

COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES Wednesday, September 10, 2003

12:15 p.m.

President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall (Final Approved Revision)

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

Absent: Randy Billingsley, Robyn Daniel, Brian James, Dean Stauffer, Diane Zahm

Guests: Susan Angle, Greg Beecher, Dave McKee, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly, Hunter Gresham

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

Approval of Minutes — April 30, 2003

Moved by Brown and seconded by O'Rourke, the minutes were approved as written, with the exception of a change in the attendance listing showing Diane Zahm as absent. She should not have been listed at all.

Announcement

It was reiterated that Fall Commencement would be held on Friday, December 19, 2003. The undergraduate ceremony will be held at 11:00 a.m., and the graduate ceremony will be held at 3:00 p.m.—each in Cassell Coliseum.

Recap of Spring Ceremony

Space Issues

Klein indicated that Veterinary Medicine encountered a space problem in Squires for their reception, and incurred additional expenses to move their event to another location, in addition to losing people in transition. He felt that since the schedule for the Friday ceremony had changed that Veterinary Medicine should have received and should in the future receive first choice for space at Squires.

Change in Time for University Undergraduate Ceremony

Gibson stated that he thought the environment was nice for the evening University Ceremony. He did indicate that several parents had questions about where their kids were seated on the field. This information is printed in the flyer. It was suggested that this information also be printed in the Commencement Program and listed on the website.

Brown indicated that the Honors procession went very well, but they ran out of seats for this group. A more accurate number needs to be provided to Physical Plant for seat blocking purposes.

Usher/Marshal Volunteers and Faculty Participation

Henneke asked about the usher/marshal assignments. He understood that there were many no-shows and that several ushers/marshals did not call to notify anyone-- therefore placing others in the position of struggling to find replacements. Taylor indicated that he didn't think the problem was any worse than normal, but the timing made it difficult to find substitutes.

Brown indicated that his college had a problem getting volunteers—especially after recent budget cuts. Gibson stated that the College of Agriculture sends a letter with a spreadsheet during the fall and spring to faculty requesting volunteers on a rotating basis with alternate volunteers included.

Reaves thought that each college has different ways of getting faculty on a volunteer list, and that the college should make sure that the faculty member knows that he or she has been appointed—maybe a letter from Taylor or Reaves to the Committee representatives would help. Sorensen suggested that this letter be sent to the colleges' associate deans for them to handle.

Goodrich indicated that retired faculty might be interested in assisting. Lohani indicated that we should ask for more volunteers than needed. Taylor said that the assignments should be preassigned so that holes could be filled. Schofield-Tomschin asked if the volunteers get reminder notices. The answer was no, but they are mailed a schedule within two to three weeks of the ceremony.

Gibson indicated that at UVA it was expected that faculty march, and that there seems to be an apathy here with regard to faculty participation. Brown indicated that the tone should be set at the top. Henneke stated that at UVA faculty really participate and that it seems to have become a tradition of walking on the grounds. How can we motivate Virginia Tech faculty to attend?

Reilly thought we should remarket Commencement as a ceremony that is not unfriendly as it once was. Henneke stated that this is the most important event of the year. O'Rourke said that a letter could be sent out by Dro Steger urging faculty to attend, but that he would not make participation a requirement.

Spring Ceremony Changes After Restructuring/Space Coordination

It was asked if the Commencement Committee schedules space for college and departmental ceremonies. Henneke said that the Committee is not responsible for the scheduling of college and department ceremonies, but should we intervene and have some oversight over the planning for spring ceremonies—especially with regard to space problems and disputes. We do expect that there will be more scheduling problems with regard to space in the spring of 2004

There will be eight colleges and numerous college ceremonies for Spring 2004, and it was moved by Sorensen that this committee hold central oversight during the planning stages until the final schedules have been confirmed. With a second by Gibson, the committee unanimously agreed that a space survey will be done for Spring 2004 ceremonies, and that the Commencement Committee Would have oversight over this process.

Beecher indicated that we should do a space survey. Hunter Gresham will prepare a listing with potential space to provide to Murray for survey needs.

Fall Commencement Scheduling for Future Dates

It was requested that the committee make a decision regarding Fall Commencement dates for future years. Although Fall 2003 is a trial year, unless problems arise, the committee

anticipates that Fall Commencement ceremonies for undergraduate and graduate students will continue to be held on one day. It was felt that the committee needed to get this information out so that students and parents could be aware of this schedule in advance.

