The meeting of the Commencement Committee was held on Tuesday, April 17 at 11:00 a.m. Members present were: President Patton, Elizabeth Firestone, Kurt Kepller, Rebecca Laurens, Catherine McGovern, Ed Miles, Sue Seago, and Roger Weed.

This is the first meeting of new Senate committee. President Patton reviewed the work of the committee, saying that the meetings include a routine review of the Commencement ceremony, work on developing an on-going list of possible speakers, review of honorary degree proposals and other matters, and approval of the awarding of posthumous degrees where appropriate. We do not provide any payment for speakers and we need approximately 6 per year. The theme for the upcoming commencement will be growth and development in the sciences. Speakers in May will be: Mike Cassidy, President of the Georgia Research Alliance and Parker H. "Pete" Petit, Chairman, President and CEO of Matria Healthcare. Future speakers will be Russ Toal, State Department of Community Health; Jeff Koplan, Director of CDC; and Bonnie Phipps, President of Promina.

Becky Laurens discussed first aid needs at commencement and it was agreed that there would be wheelchairs on site and a nurse practitioner present. This seems necessary due to the size of the crowd and the presence of many older guests. For student events the police are present and provide any needed first aid. The tickets for this spring ceremony will be embossed to avoid forgery. There will be police as well as two ticket takers at each door on the third floor of the arena. Dr. Patton has talked with the Provost about staff taking comp time if they volunteer to work at commencement. It was estimated that 24 volunteers will be needed. No free parking is provided on commencement day.

Unfortunately there will be 3 posthumous degrees at the May commencement. It is expected that two of the families will attend to receive the degrees from the President at the special reception prior to the commencement ceremony. Dr. Patton commented that there should be someone "signing" at each of the ceremonies. Kurt Kepller and Sue Seago will schedule this. There have been no honorary degree nominees this year. The announcement asking for nominations will be sent early this year.

Submitted by,
Frances B. Stone