

Commencement Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 3:00-4:15pm

President's Office Conference Room, Tigert Hall room 257

Attendees: Ronald Spitznagel (chair); Kelsey Abbey; John Banko; Florida Bridgewater-Alford; M. Harry Daniels; Bruce Goldberger; Melissa Johnson; Abby Kaufmann; Gurleen Kauer; Debra Krawczykewics; Angela Lindner; Stephanie McBride; Stephen Pritz; Lynda Reinhart; Michael Russel; F. Leslie Smith; Donna Stricker; Kjerstin Terry; Hans van Oostrom; Katherine Vogel-Anderson

Unable to attend: Janice Douglas;Carolynn Komanski; Ryan Morejon; Katherine Williams

Determine times for spring commencements

- It was determined that adding the College of Engineering's Master's graduates into the central UF ceremonies would require adding another ceremony; there is not a way to distribute another 450 graduates among existing ceremonies and stay within the capacity of the arena. We determined this additional ceremony could most easily be placed on the Friday of commencement weekend.
- There was discussion about moving the doctoral ceremony to Thursday night for the 2019 dates, but we cannot add an additional day in spring of 2018, as it could negatively impact the graduates and families who have planned their travel in advance using the already published academic calendar. This sort of information would also need to be provided to other members of the Gainesville community.
- A full list of ceremonies, dates and times can be seen on the attached "Proposed Spring 2018 Commencement Schedule."

ACTION ITEM:

1. Stephanie will re-draft the proposed schedule and distribute to the committee for final review by close of business on 10/17/2017. Committee members should respond with changes or concerns by 12:00pm on 10/20/2017. The finalized proposal will then be given to the President for final approval on the afternoon of 10/20/2017.

****UPDATE:** The schedule was approved by the President on 10/23/2017**

Religious conflicts with Friday Evening/Saturday ceremonies

- It was determined that graduates who have religious needs that conflict with their assigned dates and times will be accommodated by placing them in a different ceremony. When timing is possible, undergrads will be placed in a different undergrad ceremony and graduates with advanced degrees will be placed in a different advanced degree ceremony. If timing does not make that possible, then an undergrad may be placed in an advanced degree ceremony or advanced degree recipients may be placed in an undergrad ceremony.
- We will also look at the potential need to make ceremony times earlier on Fridays for the summer and fall, because there are no Sunday ceremony options.

Walk-Out-Of-Term for Undergrads

- With the rising number of graduates at each ceremony, looking at the number of students who walk “Out-of-Term” makes sense, especially for spring ceremonies. There is already a policy for advanced degree students, but the policy for undergrads has been left in the hands of the individual colleges.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Steph McBride will seek numerical data to determine the approximate number of students that walk “Out-of-Term” per semester, per college.
2. Steph will then present this information to Angela Linder to be reviewed and discussed by Academic Affairs.

Commencement Committee Meetings

- Our next meeting will take place in March; at that meeting we will set commencement dates for the entire 2018-2019 academic year. In the past we have waited until October to set the spring dates and times, but this is proving to cause hardship for graduates and their families trying to adequately plan for travel and attendance.

Degree Description Page in Doctoral Commencement Program

- The question was posed by the staff in the publications area of the Registrar’s Office as to whether we should keep the degree description page in the doctoral commencement program, the rationale being that, while the booklet was once given to all attendees, it is now distributed only to graduates, who should know what their degree means already. In short, the question was whether this is an unnecessary filler page.
- The discussion of the committee was it can be taken out if its presence is creating an odd number of pages, leading to the addition of more filler pages and/or if degrees were added in such a way that this page needed to be two pages, in which case it’s not a needed expense. As of now, the Doctor of Pharmacy degree is not described and should be added if the page continues.
- It was suggested the information from the page instead be included on the website as an alternative location.
- The question was raised about the cost per-page of the booklet, but that was not a known answer at the time.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Steph McBride will convey this discussion back to the publications area of the Registrar’s Office. This will include a request for the information to be added to the commencement website.
2. Steph McBride will find out the per-page cost of the printed program.

Overview of the Marshal and Name Card Staff Surveys

- After the summer semester's commencement ceremony weekend, Steph sent out a survey to all of the faculty who served as marshals and all of the staff who served in the name card scanning area in order to identify areas for improvement of internal customer service. She shared that she received a 55% response rate from faculty and a 100% response rate from staff. She then shared plans for changes to be implemented as a direct result of the received feedback.
- Changes to trainings- Staff training will now be given on the day-of; asking for a 30 minute earlier arrival time than in previous semesters. Marshal training will now include a walk-through of the physical spaces, as that was something requested and identified as a lacking component.
- Thank-you's- A note of thanks at the bottom of the commencement agenda; continued surveys requesting feedback; a thank you email after the ceremony from Steph McBride to the faculty who served as college marshals...all new additions starting in the fall of 2017.
**Florida Bridgewater-Alford also suggested, and offered to help with, posting pictures of marshals working with commencement and putting them on social media with notes of gratitude.
- Introducing Cicerones- A note of concern and frustration by the colleges was that we are requesting too many marshals, which placed heavy demands on faculty members' time. In an effort to decrease our use of faculty, we're introducing Cicerones to serve as Honor Guards during the ceremonies. This decreases the number of requested faculty per ceremony by 16 persons (approximately 1/5 of our marshals). This is a test run of the program. If it goes over well we will look at other ways to use Cicerones in the ceremony. The specific reason the role of Honor Guard was chosen is because it is the second most disliked role of the marshals, the first being Door Sentinel.

