

University Commencement Committee Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2022

12:00PM

Zoom

Attending: Diane Zahm (chair), Janice Austin, Danielle Panico, Kim O'Rourke, Jennifer Cleveland, Margaret Deck, Anthony Watson, Keresh Afsari, Amie Pendleton, Stewart Scales, Johnathan Watkinson

Invited Guests: Laura Wedin, Tom Gallemore, Alex Garner, Abby Carlson, Dennis Robage, Rebecca Jones, Christine McIntyre, Pamela Vickers, Kelly McCann, Deanna Harman

Diane Zahm called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm.

Spring Commencement Information

The meeting next month will be spent on detailed logistics of commencement, including when and where students, marshals, and volunteers should arrive.

Run of Ceremony

University Commencement will begin with a prelude, Academic Processional, and then the National Anthem. As a result of additional award winners the announcement of awards will be longer than usual. A welcome or remarks may be added to the awards announcements. The Governor has been confirmed as the keynote speaker. He has been informed of the 10 minutes allotted for him to speak. The current run of show has the University Ceremony ending around 9:45 am.

The closing student remarks have been moved earlier in the program to reflect the requested changes. President Sands will give his closing remarks, followed by the closing student remarks, with the last remarks given by the Alumni Association. The ceremony will officially close out with a greeting from the Alumni Association.

Spring Commencement Logistic Updates

Lane Stadium gates will open 1 1/2 hours before at the University Ceremony. Anyone assisting at the event will need to be in place before gates open.

Gates will open 1 hour in advance for each college ceremony.

Graduate seating on the field has been adjusted to remove two aisles from the original layout design. This will create one central aisle and allow for larger side aisles for ushering students. There will now be two sections of seating with a total of 36 seats per row.

ADA accommodation requests are being tracked through a google spreadsheet for college ceremonies. Notes will be made on how requests need to be addressed. ADA and SSD will work to address the accommodations.

ADA will be on-site at commencement. As a reminder, ADA staff, faculty, and volunteers are not allowed to touch any medical equipment when assisting guests. Everyone is being shuttled through Gate 2. Faculty and volunteers will be on hand to assist. Seating is available in East stands. Seating may have to extend to South End zone if East becomes full. The towers will not be utilized. ADA staff will designate wheel chair parking spots in stands on day of ceremony. This will be used for capacity awareness. One guest is allowed to accompany those with wheelchairs. Seating will be reserved for the guest in the first row of bleachers behind the wheelchairs. In the past, the whole family go to the area and then only 1 guest is allowed to stay. Anthony, Joe, and Abby will go do a walk through so make final decision.

Reminder Beamer way will be shut down for commencement. Gates 2, 3, 4, will be open for guests to use. The south end suites are being rented out during commencement ceremonies. Club Corps guests will be moving through the area to get to the suite. University Club/ President's Suite will be functioning during some of the ceremonies. Rhino will have people on staff to prevent people coming in and out of the club into the stands.

The Graduate School ceremonies currently has some logistics to confirm and will be addressed in logistical meetings. Graduate students will be seated by PhD or Master. Masters will sit as they arrive, while PhD students will have assigned seats.

Honors College representative Christine McIntyre has joined the meetings. For University Commencement, Honors College students will not be processing from Hillcrest to the stadium. This means no bagpipes. There will not be a special seating area for honors during the ceremony as all students will be seating as they arrive.

The request for volunteers will be send out shortly. Faculty volunteer roles will include: escorts, student seating, and hooding and name reading for graduate school. Each college will need to provide two marshals for the field. These volunteers are not required to wear regalia. Additionally, one faculty volunteer in regalia will be needed to assist with wheel chairs and accommodations at the University ceremony. The Graduate School ceremony will also need at least 1 in regalia.

There is only 1 hour turn over for traffic between each ceremony. Traffic arriving and leaving, as well as getting in and out of the stadium, can become congested. There will be issues if any ceremony goes over time. Colleges must stay within their two hour program window. The importance of not going over time must be communicated with colleges.

Questions Regarding Spring Commencement

Questions were raised about the Faculty Senate Representatives role at the Graduate School Commencement. The questions regarding their participation will be addressed outside of the meeting.

A question was raised about the Mace and the Northern Virginia ceremonies. The question will be researched and addressed outside of the meeting.

Adjournment

With no further committee business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Future Meeting Date

Wednesday, May 4, 2022 at Noon