

Calendar Committee Minutes
May 24, 2001
1:00 p.m.

Present: Dr. Ruth Carroll; Dr. Ron Core; Mr. Mike Deal; Ms. Cynthia Frost; Dr. Carl Gooding; Dr. Randy Gunter; Dr. Clara Krug; Dr. Ming Li; Dr. Jill Lockwood; Dr. Bruce McLean; Mr. Jonathan Perkins; and Dr. Vaughn Vandegrift.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Dr. Vandegrift.

The minutes of the April 10, 2001 Calendar Committee meeting were approved with corrections noted.

Dr. Vandegrift started the discussion of the December 2001 commencement date which had been previously approved for Friday, December 14, 2001. He explained that recently the NCAA Championship game to be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee was moved from Saturday, December 15, 2001, to 8:00 p.m. on Friday, December 14, 2001. Dr. Vandegrift stated that if Georgia Southern is fortunate enough to be in the championship game this year, a safety issue for students, faculty, and staff is created by the events being on the same day.

Dr. McLean said that the committee should address this issue and asked to hear ideas about possible alternatives for the scheduling of commencement.

Dr. Vandegrift reported that several alternatives exist. Two feasible alternatives are as follows:

- 1) Move the 4-day exam period back one day so that exams start on Saturday, December 8, 2001. Exams would end on Wednesday, December 12, 2001, and commencement could be scheduled on Thursday, December 13, 2001.
- 2) Leave the exam period as is and move commencement to Sunday, December 16, 2001.

It was noted that there would be a playoff game on Saturday, December 8, 2001, which may also conflict with exams on that day. Also noted was the fact that an alternative of moving commencement to Saturday, December 15, 2001, would not be a good alternative because people would still be rushing back from the championship game to commencement.

Dr. Krug reported responses from CLASS faculty regarding possible alternatives for commencement. She had 24 respondents, 12 of which preferred having no commencement in December and allowing students completing in December to attend the following May's commencement. Two respondents favored moving the exam schedule to begin on Saturday, December 8, 2001. Dr. Krug reported that some respondents vehemently opposed this option because some student music groups have performances scheduled on Friday, December 7, which would cause a hardship for these students if exams were scheduled on the following day. Four of the CLASS respondents opted for a delay of commencement to Saturday, December 15, 2001, and 5 respondents supported moving commencement to Sunday, December 16, 2001.

Dr. Krug asked if a long term solution might be have no August or December commencements and to allow students with only one term left to complete graduation requirements to march in May and students with 2 terms left to complete to wait until the subsequent May commencement.

Dr. Vandegrift stated that though this may be a consideration for the future, it is not an option for this December since we have already published a December commencement.

Dr. Lockwood suggested that the committee consider the option of starting exams on Saturday, December 8 and the Thursday, December 13 commencement with the understanding that the institution be considerate of those music students who may have performances on Friday evening, December 7.

Dr. Gooding stated that another alternative might be to do nothing as he reminded the committee that in 1998 we had a championship game played during commencement. He also suggested that the committee consider an alternative of one morning commencement ceremony on Friday, December 14 in Paulson Stadium and, for a rain plan, hold the ceremony in Hanner and issue each student a set number of tickets for guests.

Dr. Core noted that the stadium may not be available on that date due to a commitment the university has made for the Georgia High School Football championship game.

Dr. Lockwood suggested that if the stadium is not available, we could have one ceremony in Hanner with tickets issued for guests. She also suggested we investigate the possibility of closed circuit television broadcast of commencement to the Russell Union so that additional guests might be able to go there for viewing of the ceremony.

Dr. Gunter reminded the committee that Georgia Southern has always prided itself in supporting our first generation graduates by not limiting guest attendance at commencement. He also noted that a Thursday commencement would be a positive in that students would have completed their term and would not need to return to Statesboro after the game for commencement.

Dr. McLean stated that faculty are feeling that the final exam time is already compressed and to start exams earlier would add to that feeling. He stated that he would rather see commencement on Friday, December 14 or Sunday, December 16.

Jonathan Perkins said that he felt the best option would be a Sunday, December 16 commencement but that it would be less confusing to just leave the commencement date as Friday, December 14 since that date has already been published.

Dr. Vandegrift summarized the preferences indicated by the committee members input as follows:

First Choice:

Leave commencement on Friday, December 14 but have only one ceremony at Paulson Stadium with Hanner and guest tickets for the backup plan.

Second Choice:

Start exams on Saturday, December 8 and move commencement to Thursday, December 13.

Third Choice:

Move commencement to Sunday, December 16.

The idea of having exams on Sunday, December 9 was discussed but was abandoned because the committee did not believe this was a viable alternative.

It was agreed that the committee preferred leaving commencement on Friday, December 14 and to have one ceremony at Paulson Stadium and to use Hanner with guest tickets if Paulson is not available. Dr. Core agreed to check on the availability of Paulson and report to Dr. Vandegrift so that Dr. Vandegrift can report the outcome by email to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Bacon
Recording Secretary