Although the ceremony would be held on one day instead of two, it is expected that hotels will still require a two-night stay for Commencement in the fall and the spring. Instead of a Friday/Saturday night stay, parents may choose to stay on Thursday and Friday nights—making it necessary to get the word out as soon as possible.

The Committee decided to make a decision at the February 2004 meeting. It was indicated to Hincker that communication to families and students is very important. Hincker indicated that there were at least six means of getting this information posted. There will be a notice on the Virginia Tech home page posted as soon as possible.

It was asked if the University would close early on the day of the ceremony based on parking needs. Beach indicated that most students have left the university of this time, and that parking in the Commuter and Lane Stadium parking lots would be readily available.

Beach suggested that some information be put in the student handbook and provided to incoming students during orientation—information such as book hotels at least one year in advance of graduation. It was also suggested that information be placed in the newsletter that is mailed to parents.

In response to a question from a member of the committee asking us to remind him of why we're having both ceremonies on Friday. Beach indicated that it is easier on physical plant personnel at that time of the year to complete their work on Friday. Henneke pointed out it is easier to get faculty volunteers on Friday and that the athletic association has pleaded with us to make the Coliseum available as soon as possible for basketball.

Permits Needed for Tents

Beach also indicated that we need to make colleges and departments aware of the fact that if tents are used for ceremonies and they are more than 900 square feet or more than 50 people, they must request a permit thirty days in advance of need. No tents will be allowed without a permit according to the Division of Engineering and Buildings for the state.

Other Items — Broadcasting / Accessibility

Reilly indicated that the captioning and interpreters for Commencement has become an added expense, and that if we continue to broadcast, this will have to be done in accessible format. There is no space on the Jumbotron to project the interpreter, and she suggested a separate screen with closed captioning.

It was also noted by a member of the committee that it is very difficult for individuals with accessibility needs to get into Burruss Hall for ceremonies. There are no signs, and it was indicated that ushers or marshals or greeters should be used to assist with this

problem in the future. Beach indicated that the University Architect's office is working on appropriate signage.

The south end zone and fourth level handicap seating sections in Lane Stadium were full during the Spring 2003 ceremony, and this was even with the threat of inclement weather. More ushers will be needed to assist with directing these guests to accessible seating.

West Side Construction

It was also noted by McKee that with the construction beginning on the west side of Lane Stadium after the Fall 2004 football season, it may become necessary to use only the east stands for seating. It may also be another ceremony in which a processional may not be held.

The meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.

COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES Wednesday, October 1, 2003
12:15 p.m.
President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Charles Payne for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Pat Goodrich, Brad Klein, Kim O'Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Dean Stauffer, Dan Taylor

Absent: Theresa Cassino, Robyn Daniel, Jerry Gibson, Larry Hincker, Brian James, Vinod Lohani, Rich Sorensen, Diane Zahm (teaches on Wednesdays in fall)

Guests: Dave McKee, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:17 p.m.

Approval of Minutes — September 10, 2003

Moved by Schofield-Tomschin and seconded by Stauffer, the minutes were approved as written.

Spring College-Wide Ceremonies; Reports from College Representatives

Bud Brown indicated that the College of Science would still hold separate departmental ceremonies in the spring.

It was anticipated that the Pamplin College of Business and the College of Engineering would remain in the Coliseum.

The College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences would hold some joint and some individual ceremonies. Beach stated that a safe capacity for Burruss Hall is 2800 guests/participants. Veterinary Medicine will work with UUSA to plan for their ceremony in Squires along with their reception.

The College of Agriculture will have 600 additional students and will now need to use Cassell Coliseum in addition to the Pamplin College of Business, and College of Engineering.

The College of Natural Resources will need to use Donaldson Brown Auditorium or even a slightly larger space for their ceremony.

Planning for Fall Commencement

Arrangements were to be made to have an email sent to all eligible seniors regarding the change in fall commencement. Phone calls were still coming in from angry parents about the change in date because their son/daughter had not been aware of the changes even though the announcement had been made using several venues.

Goodrich announced that the speaker for the Graduate School ceremony would be Walter Rugaber. The president's office was still awaiting the undergraduate faculty speaker nominations for the University ceremony, so a decision about the faculty speaker has not yet been made.

