COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 2, 2002
12:15 p.m.
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

PRESENT: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Leon Geyer, Jerry Gibson, Pat Goodrich, Grant Hill, Larry Hincker, Brad Klein, Vinod Lohani, Kim O’Rourke, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Pat Scanlon for Dean Stauffer, Dan Taylor


ABSENT: Randy Billingsley, Reba Crawford, Bill Green, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Dean Stauffer (replacement sent)

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

Approval of Minutes for September 10, 2002
Moved by O’Rourke and seconded by Schofield-Tomschin, the minutes were approved as written.

Discussion for Change in Spring Ceremonies
The discussion began around the use of the Field House for the College of Human Resources and Education for Spring Ceremonies. At the September meeting the committee unanimously approved to discontinue the use of the Field House for safety reasons and an estimated savings of $22,000.00. Discussion regarding the change in the schedule itself would be discussed once the college representatives had a chance to review the proposals. They were:

Proposal #1:
Permanently eliminate the setup of Rector Field House for the College of Human Resources and Education ceremony in the spring. This is the only college or department to have a ceremony in that venue. The only other space large enough to accommodate this ceremony is Cassell Coliseum, where the spring ceremonies are currently held for the Colleges of Business and Engineering. (Note: Currently, Staff Appreciation Day, which is held in Rector Field House the Wednesday following spring commencement, benefits from no setup fee.) Net Savings: $22,000

Option 1: Move the CHRE ceremony to the Coliseum and add it to the rotation schedule with the Colleges of Engineering and Business. This would mean having one of the three ceremonies on Friday night or adding a later ceremony on Saturday.

Option 2: Move the University Ceremony to late Friday afternoon (e.g., 4:00 p.m.), thus allowing college ceremonies to begin earlier on Saturday. The Graduate School ceremony could be scheduled to follow the university ceremony on Friday evening, (e.g., 6:00 p.m.) If this change is made, it should be considered a permanent change.
Wanda Dean sent a note to Ed Henneke advising the committee that if one of the colleges chose to move to a Friday ceremony in the spring, the Registrar’s Office would not be able to have diplomas ready for that particular college.

The difficulty for some parents to arrive in time for a Friday college ceremony was discussed. The representative from the College of Human Resources & Education voiced their preference not to move to Friday. Additionally, she noted that the first year the College of Human Resources and Education had a combined ceremony, it was at 4:30 on Saturday, which was a terrible time.

Lohani stated that the College of Engineering would volunteer to take the 1:00 p.m. Friday slot permanently, knowing that diplomas would not be ready to be handed out, BUT only if NO diplomas were handed out at the other college ceremonies either. If diplomas are available to students, the College of Engineering will enter into whatever rotation evolves, but do not want any rotation that includes 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. Lohani also indicated that his college would support cancellation of the university ceremony. However, it is unlikely that the president would be receptive to this proposal unless there was widespread support for it throughout the university.

It was suggested that we not give diplomas in the spring to any college. That suggestion will not be considered at this time.

Beach indicated that the stadium itself might be used for a college ceremony following the main university ceremony, but that the weather would be a risk factor. If the University Ceremony were held late on Friday afternoon, there could be 4 ceremonies at Cassell Coliseum on Saturday based on the current rain plan. The latest ceremony would most likely begin at 4 p.m.

Henneke asked that the college representatives and the committee members review these issues with their college and report at the next meeting.

In the interim, the following memo was sent to the committee from Dr. Henneke:

To serve both the internal and external University community, it will be necessary for our committee to develop a recommendation to the President concerning what changes the University should make in the Spring Commencement Ceremonies by the end of this semester.

This is a reminder that we have only two committee meetings left to discuss the issues and develop our recommendations. I am asking all of you, and especially the representatives from the Colleges of Business, Engineering and Human Resources & Education, to be ready to discuss this issue at our November 6th meeting so that we can vote on our final recommendations at the December 4th meeting.

Thanks to all of you for your continuing help and service to the university.

New Carpet Use in the Coliseum
At the spring commencement ceremony, the newly purchased carpet (purchased with Commencement Committee funds) was used for the first time. Beach mentioned that the prior carpet was used for approximately 10 years. On occasion, the Athletic Department requests that they be able to use this carpet for functions held by them. Beach indicated that with repeated use, the carpet would wear faster. It’s not made to be put down and pulled up on a consistent basis. He brought up the fact that this is a very expensive cost to the Commencement Committee, and that it will continually need to be replaced. He suggested that each time the carpet is used, the
party using it should pay a rental fee. He indicated that the cost of the special trailer purchased to handle this carpet was $5000 and that the labor costs were also a consideration. The Controller’s office could help to identify an estimated rental fee, and Henneke and O’Rourke agreed to investigate this option.

**Commencement Invitations**
Murray brought up the fact that the University mails Commencement invitations to two addresses of the student’s choice, which is marked on the DARS form (at least one year in advance). Addresses can be out-of-date, typed in incorrectly or just not included. The committee was asked to vote on discontinuing the mailing of these invitations, especially since they do not contain complete information. Students and families will continue to receive the commencement brochure in the mail and will also have access to the web site for information.

Brown moved, Geyer seconded, and the committee voted unanimously to discontinue the mailing of these invitations.

With no further business, Geyer moved to adjourn.