

# THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE

## Commencement Committee Minutes

August 13, 2007

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**Members Present:** B. Bennett, C. Browder, R. Brown, D. Buczala, S. Chaney, R. Chardkoff, S. Chenoweth, J. Cottingham, K. Crowley, T. Doke, A. Feig, R. Fiorillo, A. Hibbets, S. Humes, S. Jones, R. Keiser, M. Koper, C. Lee, J. McKeithen, L. Mondschein, U. Ograk, S. Owens, A. Picard, C. Thameling, J. Tidwell-Ellington, N. White, E. Williamson, M. Wortham.

**Members Absent:** M. Caldwell, S. Davidson, D. Eichhorn, L. Ellerman, K. Friery, L. Harris, S. Hill, M. Michel, M. Ramsey, L. Reid, L. Rodden, B. Smith, R. Stephenson, D. Stokes.

The August 13, 2007, meeting of the Commencement Committee (CC), held in Library 651, was called to order at 8:47 a.m. by Committee Chair Karen Crowley. The meeting was comprised of the following agenda items:

### 1. Welcome and Introduction of Members

Ms. Crowley welcomed all members of the committee and thanked them for their willingness to serve, after which members introduced themselves and stated whether they are new or returning committee members.

### 2. Guidelines for University Committees

Ms. Crowley reviewed the basic guidelines for University committees, as presented earlier in the morning to Committee Chairs by Associate Provost Eric Pani.

### 3. Overview of Commencement Committee

Ms. Crowley described the CC's function as being to provide meaningful, dignified commencement exercises for graduates and their families/guests, as set forth in the group's mission statement. The large membership of 45 achieves this by planning and executing all details of ULM's three commencement ceremonies each year. Because members carry out their newly-learned duties so few times during the course of a year, the rotation schedule calls for members to serve a maximum of four (4) years, with some exceptions being allowed upon the Chair's recommendation and the Provost's approval.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members

Ms. Crowley stated that CC members are responsible for attending a Committee meeting before each of ULM's three ceremonies, as well as the rehearsal and ceremony associated with each commencement (this is a twelve-month committee, even for nine-month employees). Co-Chair Emily Williamson discussed the structure of the CC, stating that there are four subcommittees: Operations, Music, Graduates, and Faculty. Subcommittee assignments for 2007-08 have not yet been made.

### 5. Key Dates for 2007-08

Ms. Crowley called Committee members' attention to the following key dates for the upcoming year:

- 2007 Fall Commencement Committee Meeting – 11/26/07, 3:30 p.m. (tentative)
- 2007 Fall Commencement Rehearsal – 12/14/07, 9:00 a.m.
- 2007 Fall Commencement Ceremony – 12/15/07, 2:00 p.m.
- 2008 Spring Commencement Committee Meeting – 4/28/08, 3:30 p.m. (tentative)
- 2008 Spring Commencement Rehearsal – 05/16/08, 9:00 a.m.
- 2008 Spring Commencement Ceremony – 05/17/08, 2:00 p.m.
- 2008 Summer Commencement Committee Meeting – 7/21/08, 3:30 p.m. (tentative)
- 2008 Summer Commencement Rehearsal – 08/08/08, 9:00 a.m.
- 2008 Summer Commencement Ceremony – 08/09/08, 2:00 p.m.

Relative to the rumor that summer commencement is soon to be discontinued, Ms. Crowley stated that the summer ceremony remains on the calendar. The CC will continue to plan for summer ceremonies unless otherwise notified by the administration.

### 6. Outlook for 2007-08

The following will be implemented during 2007-08:

- Chilled water will be provided to ULM policemen after they return from traffic duty (at the beginning of the ceremony).

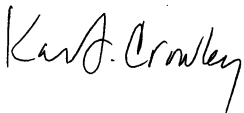
- For large graduating classes which result in large crowds of attendees, Cushman carts will be used as shuttles between Fant-Ewing and distant parking lots;
- A student organization will be engaged to assist with wheelchair-bound guests as they use the ramp entrance to enter/exit Fant-Ewing. Sharon Chaney recommended an organization comprised of students training to become occupational therapy assistants.
- Mirrors are needed in the administration robing area. [Crowley]
- A hanging rack, mirror, and sugar-free mints are needed in the faculty robing area. [Wortham]
- More than one CC member may be needed in the faculty robing area. A room larger than Coliseum 31 would be helpful, if one is available. [Crowley]

## 7. Other Business

- In response to an issue raised by Dr. Carl Thameling, Ms. Williamson asked marshals to notify her if numbers posted on the walls needed to be moved.
- Ms. Williamson noted that we will continue to assign three marshals to each line of candidates.
- Dr. Ross Keiser volunteered to bring his laser level to rehearsal. Ms. Williamson will use it to ensure that chairs used on the arena floor are straight.
- Ms. Williamson asked marshals to notify her when their kits need replenishing by writing their kit number and the items needed on a Post-It and submitting it to her when they return their materials after commencement.
- In response to committee members' requests, Ms. Williamson will add two items to the marshal kits: a door stop to hold open the heavy stairwell doors and a diagram explaining how to properly don a hood. Ms. Williamson reminded marshals to return the door stops to their kits, as well close the stairwell doors.
- The letter sent to candidates should be revised to indicate regarding candidates who have letters or writing on caps or gowns. The consequence for such should be changed from a \$100 fine to possible removal from the procession, which means the student would not participate in the ceremony.
- Julia Tidwell-Ellington and Dr. Aleecia Hibbets asked Ms. Crowley to amend her rehearsal comments to include a statement regarding the fact that students receiving graduate degrees are not eligible for Latin honors. Such distinction is given only to baccalaureate degree recipients.
- There was broad discussion about faculty regalia. In the future, Ms. Crowley will send instructions/information to faculty regarding their regalia and other appropriate accessories.
- Dr. Jean Cottingham suggested that a CC representative be placed on the upper concourse of Fant-Ewing to give directions to candidates, marching faculty, and guests. That representative would also be responsible for contacting ULM police or Marge Michel, the nurse on duty at commencement, when necessary.
- Ms. Crowley and Ms. Williamson encouraged the membership to offer input regarding Commencement policies, procedures, and activities as a means of enhancing and improving our ceremony and rehearsal.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen A. Crowley, Chair  
Associate University Registrar  
13 August 2007

(approved 11/26/2007)