Goodrich also announced that the diplomas for the Graduate School would be smaller for the spring ceremony.

New Business

Lane Stadium Construction

Beach brought up the subject of the upcoming construction to Lane Stadium. Immediately after the end of this year's football season, construction will begin on the west side of Lane Stadium. For the next two years this construction will affect the Commencement ceremonies.

There would be minimal impact for the Spring 2004 Commencement, but as construction progresses, the area could become very messy. Handicap access would be available in the south and east stands. There would be more impact for the spring of 2005. The entire west side of the stadium would become unusable.

It was still felt that a processional would be possible through the use of the south end zone. The south end zone boxes should again be made available to special guests and guests of the stage party.

Cable Broadcast of University and Graduate Ceremonies

Goodrich indicated that the Graduate School planned to make arrangements to videotape the Graduate Ceremony, and thought that another cable broadcast was also a good idea this year. Clarification will be needed from Reilly as to whether an interpreter is required. The president assisted with costs related to the last broadcast. Would he again help share the cost? It was estimated that the majority of the related costs were for setup.

Could the Bookstore sell videotaped copies of the ceremonies at minimal cost?

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

COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
 MINUTES Wednesday, November 5, 2003
 12:15 p.m.
 President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, Debbie Cook, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Jerry Gibson, Pat Goodrich, Bill Green, Larry Hincker, Brad Klein, Vinod Lohani, Kim O'Rourke,
 Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Rich Sorensen, Dean Stauffer, Dan Taylor

Absent: Theresa Cassino, Robyn Daniel, Brian James, Diane Zahm

Guests: Susan Angle, Hunter Gresham, Dave McKee, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:17 p.m.

Approval of Minutes — October 1, 2003

Moved by O'Rourke and seconded by Schofield-Tomschin, the minutes were approved as written.

Presentation of Diplomas at Spring Commencement

Henneke began the discussion by reporting that the Commission on Faculty Affairs is recommending that providing diplomas at spring commencement be discontinued. This would allow faculty to give longer and more detailed exams and have more time to get grades prepared.

Gibson responded that the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences would prefer that diplomas be presented at spring commencement, and is concerned that there would be a lot of complaints. Brown indicated that getting the diploma is a big deal for students. Gibson stated that the current apathy with regard to attending commencement would increase with the discontinuation of diplomas.

Sorensen felt that students or their parents greatly appreciate the diplomas. Reynolds, President of the Class of 2005, indicated that many students attend spring commencement because they know they will receive their diploma then. Why not process in the fall if diplomas will not be presented.

Green asked, why should we stop? We are one of the only schools left that presents spring diplomas. Virginia Tech has always provided diplomas at spring commencement according to Henneke, and he indicated that this issue comes up again every four to five years for discussion. Generally, the committee is strongly opposed.

The strongest argument used now to deter this change is that commencement is a student/parent function. What about fall commencement? Why do we not provide diplomas during the fall ceremony? Henneke indicated that the timeframe in the fall is much too close to the ceremony date, and that the Committee on Academic Support sets the academic calendar far in advance.

After discussion, the Commencement Committee membership unanimously agreed to oppose this suggestion. Even if the motion passed the Commission on Faculty Affairs, University Council would have to approve this decision as well.

Videotape of Commencement Ceremonies

At the October meeting, Goodrich announced that the Graduate School planned to have the fall ceremony videotaped, and indicated that she thought another cable broadcast was a good idea. It was asked if the Bookstore could sell videotaped copies of the ceremonies at a minimal cost to those interested in purchasing a copy. Reilly would need to determine if an interpreter would be required on screen during the ceremony.

Reilly reported that an interpreter on screen would not be necessary, but that separate videos would have to be provided in an accessible format. She has the equipment and staff to do this, and the only additional cost would be \$12-\$15 per hour for transcribing for captions. Videos could be made available, but the same cost should apply for captioned or noncaptioned copies.

It was suggested that we post the video on the website for downloading or pre-advertise the video for sale with diploma frames. Hincker noted that downloading a file as large as this would not be feasible. Another suggestion would be to have the ceremony available on CD instead of VHS format, but Reilly said that captioning is easier in VHS format. Another suggestion by Hincker was to have videos captioned on demand.

McKee asked if there was a market for this. He questioned the small market for the large amount of work to complete this endeavor. More discussion will follow on this subject, but there was no strong commitment by this committee to pursue this project at this time.

