The meeting of the Commencement Committee was held on Thursday, September 21st at 10:00 a.m. Members present were: President Patton, Anthony Coleman, Gayla Domke, Jerry Edwards, Charles Gilbreath, Penny Hallock, Kurt Keppler, Ralph LaRossa, Catherine McGovern, Larry Rifkind and Roger Weed.

Dr. Patton commented that commencement speakers need to be dynamic, and also willing to speak without receiving payment. Please give recommendations to Dr. Patton.

The problem with getting enough volunteers was noted. Charles Gilbreath commented that he would work to help increase the number of volunteers assisting with commencement. Perhaps he could offer a deal to attract students to help, such as letting them register early. August is a difficult time to find volunteers since it is between semesters. This time only two or three volunteers came for the 1:00 ceremony and there was only one for the 5:00 and that person left early. Catherine McGovern said that she had two volunteers who stayed all day to help. There should be more than one person at the door to take tickets. Perhaps each V.P. unit would be responsible for providing a number of exempt staff each semester. Dr. Patton commented that this year there will be ceremonies on a Saturday, a Sunday and a Monday. The weekday will be an easy time to get helpers. The Tuesday ceremony was successful and the campus was open and looked alive. The August ceremony was the day before fall classes began. Dr. Patton suggested that a subcommittee could look at the situation. Charles Gilbreath will head that, with Larry Rifkind and Kurt Keppler joining him. They will report back to the committee.

The committee was reminded that preparations always need to be made for any disabled guests who might attend, since there seem to be more in the audience than before. There should be someone to sign for the hearing impaired, as once was done. This service will be provided at each ceremony. Information should be provided in the pre-graduation letter stating that the hearing impaired should sit on the left side of the arena for signing service. The elevator situation has improved, but students need to be forewarned that it is for those with special needs.

Someone will check with media services to see if there could be speakers outside the doors on the 4th floor so those in the hallway could hear. A university police officer should be outside each elevator on each floor providing security. The back door to the arena should be kept locked to the outside so people will not enter through the wrong door.

During the commencement exercises it should be stated that there is recognition of "candidates for degrees" since we now cannot say "graduates." If one is not mathematically excluded because of grades, then one is entitled to participate. Student eligibility is determined at the beginning of the semester. Dr. Patton stated that this ceremony should be as inclusive as possible. Dr. Rifkind commented that the best-case scenario should be calculated for the student. Students should be reminded that they can only walk once, so if they aren't successful the time they do walk, they will not participate a second time.

The rolled paper presented to student who walk will state: "To all candidates for graduation: We are happy that you were able to join us for these commencement exercises. Upon receipt for final grades for X Semester, 2000, and successful completion of degrees requirements, your diploma will be mailed to you. Please allow eight weeks for delivery. Please let us know if your mailing address changes by calling 404/651-3387."

Kurt Keppler presented information concerning a posthumous degree request from Policy Studies. The
committee unanimously approved this request. Also approved was a motion to exclude from participating in the commencement exercises only those students who are mathematically excluded.

Dr. Patton said that Herman Russell has been nominated for an honorary Ph.D. in Business Administration. With approval from the Chancellor's Office, this will be awarded at the December ceremony. Also discussed was the color of the hoods which are currently gray and red. Kurt moved and Dr. Domke seconded, that these be changed to the GSU blue and crimson. This passed unanimously. In response to a question, Dr. Patton said that students will continue to move the tassels on their caps and receive hoods in the commencement ceremony.

Submitted by,
Frances B. Stone