Commencement Committee
February 10, 2000

The meeting of the Commencement Committee was held on Thursday, February 10th at 10:00 a.m. Members present were President Patton, Evelyn Babey, Gayla Domke, Jamey Forehand, Penny Hallock, Kurt Keppler, Shannon Mosher, John Nelson, Larry Rifkind and Roger Weed. The minutes of the meeting of September 23rd were approved. Dr. Patton discussed the ceremony changes which will be made due to the move to semesters. The students were polled for their preference, and they support having the December ceremony at the end of the semester rather than after the holiday break. Therefore it will not be possible to award the diploma at the ceremony since there would not be enough time to process grading information. Reviewing the most recent commencement, it was noted that the vocalist was not present due to an auto accident on the way to campus that morning. The afternoon substitute did a wonderful job. The faculty did like having the ceremony on a Tuesday rather than the weekend. There was a problem with late grades for graduating students.

Issues associated with the changes to be made in the ceremony were discussed. Seating will remain as before. The students will proceed to the stage and shake hands with the president and dean, but the real diploma will not be presented. It was determined that there should be something to be handed to the graduate. Wording should be drafted which conveys congratulations and states that upon receiving final grades the diploma will be mailed. It was noted that perhaps the SGA might be able to help with rolling this item and adding the ribbon to prepare it to be handed out during the ceremony. Hooding the Ph.D.'s will be continued. Honors will be determined on the last term since final grades will not be available. The President's Award for Excellence will also be determined on the previous semester totals. Two of these awards will be given in case of extremely close GPA's. Concerning who will walk at the ceremony, President Patton prefers to stay with the 2.0 requirement. Penny Hallock and Evelyn Babey will look at the last semester to see what the "tolerance" is for reasonable possibilities to graduate (i.e., 1.9 + or -). For Education students the PRAXIS exam results are sometimes late. If all else is acceptable, then they should be allowed to graduate.

Dr. Patton asked the committee to continue to think of names to suggest for commencement speakers. Also the group was asked to submit any additional nominations for honorary degrees. A formal submission is needed for consideration. Dr. Keppler reported on the research on diploma paper types shown to various focus groups. The larger paper can be printed on the machine we can purchase. The printer will be here within two weeks, and all should be set in time for the May ceremony. Dr. Keppler also told the committee of the student, Hieu H. Tran, who was recently shot and killed in Gwinnett County. He was to graduate in August. The Robinson College of Business recommends that he be awarded a posthumous degree. Such a motion was made by Dr. Keppler, seconded by Dr. Domke and passed unanimously.

Submitted by,
Frances B. Stone