The fall semester meeting of the Commencement Committee was held on Friday, October 11th at 10:00 a.m. Those attending were: President Patton, Gayle Christian, Anne Emanuel, Erin Erskine, Eric LeCalvez, Ken Matheney, Al Mc Williams, Marian Meyers, Tom Netzel, Marcia Pearl, Cherise Peters, Larry Rifkind, Christopher Robertson, Sue Seago, Kimberly Smith, and Becca Stout. The first item of business was discussion of the commencement ceremony. Dr. Patton welcomed new members and stated that the goal was to provide a good experience for the students. The committee helps to identify possible speakers and reviews the ceremony for problems or possible improvements. Mayor Franklin was asked to speak before and was not able to do so, but will when her schedule allows. Linda Di Santis is the new City Attorney and is GSU alum, and is another good choice. Also a faculty member may be asked to speak. This used to be done once a year. Additional names suggested included Arthur Blank, Bernie Marcus, Louis Sullivan and Dr. Satcher.

In reviewing the ceremony, Dr. Patton said that he hears many compliments when he is in the community. In August there were 1270 graduating. The person scheduled to play the trumpet did not come, so only the organ was used, and that was fine. It was decided to have just the organ provide the music for the ceremony in the future. More volunteers were needed to help with the ceremony. Earlier, only about 24 were requested, but last year there were 48 volunteers and that number was necessary. Concerning faculty attendance, some ceremonies have a small number present. In the past, Arts & Sciences used to have a directive requiring a minimum attending. This stopped some years ago. The graduates will now purchase their own gowns instead of renting them. The students were in the loop when this and other decisions were made.

Due to continued growth, two ceremonies in May will no longer suffice. For the first time there will be three this May 10th – at 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. With the new perpetual calendar in place commencements will only be on Saturdays and Sundays. The dates for commencement each year need to be approved by this committee to avoid any possible confusion. The catalog currently has the incorrect date (August 4) for 2003. Once the wrong date is published, it is difficult to get all sources corrected. The understanding is that the perpetual calendar provides a guideline, but the ceremony dates must always be reviewed and approved at this committee meeting, Dr. Patton said. It was moved and seconded that the committee adopt the perpetual calendar, and the motion passed. It was pointed out that the committee has to look three years ahead to check these dates.

The call for honorary degree nominations goes out from Dr. Patton, and those received are brought by him to this committee. Following discussion and agreement, he takes the recommendation to the Board of Regents for approval. Discussion turned to the three ceremonies and how best to group the students. The natural grouping by numbers would be Arts & Sciences at 10:00, Robinson College of Business at 2:00 and the remaining four together at 6:00. The committee, with one dissent, approved this grouping for May 2003.

Submitted by,

Frances B. Stone