

UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 7, 1996

Present: E. Henneke, S. Musser, D. Ludwig, D. Taylor, M. Johnson, L. Shumsky, J. Rohr, R. Sumichrast for R. Smith, A. Bame, J. Arditti, A. Hamby, J. Beach

Visitors: C. Agnew, C. Gasper, D. McKee, P. Roth, P. White, L. Worley

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Ed Henneke, chair of the committee.

Minutes of the December 6, 1995, committee meeting were approved as distributed.

Review of Fall Commencement activities--changes needed for next year:

Dan Taylor reported that an usher had commented about the unattractive tables used in the ambulatory area for programs. John Beach will look into getting nicer tables for Fall '96.

Robert Sumichrast, representing Ruth Smith/College of Business, asked if it would be possible to organize the graduate students by area of degree. Martha Johnson responded that it would be difficult to organize this due to the number of students involved. For Fall '95, the Graduate School expected 436 candidates to participate; approximately 175 actually participated. Johnson indicated that for Spring '96, the students will have to be lined up since diplomas will be handed out. Someone suggested that it should be mandatory for the Master's candidates to attend to get their diplomas. This might allow the Graduate School to get a better head count of those students planning to attend.

Combined Master's/Doctoral Ceremony for Spring Commencement: Joyce Arditti, representing the College of Human Resources, mentioned that the College includes Bachelor, Master's, and Doctoral candidates in its ceremony on Saturday and that they will continue to do that even if the combined ceremony is approved.

Diplomas for Master's and Doctoral candidates will be handed out at the Friday afternoon ceremony in Burruss if the decision is made to have a combined ceremony.

Sumichrast stated that the degree and discipline needs to be identified. The College of Business will be recognized by curriculum in Spring '96.

Someone commented that the names were read too fast at the Fall Graduate Ceremony. By including the discipline it would slow the process down and help the people handing out the diplomas.

Dan Ludwig made a motion to have a combined master's/doctoral ceremony in Spring '96. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Henneke indicated that he will be available to meet with college groups who have concerns about this decision.

Proposal for University Bands pre-commencement tour: The band tour has been very successful in the past and is seen as a good public relations tool/event for Virginia Tech. It gives high school students a chance to see that not all band members are music majors. The band is made up of students from all disciplines. The motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to support the band tour. The administration will be approached to provide monetary support for this effort.

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Potential conflict with Spring Commencement/Coliseum reconstruction:

John Beach reported that major repairs on the Coliseum roof are necessary. It looks like construction will begin in mid-May. It will take 4-5 months to rehabilitate the structure/roof. Some construction activity (scaffolding, etc.) may be seen in the area behind the stage in the coliseum.

This may impact the rain location of the University Ceremony and the college ceremonies for Engineering and Business. If it rains, the University Ceremony may be cancelled. Alternative sites for the college ceremonies are the Roanoke Civic Center and the Dedmon Center at Radford University (holds approximately 3,000 people).

Spring Road may be permanently closed due to construction on the athletic facilities. Publicity needs to go out so guests can avoid this area.

General comments: Martha Johnson voiced her appreciation for the support the University Commencement Committee and campus staff provided to make the Fall Graduate Ceremony a success.

Stan Musser commented on the miscue for the National Anthem played at the University Ceremony on Saturday. In the future, a band member needs to attend the rehearsal and to receive the "walk-through script" so the band will be aware of the order of the program. The miscue made it awkward for the Color Guard to post the colors and retreat from the floor.

Since the Commissioning Ceremony and the Graduate School Ceremony are scheduled back-to-back, the Color Guard may just stage the flags for the Graduate School Ceremony.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.