Henneke announced that Bud Brown has agreed to be the speaker at the University ceremony.

Beach indicated that a rehearsal time would need to be set, and that a notation in the script should be made to indicate to students and their families that another ceremony would follow the university ceremony.

It was determined that rehearsal would be set for 4 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, for the Graduate and University ceremonies.

An accessible ramp will be provided for the stage, and is always provided at the fall ceremony.

Parking

It was reported that the entire lot across from the Coliseum is generally blocked for members of the stage party and handicap access—especially the first two bays. However, in the fall, very little of this space is being utilized—somewhat due to the fact that very few faculty process, and have not been provided with special parking in the past.

It was determined by this committee that the members of the stage party will be provided parking passes for the tennis court lot on the side of Cassell Coliseum—just off Washington Street. Faculty processing will be provided spaces across from the Coliseum if they plan to process.

More handicap parking will be available for those with handicap parking needs across from Cassell. Reilly indicated that it is easier to take those guests with accessibility needs directly across the street into Merryman. In addition, she stated that at the Fall 2002 ceremony, the entire circle of accessible seating was filled.

Gibson requested that this committee somehow urge faculty to participate in fall commencement. Henneke will send a note to faculty with a new message to request their presence on behalf of the students graduating.

Cook asked if there would be event staff on site—people who could assist in managing the flow of traffic. The president's office will hire events staff, and will request that they assist with arrivals and departures from the Coliseum. It is suggested that wording be placed in the script asking guests to depart through certain gates.

Gibson asked if we had an emergency plan or emergency personnel present should they be necessary. Henneke stated that this committee does not have a good plan. It was suggested that there be a central desk or location where assistance could be sought in an emergency situation.

Beach indicated that since the Georgia Tech game, an emergency plan was made for the stadium, but wasn't sure about Cassell. He also stated that Cassell is a different venue, and there would be problems evacuating students from the floor. Basically, they would have to go out through the tunnel and would have trouble getting off the floor to reach the ambulatories.

It was also suggested that due to the length of the ceremony, that the readers needed some sort of pacing scheme to keep the process moving. This will be discussed further as necessary.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES Wednesday, December 3, 2003
12:15 p.m.
President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, Theresa Cassino, Deborah Cook, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Pat

Goodrich, Larry Hincker, Brad Klein, Vinod Lohani, Kim O'Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Rich Sorensen, Dan Taylor

Absent: Robyn Daniel, Jerry Gibson, Bill Green, Brian James, Dean Stauffer, Diane Zahm

Guests: Susan Angle, Wendell Flinchum, Dave McKee, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm

Approval of Minutes

With a motion from O'Rourke, and a second from Sorensen, the minutes were approved as written.

Rehearsal

Henneke announced that rehearsal would be held on Thursday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. in Cassell Coliseum.

Announcements

At the December 5 meeting of the Commission on Faculty Affairs, Dr. Henneke will speak on behalf of the Commencement Committee in favor of continuing the handing out of diplomas at Spring Commencement.

Final Planning for Fall Commencement

It was announced that the membership agreed not to videotape the University Undergraduate Ceremony and that the Virginia Tech Bookstore could prepare an online form to see if students would be interested in purchasing a copy of the ceremony in the future. Goodrich announced that the Graduate School would videotape its ceremony. However, each ceremony would be broadcast on closed circuit television locally,

Henneke will send a note to faculty urging their participation in Commencement ceremonies.

It was requested that the college readers pace themselves during the reading of names so that there would not become a backlog of students going off the stage to have their photos taken.

Taylor asked if the concessions would be open in Cassell Coliseum during each ceremony. Plans were to have concessions open all day.

Angle announced that the accessibility web site is up and running.

Goodrich indicated that the diploma covers would need to be delivered to the coliseum around 1:30 p.m., but John Beach indicated that they could be delivered earlier and secured for the afternoon ceremony.

Beach indicated that the programs would be picked up on Thursday between 12 and 1 p.m. Approximately 1 program per student would be placed in the gyms, and all additional programs would be placed in the ambulatories for guests.

Approximately 960 chairs would be set on the coliseum floor for the undergraduate ceremony.

Flinchum noted that there would be a table designated for emergencies in the ambulatory so that ushers, etc. would know where to go with problems should they arise.

