and the lack of faculty participation is evident. I think we should revisit this. Perhaps a back row for faculty who want to attend and a front row for faculty who are directors of dissertations of a thesis or dissertation.

## Response

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**2/25/2014:** The SEC accepts this RFI and would like to send it to the following office:

Faculty Attendance at Graduation and Honors Day submitted by J. Braselton (TO THE PROVOST)

2/26/2014: Dr. Jean Bartels: Request for Information: Faculty Attendance at Graduations and Honors Day

Why are faculty expected to be in attendance at Graduations and Honors Day?

Other than being visible, they do nothing other than sit and watch. What is the purpose of their attendance?

In direct response to the question of why faculty are to be in attendance at Graduations and Honors Day events, I quote the Faculty Handbook, Section 217 Professional Expectations, Subsection 217.01 Academic Convocations:

Faculty members are expected to participate in commencement exercises and the annual Honors Day program in academic regalia. The academic year contract [as noted and signed annually by all faculty receiving a contract] includes participation in May and December commencement exercises and the Honors Day program. At times, based on limited seating capacity, the Provost's Office will announce an appropriate percentage of faculty for each college and the Library and will request that units adhere to those limits in determining the line of march.

Professional faculty expectations—most particularly in an institution which values and espouses a student-centered ethic—include recognizing and witnessing the accomplishments of graduates and those earning academic honors. In addition and at minimum, faculty, all of whom contribute to and influence the achievements of students and graduates, are recognized and honored by all at these events. Attending these celebratory events is a part of being a good University citizen. The flip side of this question might be asked—What message do we send to students, parents, and others if faculty do not care about celebrating with students these great achievements in their lives.