Commencement Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 6, 2004  
12:15 p.m.  
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Roger Avery, Bud Brown, Myrna Callison, Deborah Cook, Robyn Daniel, Jerry Gibson, Ellington Graves, Bill Green, Larry Hincker, Vinod Lohani, Kim O’Rourke, Lyndell Price, Dixie Reaves, Dan Taylor, Diane Zahm

Absent: Sumeet Bagai, Lay Nam Chang, Brian James, Brad Klein, Dean Stauffer

Guests: Wendy Conner, Margie Murray, April Myers, Jennie Reilly

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

Approval of Minutes
Brown moved that the minutes for the September 1, 2004 meeting be approved. With a second from Graves the minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion on Academic Apparel
The Sub-committee on academic apparel (Bud Brown, Myrna Callison, Robyn Daniel, Dixie Reaves, Diane Zahm, and Ed Henneke) made two recommendations to the committee: The 1st recommendation is that the University accept the American Council on Education’s Academic Costume Code and Academic Ceremony Guide as the University’s official guide for academic apparel standards. The 2nd recommendation is to indicate exceptions to the guide. The first exception is that only one other item (sash, stole, cord, or medal) may be worn in addition to the academic gown. It was mentioned that it will be the students’ choice as to what one item to wear if there is more than one option. Lohani questioned how the public will know the meaning of the items. Henneke stated that only academic distinction will be recognized by asking these students to rise during the ceremony.

O’Rourke mentioned that there will be no limitations to what the graduates can wear during pre-ceremony photographs and it was indicated that it will still be allowable for the students to decorate their mortar boards.

Graves questioned if there are going to be provisions for the approval of the additional items. Henneke indicated that the allowance is for only one item per student so the committee will not have to be involved in each decision. Students will be required to wear academic apparel, and if wearing an additional item, it can be no more than four inches wide and no longer than the gown.

Gibson questioned if sandals or high heels are acceptable. Henneke stated that the academic apparel standards specify that shoes should be dark, but it will be difficult to enforce this on the day of the ceremony. There are no restrictions on wearing high heels. Price added that they will not damage the stadium field, but they could break.

Lohani asked how the public would be made aware of the changes. Henneke noted that the program would be updated to indicate standard academic colors for hoods, etc., and that the undergraduate students with honors sashes is the only group asked to rise other than each college during the university ceremony.
Regalia Colors
Graves questioned the interpretation of the Ph.D. blue hood as opposed to the disciplinary color of hoods. It was determined that there is a need to clarify the appropriate color to be worn.

Zahm indicated the color for Architecture should be brown but in the past has always been purple. It was stated that the color worn is because of the degree not the college. Henneke indicated the choice of color should be made by the Dean of each college.

Murray stated that more colors will be difficult for the bookstore to handle especially since some students show up at the bookstore not knowing their own degree. It was determined that the changes would be implemented in time for the 2004 Fall Commencement ceremonies. Gibson stated that distance learning students only visit the bookstore during Commencement and Zahm suggested that there is a need to give the bookstore an overall list of college colors.

Zahm questioned if it would be possible to have one tassel color for undergraduates as indicated in the guide. Reaves indicated that having one color would not be a good idea and the committee should work with each college to set tassel colors.

O’Rourke questioned when the official committee vote would be. Henneke responded that it would have to be in November.

Murray suggested that the brochure will need to be bigger in order to accommodate the additional information. It was determined that a line should be added to the brochure stating that information on regalia could be found at a specified web address.

To meet printing deadlines, it was necessary for the committee to vote on the recommendations at this meeting. Reaves then moved to follow the standard costume codes with the approval of the colleges and their modifications. Exceptions: 1) One additional item of the student’s choice may be worn with the gown; 2) graduating members of the Corps would wear academic regalia (not uniforms); 3) the cadet assisting on stage would wear the Corps uniform; and 4) associate degree candidates would wear black gowns (rather than grey). Brown seconded the motion. Henneke set an October 15, 2004 deadline for each college’s approval or modification. The motion passed unanimously.

Commencement Brochure and Website
Reilly asked what the deadline was for submitting information for the Commencement website. Murray indicated that all information for the website and the brochure would be needed by the end of October.

Concessions
Gibson requested clarification as to where the committee stands with regard to the Dairy Club selling milkshakes during the fall ceremony. Price stated that unlike the college ceremonies in the spring, there is plenty of time in the fall between ceremonies for cleanup. Henneke then stated it would be acceptable for the Dairy Club to sell milkshakes as long as a plastic lid was supplied.

Commencement Speakers
Avery indicated that the Graduate School prefers that two graduate speakers be chosen for Commencement this fall; one for the Graduate School ceremony, and one for the University ceremony.
The need to adhere to time limits for speeches by student and alumni speakers was discussed. Daniel questioned if there is a requirement to have speeches submitted for review before the ceremony. It was determined that there is no requirement to have speeches reviewed prior to the ceremony, but it would be a good idea to have speeches submitted to the Commencement Committee chair two weeks prior to Commencement for review.

Avery stated that the Graduate School has invited a speaker but does not have confirmation yet.

With no other business the meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.