With no further items, the meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

SPRING COMMENCEMENT 2004 SURVEY
CONFIRMATION OF LOCATION AND TIMES FOR
COLLEGE and/or DEPARTMENTAL CEREMONIES

College:

Department:

List department only if a separate ceremony will be held from the main college ceremony.

Contact Name:

Phone # & Email:

Has your college or department reserved space for spring graduation? _____

If so, please provide the location and time for your ceremony.

It is very important that this information be accurate for inclusion in the commencement brochure, program and website.

Do you need assistance in finding a larger or smaller facility to hold your ceremony due to reorganization? _____

Please estimate the number of students you expect to participate. _____

This can be a rough estimate from prior years.

To help us evaluate current and future needs, please estimate the numbers in audience you generally expect. _____

Do you plan to hold a reception after your ceremony? _____

If so, where and when will the reception be held? _____

Please print this form, complete the requested information and return it to Margie Murray, 219 Burruss Hall, 0116. You may also fax the information to 231-2337.

If you have any questions, please contact Margie at 231-5637.

Thank you. We appreciate your immediate response.

COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES Wednesday, February 4, 2004
12:15 p.m.
President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, Theresa Cassino, Deborah Cook, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Pat Goodrich, Larry Hincker, Brad Klein, Vinod Lohani, Kim O'Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Rich Sorensen, Dan Taylor, Diane Zahm

Absent: Robyn Daniel, Jerry Gibson, Bill Green, Brian James, Dean Stauffer

Guests: Kimberle Badinelli, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Betty Buskirk, Joey Wilkerson

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

Approval of Minutes

With a first from Cook, and a second from Brown, the minutes were approved as written.

Diplomas for Spring Commencement

Henneke began the meeting by reporting on the meeting of the Commission on Faculty Affairs discussion regarding handing out diplomas at spring commencement. Henneke voiced the Commencement Committee feeling that diplomas should be handed out in the spring. Several members of the faculty were urging the commission to discontinue the handing out of diplomas for several reasons: 1) they felt the process of providing preliminary grades led to grade inflation, 2) faculty members with large classes were forced to give different types of exams so that grades could get in on time. Henneke felt that the Commission was agreeable to the position of the Commencement Committee, and the Commission voted to continue the process of handing out diplomas.

Zahm stated that the Faculty Senate feels strongly against this issue, and that the faculty members on the Commission deferred to the wishes of the Commencement Committee this time. She said that time is very short from the last exam until grades are due, and that the time frame is a problem for faculty—not the diplomas,, She believes this issue will come up again.

Taylor asked why the faculty are asked to provide preliminary grades, and it was said that it has something to do with the diploma printing deadlines Taylor suggested that a senior week be proposed to delay the spring ceremony, or that all diplomas be printed for eligible seniors, but we just don't hand out the diplomas for those who fail. He stated again that he felt the process of providing preliminary grades was a waste of time. Henneke indicated that that procedure was outside the purview of this committee.

Fall Ceremony Committee Recommendations

The discussion followed to the committee's review of having fall commencement ceremonies all on one day Zahm said that the response she heard was positive, and that she liked having the ceremonies on one day instead of two. Henneke asked the committee if they felt the schedule should change. He thought that the members of Physical Plant had a hard time dealing with a fast turnaround time from the University Ceremony since that ceremony ran over their time limit. Beach indicated that although

the members of Physical Plant were able to reset for the Graduate Ceremony in time, it was a somewhat difficult since the first group ran over. Beach indicated that it might be a good idea to move the second ceremony back one half hour because of that

Reaves suggested that the timing for the University ceremony be changed, and that there should be time limits for speakers. She also felt that maybe some of the student speaker comments be shortened or have the reflections removed from the ceremony. Goodrich indicated that the Graduate School will consider taking out the closing remarks of the student speaker from their ceremony Sorensen felt that shortening the presentations or eliminating speakers from the University Ceremony would allow for the same schedule as before. The committee agreed that the schedule remain as is with the University Ceremony beginning at 11 a.m., and the Graduate Ceremony following at 3:00 p.m.

Sorensen felt that part of the backup on stage during the University ceremony was the second photograph taken once the student is off the stage. In addition, someone needs to alert the reader of potential backups so that the reading of names will slow down during these backups. The committee felt that the second photo was unnecessary, but the photographers feel that there is a better chance that the photo will be good if another photo can be taken off stage. The committee will consider looking for another close location for the second photograph to be taken after the ceremony concludes.