Parent Hooders

- There have been periodic requests over the years from parents with PhD's to hood their children or other relative at commencement, serving as an escort alongside the student's advisor or committee member. The precedent has been set and this practice has subsequently been permitted. Up to this point we have been going by a precedent and there has been no formal policy.
- It was discussed that it is time for something to be in writing, but the commencement committee would not have the ability to enforce it. Rather, it was decided this was a matter for the Graduate School to address.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Steph will draft a recommendation stating that only individuals who are members of the UF faculty may act as escorts and/or hooders; those faculty wishing to escort and/or hood a graduate they are not the advisor or committee

member for, must obtain permission from the graduate AND his/her faculty advisor.

2. Steph will send the draft to this committee for review.
3. Upon completion of the committee's review process, Steph will submit the final version of the recommendation to the Grad School for review and consideration.

Dual Degrees

- There was discussion as to whether graduates with dual degrees (2 degrees, not just two majors) should be allowed to "walk" with both colleges their respective degree came from.
- A motion was made by Hans van Oostrom stating "Graduates receiving dual degrees may not walk with both colleges if those colleges are being recognized at the same ceremony." The motion was seconded by Bruce Goldberger and voted on unanimously by the committee.

APPROVED Spring 2018 Commencement Schedule

Centralized UF Ceremonies:

Friday, May 4, 9:00am

Doctoral Ceremony

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

All Colleges

- Standard Doctoral Degrees: Ph.D., Ed.D.
- Professional Degrees: Au.D., D.B.A., D.N.P., D.P.M., D.P.T.

Friday, May 4, 2:00pm

Master's & Specialist's Ceremony #1

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

- College of Arts
- College of Design, Construction and Planning
- College of Health and Human Performance
- College of Journalism and Communications
- College of Medicine
- College of Pharmacy
- College of Public Health and Health Professions
- College of Veterinary Medicine
- Warrington College of Business

Friday, May 4, 7:30pm

Master's & Specialist's Ceremony #2

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

- College of Education
- Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering
- College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Saturday, May 5, 9:00am

Bachelor's Ceremony #1

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences *For degree candidates with the following majors - - -*
 - Anthropology
 - Astronomy
 - Biology (including Botany and Zoology)
 - Chemistry (including Biochemistry)
 - Classical Studies
 - Computer Science
 - Economics
 - English
 - Geography
 - Geological Sciences
 - History
 - Interdisciplinary
 - Jewish Studies
- College of Arts

Saturday, May 5, 2:00pm

Bachelor's Ceremony #2

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences *For degree candidates with the following majors - - -*
 - Languages, Literatures and Cultures (including Asian studies, East Asian languages, French, German and Russian)
 - Linguistics
 - Mathematics
 - Microbiology and Cell Science
 - Philosophy
 - Physics
 - Political Science
 - Psychology
 - Religion
 - Sociology, Criminology and Law
 - Spanish and Portuguese
 - Statistics
 - Sustainability Studies
 - Women's Studies and Gender Research
- College of Nursing

Sunday, May 6, 9:00am

Bachelor's Ceremony #3

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

- College of Education
- College of Public Health and Health Professions
- Warrington College of Business

Sunday, May 6, 2:00pm

Bachelor's Ceremony #4

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

- College of Design, Construction and Planning
- College of Health and Human Performance
- College of Journalism and Communications

College Ceremonies

Saturday, May 5, 7:00pm

Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

- College of Agricultural and Life Sciences -
School of Natural Resources and Environment

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

Sunday, May 6, 7:00pm

Bachelor's Degrees

- College of Engineering

Stephen C. O'Connell Center

Professional Degrees Ceremonies

Monday, May 7, 10:00am

Professional Degrees ONLY

- College of Pharmacy
Stephen C. O'Connell Center

Friday, May 18, 10:00am

Professional Degrees (JD) and Master's Degrees

- Fredric G. Levin College of Law
Stephen C. O'Connell Center

Friday, May 18, 2:00pm

Professional Degrees (DMD) and Master's Degrees

- College of Dentistry
Phillips Center for the Performing Arts

Saturday, May 19, 9:00am

Professional Degrees (MD) ONLY

- College of Medicine
Phillips Center for the Performing Arts

Saturday, May 26, 2:00pm

Professional Degrees (DVM) ONLY

- College of Veterinary Medicine
Phillips Center for the Performing Arts

Saturday, June 16, 3:30pm

Master's of Physician Assistant Studies Degrees ONLY

- College of Medicine
University Auditorium
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