

**THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE**  
**Commencement Committee Minutes**  
**August 14, 2006**

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**Members Present:** C. Browder, R. Brown, M. Caldwell, S. Chaney, R. Chardkoff, K. Crowley, M. DeGennaro, D. Eichhorn, A. Feig, F. Gibson, S. Hill, A. Hibbets, S. Humes, S. Jones, M. Koper, C. Lee, J. McKeithen, M. Michel, U. Ograk, A. Picard, M. Ramsey, L. Reid, L. Rodden, C. Singletary, B. Smith, R. Stephenson, C. Thameling, J. Tidwell-Ellington, E. Williamson.

**Members Absent:** J. Carr, C. Cook, L. Ellerman, K. Friery, R. Keiser, P. Melton, D. Stokes.

The August 14, 2006, meeting of the Commencement Committee, held in Library 651, was called to order at 8:46 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, both new and returning, and thanked them for their willingness to serve, after which members introduced themselves and indicated their positions on campus.

**2. Guidelines for University Committees**

Ms. Crowley reminded the committee that, in order to meet the requirements set forth in the *Guidelines and Policies for University Committees* presented by Provost Stephen P. Richters in the meeting of University Committee Chairs held earlier in the morning, attendance will be taken at meetings held during the 2006-07 year. Ms. Crowley encourage committee members to contact her or Co-Chair Emily Williamson if they could not attend a meeting, quoting Dr. Richters as saying that absence is not a negative but the lack of a positive.

**3. Overview of Commencement Committee**

Ms. Crowley described Commencement as the premier event of any university, including ULM. The Commencement Committee's responsibility is to ensure that the ceremony is a well-organized, smoothly-run event which is memorable for our graduates and guests. The committee meets during University Week and three additional times (i.e., once before each of our three Commencements). Commencement Committee members receive immediate gratification for a *job well done*, since the fruits of our labor can be seen in the successful ceremony which results.

**4. Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members**

Ms. Crowley stated that the committee was reorganized in 2005-06, a move which resulted in the creation of the four subcommittees of Operations, Music, Graduates, and Faculty. Subcommittee assignments for the 2006-07 year and related responsibilities will be emailed to committee members in the near future. In general terms, however, all committee members are responsible to be available on key dates to the extent possible and to perform their assigned duties. To facilitate communication efforts, Ms. Crowley asked all members to give their home and/or mobile phone numbers.

**5. Key Dates for 2006-07**

Ms. Crowley called committee members' attention to the following key dates for the upcoming year, reminding them of the importance of each person's participation:

- 2006 Fall Commencement: rehearsal – 12/15/06, 9:00 a.m.; ceremony - 12/16/06, 2:00 p.m.
- 2007 Spring Commencement: rehearsal – 05/18/06, 9:00 a.m.; ceremony - 05/19/06, 2:00 p.m.
- 2007 Summer Commencement: rehearsal – 08/10/06, 9:00 a.m.; ceremony - 08/11/06, 2:00 p.m.

**6. What's New for 2006-07**

Because summer graduation falls at the conclusion of one academic year and the beginning of another, Ms. Crowley noted the two major changes during the 2006 Summer Commencement - the new skirts for the diploma tables and the Pharm.D. hoods table and the addition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" to the program. By the December Commencement of the new academic year, Ms. Crowley hopes to have purchased cordless microphones for the President, the Provost, and the Commencement speaker. Additionally, a subcommittee will review the current policy on honors regalia and make any resulting recommendations in that regard to the Provost, who will forward the matter to the President's Cabinet and the Faculty Senate for review.

Further, Ms. Crowley mentioned two issues which are merely occasional topics of discussion at this juncture, neither of which carries with it any suggestion that it will be instituted in 2006-07 or at any time in the future. Relevant to the possibility that we will no longer have summer graduations, Ms. Crowley noted that the summer Commencement ceremonies will remain scheduled events unless the administration decides otherwise. There is also the possibility that, at some point in the future, we could possibly issue diplomas to graduates immediately after the conclusion of the


Commencement ceremony. Dr. Aleecia Hibbetts commented that upon her recent graduation from the University of Alabama, diplomas were issued to Ph.D. graduates at the conclusion of the graduation ceremony. She suggested that we might implement such a procedure in phases over the span of several commencements (e.g., issue graduate-level diplomas in the first commencement of the plan, add Pharm.D.'s in the following commencement). Sharon Chaney added that such a plan would benefit some graduates from the College of Health Sciences who must provide copies of their diplomas as part of the licensure process.

#### **7. Other Business**

- Ms. Williamson commented that some committee members will be trained in two areas of responsibility.
- Dr. Mike Ramsey expressed the need for more marshals per graduate line in the fall and spring commencements.
- Ms. Chaney suggested that we prohibit chewing gum among the degree candidates, which prompted Ms. Williamson to note that line marshals must continue to check candidates' appearance carefully to ensure that they are not taking prohibited items (e.g., cell phones, cameras) onto the Coliseum floor and that their mortar boards are free of writing.
- Mary Caldwell asked that we emphasize to degree candidates the importance of quickly stating their last names when approaching the final checker just before entering the arena during the processional.
- Dr. Florencetta Gibson asked whether committee meetings would continue being held just prior to each Commencement and, for planning purposes, asked for ample notice of the meeting date. Ms. Crowley and Ms. Williamson responded affirmatively to both questions, adding that of late the Committee meetings have been held somewhat earlier than traditionally scheduled.
- Ms. Crowley expressed appreciation to those who worked the recent summer ceremony, noting that a successful commencement is the result of the efforts of all committee members. In turn, Linda Reid and Dr. Carl Thamelning thanked Ms. Williamson and Ms. Crowley for their leadership.
- Both Ms. Crowley and Ms. Williamson the membership to offer input regarding Commencement policies, procedures, and activities. Ms. Crowley emphasized that change can be a vehicle for growth and improvement, both of which should be goals of the Commencement Committee both individually and collectively.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen A. Crowley, Chair  
Associate University Registrar  
14 August 2006