It was recommended by this committee that both the University and Graduate Ceremonies be held on the same day in the fall. Moved by Reaves, and seconded by Brown, the recommendation was unanimously approved by the committee. The Registrar's Office will be notified of this change after official approval by Dr. Steger.

University Band Tour Committee Support

Dave McKee again has requested the support of the Commencement Committee regarding the local tour of band members to area schools. He feels this is an important recruiting tool and promotes a good image of the university. Zahm moved that the committee support his request for funds for the tour. With a second from O'Rourke, the committee unanimously agreed to support McKee's request for funding for 2004.

Spring Commencement Ceremony Scheduling on Saturday

The committee reviewed the scheduling for college commencement ceremonies being held in Cassell Coliseum. Because there are three college ceremonies being held in Cassell it was felt that a review of the scheduling be addressed so that no ceremony begins later than 2:00 p.m. In 2003, the schedule was set for 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. ceremonies. It was felt by the colleges involved that two of the largest colleges not hold back-to-back ceremonies. It was decided by the colleges that the Pamplin College of Business would hold their ceremony first, followed by the College of Agriculture, and then Engineering. In future years, this would mean that the College of Agriculture remains in the 11 a.m. time slot with the Pamplin College of Business and the College of Engineering switching times every year. To allow for ample time between ceremonies, the committee agreed that the schedule used in 2003 be used now and in upcoming years.

Reaves stated that speech limits during college ceremonies be exercised to limit ceremony length. This would improve handicap accessibility between ceremonies. Reaves also commended the members of the Physical Plant for handling the setups between ceremonies.

Survey of Ceremony Locations

A survey of ceremony locations for spring 2004 was handed out to the members of this committee, and it was requested that the college representatives work to ensure that each college or department complete the survey to verify the location and timing of their ceremonies.

New Business

Kimberle Badinelli of Student Programs reported that their office sent out a mailing to all eligible seniors and their parents regarding on-campus housing and dining during spring commencement. This mailing was sent separate from the commencement brochure mailing so that it could be mailed at an earlier date.

Goodrich reported that at the last Graduate Ceremony an interlude was played during the time graduates rose to come to the stage and actual presentations. Dean DePauw is working with McKee to have an original piece written just for this ceremony

COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 3, 2004

12:15 p.m.

President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, Theresa Cassino, Deborah

Cook, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Pat Goodrich, Larry Hincker, Brian James, Brad Klein,

Vinod Lohani, M. Echols for Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Audrey Zink-Sharp for Dean Stauffer

Absent: Robyn Daniel, Jerry Gibson, Bill Green, Rich Sorensen, Dan Taylor, Diane Zahm

Guests: Susan Angle, Hunter Gresham, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly

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

Approval of Minutes

With one change in paragraph two under the heading of Diplomas for Spring

Commencement, the minutes were approved unanimously after a motion from Schofield-Tomschin and a second from Cook.

Zahm stated that the Commission on Faculty Affairs feels strongly against this issue, and that the faculty members on the commission deferred to the members of the Commencement Committee this time,

Spring Commencement Planning

It was announced that the Commencement Speaker for the Graduate School Ceremony will be Dr. Orlando Taylor, Dean of Graduate Studies at Howard University. The University Commencement Speaker will be Pierre Thomas, ABC News Correspondent for the Justice Department. The speaker for the Northern Virginia Ceremony will be Lawrence J. Korb, Senior Fellow of the Center for American Progress.

Jack Dudley has again requested that a special procession of honors students be allowed at Spring Commencement. The procession would progress to Lane Stadium as before, but with more bagpipers and drummers leading the students instead of two. It was noted that last year, the students entered the north end zone simultaneously with the procession from the south end zone, but not enough seating was left for honors students. Dudley has asked for the committee to consider the following.

Dudley suggested that the honors students process onto the field from the tunnel at the north end zone, walk to the south end with the bagpipers and drummers playing, pause under the score board, and then join the front of the procession onto the field to be seated. The orchestra begins playing at approximately 6:45 p.m., and at approximately 7:00 or 7:05 p.m., the honors students would process in, followed by pomp and circumstance at 7:10 p.m. after the groups have joined.

Beach indicated that Dudley should work directly with the Virginia Tech Police again to develop a safe route of travel across roadways to the stadium.

