

University Commencement Committee Meeting Minutes

November 3, 2021

12:00PM

Zoom

Attending: Diane Zahm (chair), Janice Austin, Eric Kaufman, Danielle Panico, Paul Deck, Amie Pendleton, Prince Wang, Anthony Watson, Kim O'Rourke

Invited Guests: Derek Shapiro, Jennifer Cleveland, Laura Wedin, Tom Gallemore, Michael Mulhare, Margaret Deck, Pamela Vickers, Kelly McCann, Ciji Good, Deanna Harman

Diane Zahm called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Fall Speaker Ideas:

Laura Wedin will send out the names today.

COVID Protocols

Fall ceremony as close to normal as possible. All people in Cassell must wear masks at all time. Air circulation study is finished for Cassell. The area has no limits on auditorium. At the moment no limits on graduates or guests. Concessions areas currently closed for study. Waiting to hear results on this to know if can serve water through there.

The back halls have not been approved for the processions. Current plan is for students to go straight to their seats.

Staging for stage party is in new student performance area and they will be the only one processing

Processing

Without processional the seats on floor will have to be counted out to group students by college. Group colleges together as best as can in seats and will have to do best as possible for stragglers. Will keep a few more rows of seats in back than normal. Will still keep normal time of 9:15am for students to arrive. Procession still starts at 10:30 even without students processing.

Volunteers for Fall

Using Rhino for ushers during event. Need 1 Marshal with regalia for getting students to stage and 1 Marshal with or without regalia for other thing. Down to only two volunteers from each college. Diane sending notice out to each college with needs this afternoon.

ADA entrance and parking

ADA entrance will have guest coming from Merryman center side and go through the back way to elevators to get into Cassell. Would use Lot 1 for ADA parking. Will need ADA signage for Merryman and blocking off areas of ADA parking in Lot 1.

Fall Ceremonies

The Board of Visitors are all invited but if they are on the stage is in review to follow what had been revised before COVID.

The student music ensemble in the past were given a stipend for students that are not usually on campus for graduation. Jay will need paperwork to send to students fill out to receive payment. For spring ask for a proposal of what the spring cost would be. Decisions are still being made about the spring ensemble regarding space needs and weather issues.

Still need to identify who is singing the national anthem and the alma mater.

Graduate ceremony will still have students processing across the stage and plans to have the handshakes. For graduate students there may be issues with these students were not required to have vaccination if were not on campus. Students will still take photos on stage. Current plans include the President standing on stage. If president is comfortable with photo handshake he can hand them the diploma cover if not students will be able to get diploma cover off the stage to the side.

Need to know the preference of the President if handshakes will be happening for University ceremony.

The student speaker names are still needed to Kelly. Danielle and Laura will provide the information.

The fall ceremony timeline will be sent out and gone over the final copy at the December meeting. Inclement weather plan for commencement is still needed and will be reviewed at the December meeting. Current inclement weather plans has commencement not being cancelled and would stream live some portion of the event.

Spring Schedule for 2022

Proposed schedule still needs to go to the Deans for review. Rain or shine all ceremonies will be at Lane Stadium expect Vet Med, Corps, and DC graduate School. Questions remain of if the cultural centers ceremonies are happening on Wednesday. Grad Bash is usually 3:00-6:00pm on Wednesday. All ceremonies will have scripts and time limits of 2 hours. There could be issues in parking lots with overlap on parking. Parking will need to be reviewed and set in January or February.

Stadium seating will be set up and each college would use as is. Colleges will not be processing for their ceremonies in the Spring. Processing will happen during the university ceremony. Only Pamplin and Engineering have multiple ceremonies. Pamplin and Engineering can combine their ceremonies resulting

in adjusting their ceremony to still fit into their time limits. Would like to post this to website for students within the next two weeks.

If inclement weather, students will be moved into an indoor area for a short speaking presentation, but otherwise will have to ultimately cancel. Cassell will be used as a weather shelter. Colleges will be notified of inclement weather plan.

Honors College can walk over from Hillcrest but no student processing at ceremony they would go straight to seats.

On campus housing has been provided in the past for families. Housing services last day of move out is Thursday the 12th. The families usually use this at the lost coast alternative. Will need to work with housing to see if on campus housing can still be used. Tracy is working with local hotels for space.

Other Discussion

Spring Speaker may be new Governor. A letter has been sent to the Governor to ask for him to be the keynote. For spring usually get some recommendations for speakers from students except when a governor is elected.

Eric Kaufman will be part of the stage ceremonies and carry mace in the fall for the university and graduate ceremonies. In the spring also attends the Northern VA ceremony.

Adjournment

With no further committee business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates

Wednesday, December 1, at Noon via Zoom