

University Commencement Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 1, 2012
12:15 p.m.
President's Board Room, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Dan Taylor (chair), Tom Broyles, Rebecca Funk, Pat Goodrich, Larry Hincker, Jason Holliday, Tamara Knott, Michael Berg for Joe Merola, Jacqueline Nottingham, Kim O'Rourke, Masoud Safdari, Durelle Scott, Muzaffer Uysal, Anthony Watson, Michael Weaver for Randy Fullhart

Absent Sandy Bass, Tyler Campbell, Candi Clemenz (with notice), Mike Ellerbrock (with notice), Elizabeth Fine, Bill Green, David Shuster (with notice)

Guests: Kevin Ayoub, Travis Cross, Captain Houston, Margie Murray, April Myers, Scott Poff, Pam Vickers, Laura Wedin, Eric Wininger

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

Approval of December 7, 2011, minutes

O'Rourke moved to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2011, meeting. With a second from Hincker, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Announcement

Taylor welcomed Jacqueline Nottingham back to the committee.

Recap of Fall Ceremonies:

Ms. Pam Vickers indicated that everything went smoothly, but the accessible seating was at capacity.

O'Rourke noted that the Monogram room is being renovated and was not available for the stage party to use as a robing location. The robing location was moved to the Merryman Auditorium, which will now be the permanent location for the stage party members for the Graduate School ceremony (in the fall and spring) and University ceremony (in the fall) to assemble before the processional.

Planning for Spring Ceremonies:

Loss of Practice Gym 220 in Cassell Coliseum

Taylor informed the committee that practice gym 220 in Cassell Coliseum will no longer be available to assemble students prior to Commencement processions in Cassell. He stated that the three Saturday ceremonies in Cassell in the spring do not process so the loss of the gym will not have a great impact on these ceremonies. There was a tour taken of Cassell Coliseum and a recommendation was made to have the Ph.D. students line up on the sidewalk next to the football practice field. This area allows the graduates to process in an without encountering too many obstacles. RMC staff can be posted outside so the graduates will be able to leave items on the ledges next to the sidewalk. An alternate location for the Ph.D. students, which could be used rain or shine, would be the hallway in Jamerson that is on the floor below the playing court level. It was indicated that the Spring 2012 Graduate School ceremony will be a guide as to what should be done in the Fall for both the University and Graduate School ceremonies. **Post Meeting Update:** Following another tour of Cassell, Jacqueline Nottingham recommended that the hallway in Jamerson on the floor below the playing court level be used to line up the Ph.D. students and faculty for the Spring 2012

Graduate School ceremony. Thus the hallway lineup option will be used for the Spring 2012 ceremony.

Distribution of Diplomas for Friday Ceremonies

Taylor announced that it has been posted on the Commencement website that diplomas for Friday ceremonies may be picked up on Saturday. If a department wants to make different arrangements for distributing diplomas this spring, the department will be responsible for notifying its graduates and making arrangements for diploma distribution. The student members of the committee were asked to obtain feedback from their fellow students as to whether in future years they would prefer to receive their diplomas at the ceremony (or pick them up that weekend) or to simply have them mailed. The student members will report back to the committee later in the spring.

Other Items for Spring Ceremonies

A representative from RMC will attend the May Commencement Committee meeting and the rehearsal prior to the spring ceremonies.

It was indicated that the walkie-talkies were useful but were a bit cumbersome for some staff members. It would be good for the Commencement Committee chair, the Director of Processions, the Director of Ushers, and the ADA staff members to have walkie-talkies in order to communicate with each other.

Murray indicated that there may be a need to have ushers hand out the one-page flyer given to the graduates as they enter the stadium. Last year the flyers stuck together, and it was hard for the students to pick up just one. Taylor noted that normally students would pick the fliers up in the parking lots when they line up prior to the procession. In good weather, their distribution should not be a problem,

Cross informed the committee that he has sent the University Wind Ensemble tour proposal to Dan Taylor. The tour will go to the Jefferson Center on Wednesday night and then back to campus. Then the Wind Ensemble will go to Stanton and Richmond on Thursday and will be back around 7:30 p.m. The budget is essentially the same as past three or four years. Taylor informed the committee that the proposal will be sent out to the committee members for electronic vote to recommend to the President that Virginia Tech support the University Wind Ensemble Tour.

A question was raised as to when the doors will be open at Cassell Coliseum on Friday. It was indicated that the doors will be open for the public at 7:30 a.m. There will be RMC staff stationed at the coliseum all night, and the facilities workers will be there by 6:00 a.m.

Hincker indicated that he will have John Jackson close the loop with Athletics about live streaming of the Commencement ceremonies. Pat Goodrich asked where the link to the live feed will be located. Hincker stated that he will report that back to the committee once it has been determined.

Taylor informed the committee that there may not be a March meeting, but there will be meetings in April and May. He will let the committee know once a decision has been made about the March meeting.

With no other business, Hincker moved to adjourn at 12:48 p.m.