Reaves and McKee will need to discuss the issue further with Dudley in order to make a final recommendation to the committee prior to May 14.

It was announced that the total number of usher and marshal volunteers from each college would be requested based on the number of graduates in the respective college instead of equally by college. This was in part due to college restructuring, and did not have a huge impact on the majority of colleges, with the exception of the College of Engineering whose volunteer numbers did increase.

Tassel Colors for Academic Regalia

Henneke reported to the committee that there was some confusion at the University Bookstore regarding tassel colors for academic regalia. This was also in part a direct result of college restructuring. It was thought by members of this committee that each college had its own tassel color, and that colors were not chosen based on the area of study. However, at least one, if not two colleges, directed students to choose colors based on area of study.

For this ceremony, it was agreed that no changes would be made, but that this issue should be addressed prior to the fall ceremony. Henneke stated that a national organization sets the standard for colors, and a copy of this literature was handed out to members of the committee for review. A follow-up study and review should be made with recommendations to the committee at a later time. This issue was tabled until further review.

Murray handed out a listing of the calendar of events for spring commencement for committee review so that any changes could be made if necessary prior to printing of the brochure. No changes were indicated.

In addition, a draft of the materials to be posted on the Virginia Tech Commencement Website was also distributed for review by the members of the committee prior to posting. Additional information should be directed to Murray for inclusion on the website as needed.

One last handout was distributed regarding the layout and maintenance of a permanent Commencement Information website. After review by the committee, the only suggestion was to have the past speakers of the University and Graduate ceremonies listed. Once the

new website has been designed, the President's Office will be responsible for the continual update of this site for review as needed by students and family members on a daily basis.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

COMMENCEMENT MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 7, 2004

12:15 p.m.

President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bill Stringer for Jerry Allen, Bud Brown, Theresa Cassino, Deborah Cook, John Beach, Jerry Gibson, Larry Hincker, Vinod Lohani, Kim O'Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin, Dan Taylor, Diane Zahm, Audrey Zink-Sharp for Dean Stauffer

Absent: Robyn Daniel, Pat Goodrich, Bill Green, Brian James, Brad Klein, Rich Sorensen

Guests: Susan Angle, Wendell Flinchum, Hunter Gresham, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly, Joey Wilkerson, Richard McCoy

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

Approval of Minutes

Zahm moved that the minutes be approved, and with a second from Hincker, the minutes were unanimously approved as written,

Honors Procession

The first order of business was to discuss final details for the honors procession. It was suggested that after their procession enters Lane Stadium that they join and take the lead in the University Ceremony procession. Reaves moved to approve this recommendation, and with a second from Gibson, the motion was unanimously approved. Gibson suggested that the ushers and marshals be provided this information in advance.

No West Side Stands Seating at Lane Stadium

Beach indicated that the west side of Lane Stadium will be completely blocked, providing no access for family or visitor seating. This information was provided in the brochure that was mailed to all eligible students and their parents.

Accessibility Signs and Seating

Reilly questioned if adequate signage would be provided indicating seating and access changes.

After meeting with Beach, she indicated possible changes in the information being provided to ushers. Reilly suggested that there be signs at the south end zone elevator indicating that ambulatory access would be available on the 2nd level of the south end zone, and wheelchair access would be on the 4th level. In addition, it was noted that twenty minutes prior to the ceremony, there would be no wheelchair access due to the procession lineup.

General Information

It was requested that the ushers be provided information indicating where students will be seated, either on the floor of Cassell Coliseum during the Graduate School Ceremony or on the field at Lane Stadium during the University Ceremony, to assist in directing parents to the closest location to their child.

Beach noted that there would be reduced lighting on the field due to the west side construction. There will be no lights on the west side. Stage lighting may be an issue for the speakers and should be addressed

Beach also requested a best guess for the number of seats to be placed on the field at Lane Stadium. Margie Murray will provide him with this information after talking with the Registrar's Office.

New Business

Cook asked if there was a better way to inform students that there are two separate ceremonies—the Friday University Ceremony, and their Saturday college or departmental ceremony. Could an explanation be added to the website with more detail for student information? Murray indicated that this information can be added to the website, and that the planning for a more detailed and accessible website is underway, and hopefully will be in place by fall. Lohani suggested that the website provide space for feedback for future planning purposes. Hincker stated that this can be done, and that the information can be sent to a database or survey machine if done in a particular format. It was suggested, however, that this issue be studied more carefully so that, if implemented, the survey would provide information efficiently.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

COMMENCEMENT MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

12:15 p.m.

