Commencement Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 2, 2005
12:15 p.m.
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Roger Avery, Bud Brown, Emily Aleshire, Deborah Cook, Brad Klein, Kim O’Rourke, Lyndell Price, Dixie Reaves, Dean Stauffer Dan Taylor

Absent: Sumeet Bagai, Lay Nam Chang, Robyn Daniel, Jerry Gibson, Ellington Graves, Bill Green, Larry Hincker, Brian James, Vinod Lohani, Diane Zahm

Guests: Susan Angle, Hunter Gresham, Dave McKee, Patrick Casey, April Myers, Eric Wininger

Dr. Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m.

Approval of Minutes
Avery moved that the minutes for the January 12, 2005, meeting be approved as written. With a second from O’Rourke, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Individual Commencement Ceremony Locations and Times

Henneke called for discussion of a request from the President’s Office to have the Commencement Committee take on the responsibility along with the President’s Office to coordinate the scheduling and allocation of space for all spring commencement ceremonies, including those held by the colleges and departments. Assignments would be based on need and history.

Henneke indicated that in the past the Commencement Committee (and the President’s Office) had avoided becoming involved in the scheduling of college and department ceremonies, and the units resolved any issues among themselves. However, the restructuring created a need for more of the larger venues because some departments and colleges are now larger and have outgrown their previous venues. Several situations have arisen this year in which the President’s Office or Commencement Committee Chair have been asked to help resolve scheduling and space issues when the units involved could not reach a compromise. He indicated that it may be necessary to employ the same type of procedure in other large venues that is used in Cassell Coliseum: rotating time slots for ceremonies among the same group from year to year. For example, each year the College of Business and the College of Engineering rotate the earliest and latest Saturday time slots in the Coliseum, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences takes the middle time slot because it is the smallest of the three units.

Gresham indicated that the University Unions and Student Activities office would put a block on all venues that they control for both Friday and Saturday for the President’s Office to schedule as needed. O’Rourke stated that she would communicate with the other offices responsible for scheduling on-campus venues (such as Athletics, the Registrar’s Office, Hillcrest, DBHCC, and Owens Hall), requesting that they reserve their respective spaces for the Friday and Saturday Commencement ceremonies for the President’s Office to schedule.
After much discussion, Brown made a motion that the Commencement Committee Chair and the President’s Office will coordinate the scheduling and space allocations for all Spring Commencement ceremonies (University, Graduate, college, and department) on the basis of need and history. Stauffer seconded the motion.

Klein questioned whether the current college and department ceremony times and locations as noted on the sheet that was circulated were final. Gresham indicated there will be additional ceremonies to add that have not been scheduled yet. Myers indicated that there could be minor changes, but for the most part the ceremonies that are scheduled are final.

With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously. It is effective immediately.

**General Planning for Spring Commencement**

Henneke questioned whether there has been any feedback on the announcement about the change in time for the Graduate School and University ceremonies. O’Rourke stated that there have not been any responses.

Henneke then asked if we are still on schedule with the use of the stadium. Price indicated that we are, and there will be additional lights for the people leaving the stadium after the ceremony.

Reaves stated that she has received the number of students graduating from each college and will make a determination on the lineup soon. Price asked Reaves to send that information to him also.

O’Rourke questioned how the brochure was progressing. Myers indicated that the only information needed is from the National Capital Region and that is expected by 1:00 p.m. today.

Brown asked if there has been a confirmation on speakers for Commencement yet. O’Rourke indicated that as of today we have a University speaker but the name cannot be revealed until Larry Hincker releases the information publicly.

Avery stated that the Graduate School has extended an invitation but has not received confirmation as of yet.

**Committee Support on University Band Tour**

Henneke then questioned if the committee wanted to support the request from the Music Department for funding for the University Band Tour. In the past, the procedure has been that the committee recommends approval to the EVP’s office to support a tour by the University Band to various high schools around the state. This tour will take place between exams and the University Commencement ceremony and creates good public relations for Virginia Tech.

McKee stated that the tours previously were farther away but are now more localized in order to reduce costs and allow the band to be close to campus for the University Commencement ceremony. Avery questioned the cost of the tour. Henneke confirmed that the cost will be $7487.50, which will cover the cost of the bus, meals, and hotel rooms for the band members.

Cook made a motion to recommend to the EVP that Virginia Tech support the University Band tour. O’Rourke seconded the motion. With no further discussion, it passed unanimously.

With no other business Brown moved to adjourn at 12:39 p.m.