COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, March 13, 2002  
12:15 p.m.  
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall


ABSENT: Dixie Reaves, Dan Taylor, Pat Goodrich, Bill Green, Bud Brown, Randy Billingsley, Harry Robertshaw, Audrey Zink-Sharp, Mary Ann Lewis, Reba Crawford, Grant Hill, Michelle Jefferson.

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – February 2, 2002
Conger moved that the minutes be approved, Schofield-Tomschin seconded, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Planning for Spring Commencement

Processional/Seating
Discussion continued regarding the University Commencement Ceremony scheduled at Lane Stadium. As the last meeting it was determined that students would be seated on the field, but not by college or department. Participants would need to enter the field through the tunnel at the north end of the stadium by Jamerson Athletic Center and be seated on the field by 8:30 a.m. Taylor mentioned his concern about the students being seated by 8:30 a.m. and the resulting confusion this would create. Henneke indicated that he would be talking further with Hincker to arrange to have videos shown on the Jumbo Tron to capture the students’ attention. It was decided to have faculty participants and graduate students from Friday’s ceremony be the only individuals on the field with special seating. Marshals will be on the field by 7:45 a.m. to assist with seating and directions.

From where would the stage party process? John Beach suggested that they should come from the dugout or by a selected location inside Cassell. It was agreed that the stage party gather in the practice gym in Cassell Coliseum as usual, and then process through the tunnel. Just before the stage party begins the processional, the tunnel would be blocked of all other traffic with the exception of the stage party.

It was asked whether or not moving the stage to the south end zone would allow a processional to be held. If this were the case, the students sitting on the field would not be facing the Jumbo Tron. Either way, Beach indicated that there would be sound problems. The stage will continue to be located at the north end zone facing the south end zone for this year.

Parking/Security Issues
Ridinger indicated that the usual traffic posts were planned for Commencement ceremonies and that extra event staff would need to be hired for security checks. He did say there were a few problems in the fall with small wrapped gifts being brought to the coliseum. It has been decided
that only the main gates to Lane Stadium will be open on Saturday morning for guests. These are the gates closest to Jamerson Athletic Center where the “Will Call” box is located. Guests may proceed from the main gates under the north stands to the east side of Lane Stadium. This would eliminate the need for a large number of event staff for security at numerous gates. Again, handicap parking will be available in the first bay of the coliseum parking lot.

Security for other college events on campus was addressed. Ridinger indicated that all 38 officers will be on hand for traffic posting and special needs, but the police department would not be able to provide officers for security purposes at each college event. The Commencement budget does not have the funds to hire event staff or town police for college ceremonies, but colleges may hire their own staff if they wish.

Other Items
It was reported that the Committee on Academic Support, which reports to the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, voted unanimously that diplomas should not be provided at Spring Commencement. Research will be done to determine where the issue stands within the university governance system approval process.

There will be a Friday, May 10 rehearsal for the Graduate School ceremony beginning at Cassell Coliseum at 8:00 a.m. then will move to Lane Stadium for the University ceremony rehearsal.

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.