President's Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

Present: Ed Henneke, Bud Brown, Theresa Cassino, Deborah Cook, John Beach for Bill Elvey, Jerry

Gibson, Pat Goodrich, Larry Hincker, Vinod Lohani, Kim O'Rourke, Dixie Reaves, Nicole Reynolds, Rich Sorensen, Audrey Zink-Sharp for Dean Stauffer, Dan Taylor, Diane Zahm

Absent: Jerry Allen, Robyn Daniel, Bill Green, Brian James, Brad Klein, Sherry Schofield-Tomschin,

Guests: Susan Angle, Robert Baudo, Hunter Gresham, Richard McCoy, Dave McKee, Margie Murray, Lyndell Price, Jennie Reilly, Chuck Payne

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. Before beginning, Henneke dropped the third item regarding a request to display the Golden Anniversary booklet at Commencement from the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

After an update to the present and absent listing showing Zink-Sharp attending for Dean Stauffer, Cook moved that the minutes be approved. With a second from Sorensen, the minutes were approved as written.

Request from Student Group to Wear Stoles at Commencement

Members of the committee were provided photos of stole examples before discussion began. It was noted that in prior years the Commencement Committee had given permission for an international student stole and an African American "kinta" stole. Several questions arose—one being "How many students were required to be an organization?" The answer of three full-time students was provided. The other question was "How would stoles be restricted?" It was suggested that information regarding appropriate dress could be provided on the Commencement website.

Sorensen felt that more information was needed and that a task force should be appointed to study the issue.

Final Spring Commencement Planning

West Stands

After a concern was raised regarding safety on or near the west stands, Beach indicated that the west stands would be closed, and that the project manager for the job would ensure the enclosure of the area. And, there would be no concessions open in the west stands.

Parking

Parking for the Graduate and Undergraduate Stage Parties would be provided in the tennis court lots, If members of the stage parties arrived early enough for each ceremony, parking in the south stadium

lot would also be available. This lot would have security, and barricades would be moved upon arrival to ensure adequate parking.

Captain Baudo indicated that although the coliseum lot was blocked for usher/marshal/procession parking prior to each ceremony, that the lot would be reopened within 45 minutes of the ceremony for additional guests attending the ceremonies.

It was requested that signs in the first bay of the coliseum lot be provided for handicap parking only. After a complaint about last year's parking problems in the Southgate Center lot, it was suggested that Personnel Services employees park in the maintenance lot to avoid being blocked during the ceremonies.

Beach stated that the road behind the stadium would be blocked approximately 20 minutes prior to the beginning of the ceremony.

Miscellaneous

Due to the lack of lighting available in the west stands, it was requested that additional lighting be provided on the podium, especially for main speaker needs.

Taylor indicated that if programs were to be handed out to students as they processed into the stadium, that a table should be provided at each procession line so that marshals don't have to hand out programs individually.

The Graduate School plans to have their ceremony videotaped, and the Virginia Tech Bookstore will be selling the videotapes upon request. Only the main speaker of the University Ceremony will be videotaped, and copies will not be available for sale.

To begin the ceremony, the prelude music will end at 7:10 p.m., the honors students will process in from the tunnel, march to the end of the scoreboard, and join the other students in the processional into seating on the field.

Inclement Weather

Hincker said that if the university waited until 3 p.m. to announce that the University Ceremony would be held in Cassell Coliseum, there would be no time to prepare for closed-circuit television. The only option might be to air the ceremony on campus cable or off-campus to Blacksburg cable only. It would take a full day for CNS to prepare the cable. He indicated that Athletics may have the equipment to prepare for such an event, and that he would check with them.

Other Comments

There is only one handicap ramp available for stage purposes. Since there may be a need to have one in the Coliseum, and one at Lane Stadium, especially in an inclement weather situation, Beach indicated that he would get an estimate on purchasing a second one, and that it could probably be stored with the other ramp.

Graduate Photos

Pat Goodrich stated that during the Graduate ceremony, there needs to be a change in the way photos are taken so that graduates do not become backed up on stage. Maybe only one photo angle should be taken instead of two. Someone should work with the photographer in the future to work out another arrangement.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.