COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, April 30, 2003  
12:00 p.m.  
President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, Greg Brown, Theresa Cassino, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Jerry Gibson, Pat Goodrich, Larry Hincker, Vinod Lohani, Kim O'Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Dean Stauffer, Dan Taylor

Absent: Randy Billingsley, Reba Crawford, Leon Geyer, Bill Green, Grant Hill, Brad Klein, Nicole Reynolds, Diane Zahm

Guests: Roger, Avery, Julie Kamienski, Richard McCoy, Dave McKee, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly, Wendell Flinchum

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – April 2, 2003 Meeting
With a motion from Schofield-Tomschin, and a second by Lohani, the minutes were approved as written.

Final Planning for Spring Commencement – Discussion
Taylor began the discussion by asking about the event staff and how student searches would be handled during the student lineup. Event staff will be available and assigned to each side of the south end zone tunnels at four per side. Ushers/marshals will ask students to leave their gowns unzipped prior to entering one of the tunnels into the stadium. All gates will be opened, and additional event staff will be stationed at those entrances as well. Ushers and marshals will be stationed as requested by the Director of Ushers.

Stage party musicians will be wearing tuxes and will need to set up on stage prior to the procession. They may enter through the north end zone tunnel or the stands.

Jack Dudley indicated that all arrangements for the honors students are in order. There will be six to eight bagpipers leading the procession to the stadium. Upon entering the stadium, the bagpipe music will cease, and the general stage party/student procession will begin.

Members of the stage party, Commencement Committee, and other dignitaries will be provided a parking pass valid for either the coliseum or tennis parking lots. Parking is available in the south end zone if space exists.

Roger Avery and Pat Goodrich stated the concern of the Graduate School of having too many seats on the floor during their ceremony, making it appear that there is a small turnout. Due to the possibility of rain at the University Ceremony in Lane Stadium, it is important to have enough seating on the Coliseum floor to accommodate the undergraduate ceremony should inclement weather affect use of the stadium. Beach will work with them and place fewer seats on the floor if the weather looks good.
Beach indicated a concern with the flags used for each ceremony. Because the flags are used at the Graduate ceremony first, it is very difficult to get these flags to the stage at Lane Stadium—especially once the guests start arriving. Hincker indicated that he’d noticed another set of flags/banners at the Volume II Bookstore. Murray will check into the possibility of borrowing these for the day. Another set would be very expensive. The small ones would cost approximately $500 each, and the large about $3,000 each.

Beach asked for a count of graduates so that chairs could be placed on the field. He is prepared to set 3,500 chairs if needed. Murray will get Beach the graduate numbers. Additional chairs for wheelchair users’ families will be placed in the accessible areas should they be needed. In addition, a handicap ramp will be provided for the stage during the Graduate Ceremony.

After the students line up, the gates for the paratransit bus will not be available. Gate 1 should be used after that. Once Level 4 of the south end zone is full, BT buses should be directed to drop at Gate 2. BT paratransit will work with families if they are notified in advance.

Program Distribution was finalized. Individual college ceremonies will be sent one program per student with a few additional for faculty. It should be announced to your colleges that programs will be available at the Graduate and Undergraduate Ceremonies on Friday, and should be picked up there. Partial programs for the University ceremony, as used in the past, were discontinued due to the huge amount of waste. There was some concern about families not attending the university ceremony, but it has been decided that programs left over from the Friday ceremonies will be distributed early Saturday morning by Physical Plant if at all possible. Students are provided with one program during the University processional. The full number of needed programs would be distributed to the Graduate School, Veterinary Medicine, and NOVA program ceremonies.

Hincker suggested that the announcement that Fall Commencement has been moved from Saturday, December 20 to Friday, December 19 be posted in the student paper.

Beach asked for a total number of honors students so that seats in the front rows could be marked.

There will be an 8 a.m. rehearsal of both the graduate and undergraduate ceremonies. Henneke asked that the color guard be at rehearsal.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Note:

On July 10 at 11 a.m. several members of the Commencement Committee met to discuss the timing for Fall Commencement. At that meeting the undergraduate ceremony was set for 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 19, and the graduate ceremony was set for 3:00 p.m.

All members of the Commencement Committee, and those working with Commencement in their colleges, were notified of this decision and asked to communicate this information to their students.