

THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE
Commencement Committee Minutes
May 7, 2007

Members Present: C. Browder, J. Carr, S. Chaney, K. Crowley, A. Feig, M. Koper, C. Lee, M. Michel, U. Ograk, L. Reid, B. Smith, R. Stephenson, J. Tidwell-Ellington, E. Williamson.

Members Absent: R. Brown, R. Chardkoff, C. Cook, D. Eichhorn, L. Ellerman, K. Friery, F. Gibson, S. Hill, A. Hibbets, S. Jones, J. McKeithen, L. Rodden, D. Stokes, C. Thamelng.

The May 7, 2007, meeting of the Commencement Committee (CC), held in the Arts and Sciences Conference Room, was called to order at 3:34 p.m. by Committee Chair Karen Crowley. The meeting was comprised of the following agenda items:

1. Welcome

Ms. Crowley welcomed all Committee members present, thanking them for their attendance during this busy time of the semester.

2. Approval of December 4, 2006, Minutes

The minutes of the December 4, 2006, Commencement Committee meeting were reviewed and approved (motion made by Dr. John Carr, seconded by Carlette Browder).

3. Overview of 2007 Spring Commencement

Ms. Crowley made the following remarks about the 2007 Spring Commencement:

- Rehearsal is at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, May 18; CC members should arrive at 8:45.
- The commencement ceremony is at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 19; CC members should arrive at 1:00.
- As of this date, we will be awarding 671 degrees to 666 students, with 28 graduating *in absentia*; however, we can expect those numbers to change when we mark off those who did not meet degree requirements and identify additional students who will graduate *in absentia*.
- We will award a posthumous degree to Scott Sewell, a CIS major who passed away unexpectedly in February.
- Dr. Patrick Hébert will be the announcer for the ceremony.
- Dr. Susan Olson, Assistant Professor of Music, will be the soloist.
- The Honorable Robert Levy, District Attorney for the Third Judicial District and member of the Louisiana Board of Regents, will deliver the Commencement Address.

4. Review of Rehearsal and Ceremony Instructions

Ms. Williamson distributed and reviewed the written marching and commencement instructions with the committee, highlighting the following details:

- The final seating diagram, which will be distributed to CC members at Friday's rehearsal, will contain different row numbers than those indicated on today's handouts.
- Candidate seating lists will be posted on both the upper and lower concourses of Fant-Ewing.
- Each line of candidates will have three marshals - front-line, mid-line, and end-line.
- On commencement day, CC members should check in with Ms. Williamson before 1:00 p.m. in order to be at their designated stations by 1:00.
- The accurate reporting of absentees to Ms. Williamson on the day of commencement is critical.
- Dr. Anthony Feig and Dr. Mark Doherty will serve as faculty marshals, escorting the degree candidates onto the arena floor and leading them through the ceremony.

The following issues were also discussed. The names of CC members raising the issues and/or responding to the issues are indicated in parentheses:

- Cameras, cell phones, and gum are prohibited during the ceremony for students and faculty alike. (Crowley) During rehearsal, a strong warning should be issued to students in this regard (Carr, Crowley). A reminder regarding cameras and cell phones will be included in correspondence being sent to marching faculty. (Williamson, Crowley)
- If cell phones and/or cameras are taken from students before they step onto the arena floor, masking tape is needed to label each piece of equipment with the student's name. (Stephenson) Ziploc bags pre-labeled with the row number would be helpful to place the equipment in for safekeeping and easy identification. (Koper)
- Degree candidates who arrive extremely late should be sent to their respective lines. (Koper, Williamson)
- During rehearsal, a stronger warning should be issued regarding wearing spike heels on commencement day. Women wearing spike heels slow the progress of the processional and put the women at risk of injury, since

such shoes are not compatible with the steep, narrow steps leading from the upper to the lower concourse. (Smith, Crowley)

- Additional safety pins are needed in the marshals' kits. (Carr)
- Until the recession is completely over, graduates should not be allowed to return to the arena floor to meet special-needs guests. Both guests and graduates must be encouraged to vacate the arena floor after the ceremony. (Williamson)
- ULM's official photographer and the photographer from Chappell Graduation Images will be allowed unrestricted access to the arena during the ceremony. Photographers/representatives from local media outlets will be allowed restricted floor-level access within an area to be determined tomorrow (May 8) by Ms. Crowley and Ms. Williamson (upper level access is unrestricted). Ms. Crowley will ask Laura Harris, Director of Media Relations, to communicate with local outlets regarding the area of the arena floor available to the media and the need for media representatives to have official press passes/credentials. (Crowley, Williamson)
- Because renovations to Fant-Ewing have not been completed (e.g., wheelchair-accessible restrooms are not yet available), we will not publicize the addition of the wheelchair ramp which provides upper-level concourse access. Instead, we will continue to invite special-needs guests to use the service entrance to enter the lower concourse for floor-level seating on the perimeter of the arena (our use of lower-concourse dressing rooms allows easier access to restroom facilities). Yet, we fully expect some guests to see the new wheelchair ramp and use it to enter at the upper concourse level, which we hope will ease the crowded seating area on the arena floor. (Crowley, Michel)
- Cords, pins, and other commencement regalia must have been given to recognize academic achievement (i.e., a high GPA) if it is to be worn during the ceremony. (Tidwell-Ellington, Crowley)

5. Miscellaneous Topics

- Ms. Crowley noted that committee appointments for 2007-08 are effective August 13, 2007, meaning that current CC members will serve through August commencement.
- Ms. Crowley recognized Dr. Carr for his many years of dedicated service to the Commencement Committee and related that he will rotate off at the end of this service year.
- In anticipation of our long-serving, experienced marshals rotating off the CC, Ms. Williamson stated that lead and mid-line marshals will exchange places/duties during August commencement. This will allow newer marshals to gain experience at the lead position while under the watchful eye of a veteran lead marshal.
- Dr. Rebecca Stephenson, Sharon Chaney, Julia Tidwell-Ellington, and Beth Smith will assist Ms. Williamson in hanging signs in Fant-Ewing at 7:00 a.m. on Friday, May 18.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen A. Crowley, Chair
Associate University Registrar
07 May 2007