COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, December 4, 2002
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall – 12:15 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes – Wednesday, November 6 Meeting
2. Special Request from Senior Challenge
3. Fall Commencement Planning
4. Suggestions for Possible Speakers for Spring Commencement
5. Schedule Changes for Spring Commencement (see below)

A sub-committee convened to develop a recommendation for the University Commencement Committee met on Wednesday, November 20. The following recommendation is made for further consideration by the University Commencement Committee.

Friday Spring Commencement Ceremonies

Present Schedule:
Corps of Cadets Graduation Ceremony 3:00 p.m.
Graduate School Ceremony 4:30 p.m.
Army Commissioning 5:00 p.m.
VA/MD Vet School Ceremony 7:00 p.m.
New Virginians Show 8:00 p.m.

New Schedule:
In addition to the above schedule, these should be added.
University Ceremony
Navy Commissioning (by request)

Possible Schedule:
Corps of Cadets Graduation Ceremony CEC Auditorium 1:00 p.m.
VA/MD Vet School Ceremony Commonwealth Ballroom 1:00 p.m.
Graduate School Ceremony Cassell Coliseum 3:00 p.m.
Army Commissioning CEC or Haymarket Theatre 3:30 p.m.*
Navy Commissioning Colonial Hall, Squires 4:00 p.m.*
VA/MD Vet School Ceremony Commonwealth Ballroom 5:00 p.m.
University Ceremony Lane Stadium 7:30 p.m.
New Virginians Show Haymarket Theatre ???

There was also some discussion about the possibility of varying from the usual schedule for the Northern Virginia Center ceremony. Rather than holding the ceremony as usual on that Sunday afternoon, it may now be possible to hold the ceremony early Saturday evening.
COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, December 4, 2002
12:15 p.m.
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

PRESENT: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Randy Billingsley, Bud Brown, Greg Brown, Theresa Cassino, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Jerry Gibson, Pat Goodrich, Bill Green, Larry Hincker, Brad Klein, Vinod Lohani, Kim O’Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Dean Stauffer, Dan Taylor.

GUESTS: Susan Angle, David McKee, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly, Mike Westfall, Ryan Martin, Lauren Ermann.

ABSENT: Reba Crawford, Leon Geyer, Grant Hill, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Diane Zahm.

Chairman Ed Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes for November 6, 2002
Moved by Billingsley and seconded by O’Rourke, the minutes were approved as written with one abstention from Klein due to insufficient review time.

Special Request from Senior Challenge (proposal attached)
Ryan Martin, Lauren Ermann and Mike Westfall attended the December meeting on behalf of Annual Giving with regard to the attached proposal for Senior Challenge. They were interested in incorporating into the spring Commencement ceremony a check presentation from the senior class.

Committee members were concerned that this could be viewed as an indirect request for donations. Other members believed if this were done tastefully, it would be okay to incorporate. Still others were concerned that if this were approved, other similar requests would follow.

Martin indicated that this would be in the form of a gift to the University from seniors—a gesture of devotion and respect.

Reaves moved that this proposal be recommended to the president for approval. Brown seconded and the vote was eight for approval of recommendation, two opposed, and two abstentions.

Fall Commencement Planning
Goodrich announced that the Graduate School made some changes to their program. First, arrangements were made with the Alumni Association to assist with funds to provide graduates with nice diploma covers—rather than the usual envelope with instructions enclosed for obtaining the diploma.

They also have plans for a television camera to focus on stage during their ceremony in Cassell Coliseum so that as graduates pass over the stage they may be shown on the large screen and
seen by the audience better. An outside vendor will be providing this service. Interpreters could also be seen on the large screen. One member asked if we could also access local cable television for broadcast, but it was indicated by Hincker that this could not be done, although he did state that Athletics had the equipment and capability to broadcast over campus cable.

Members voiced their opinions that this was a great idea, and wondered if this could be done at the university ceremony as well. Hincker indicated that the bulk of the cost would be in equipment and that additional costs would be hourly to do both ceremonies.

The committee discussions moved to the issue of whether or not security would or should be hired for commencement. It was noted that the brochure did not indicate that wrapped packages should not be brought to ceremonies or that bags would be checked.

It was noted that security at basketball games is now minimal. O'Rourke will contact Chief Duncan regarding her assessment of the risk, and the Chief's recommendation will be followed.

**Suggestions for Possible Speakers for Spring Commencement**
O'Rourke asked if anyone had suggestions for a speaker for Spring Commencement to let her know. Suggestions will be kept on file if they cannot be implemented this year.

**Spring Commencement Schedule (New draft schedule attached)**
A draft commencement itinerary was presented to the committee. Those representing the college and departmental ceremonies agreed upon all changes. Reaves moved, and Brown seconded, that the committee approve the draft schedule and recommend it to the president for final approval. The committee passed this motion and recommended to the president that the Spring University Ceremony be moved to Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. in this schedule. (Note: The president is willing to try the revised schedule on a trial basis for spring 2003.) The time for the New Virginians show had not been set, but discussions would follow after the meeting with John Husser and Dave McKee.
Proposal for Senior Challenge
Check Presentation at Commencement

Realizing that Virginia Tech’s Commencement is both a prestigious and meaningful event for students, parents, faculty, and staff, Annual Giving would like to explore the possibility of tastefully incorporating a check presentation into the ceremony.

Basic Concept:

➢ An opportunity to have the entire Class of 2003 draw together in a collective “Thank You” to Virginia Tech

➢ Have the two student co-chairs of the senior Challenge present an oversized check to President Steger.

➢ Check would be made out to Virginia Tech from the Class of 2003

➢ Dollar amount would be the total amount raised by the class through the Senior Challenge

➢ The tone would be that of respect and appreciation from the class to Virginia Tech

➢ An opportunity for President Steger to thank the class for their support and dedication to Virginia Tech

What it is not:

➢ An overt ask for money

➢ A “push” for money from parents

➢ A “push” for money from Virginia Tech’s newest alumni

➢ A statement of the peril Virginia Tech faces due to budget constraints