The fall semester meeting of the Commencement Committee was held on Wednesday, August 27th at 2:00 p.m. Those attending were: President Patton, Rashida Davis, Erin Erskine, Eric Le Calvez, Zhongshan Li, Peter Lyons, Ed Miles, San Miller, Marcia Pearl, Cherise Peters, Christopher Robertson, Jamaal Schoby, and Rebecca Stout. The minutes of the Meeting of February 19, 2003, were approved.

The first item of business was discussion of the commencement speakers. Dr. Patton commented that we had good luck since Ken Lewis, a Georgia State graduate and President of the Bank of America, had agreed to speak at commencement before, and separate from, the announcement of his gift to the College of Health and Human Sciences. Please give Dr. Patton names to be considered for future commencement speakers. Hopefully, these will be people the nominator will have heard speak on some occasion. The theme in recent semesters has been related to health sciences. Others suggested were Andy Agwunobi (Grady Hospital’s new President); Mike Esterly, Chair of the Georgia State University Foundation; Paula Rosput, President of AGL Resources; Bill Warren, Chair of the Good Samaritan Clinic. Suggestions may be sent by e-mail to Dr. Patton. He noted that it is easier to get individual speakers for each of the two or three ceremonies than one speaker for all.

Discussion of the ceremony followed. At 1:00 the sound system was down, then it was fixed and arrangements were made for three alternate systems for the 5:00 ceremony. Now new systems are being considered, hopefully to have in place by December. Everyone now knows not to admit attendees during the speech, but some were admitted during the student awards and this was much too noisy. The new sound system should include sound in the hallways so guests can hear even if they can’t enter the arena at certain times.

There should be more volunteers in the aisles to encourage quiet. It is hoped that quiet can be maintained at least through the Ph.D.’s, Masters and gold cords. Dr. Patton will say more about this in his remarks. There were enough volunteers to manage the critical needs areas, but more are always needed. As of this date there are 2,284 students planning to graduate, but there is one more week before the final numbers are determined. There are over 200 “no shows” at each ceremony in August, this impacts planning greatly (seating needed on the floor, etc.). Data should be tracked so these can be anticipated. The bookstore will be contacted to see if the number purchasing regalia could help in planning. It was suggested that perhaps tickets could be distributed differently- perhaps with the regalia.

Consideration is being given to rotating the times the colleges participate so that they do not always have the same time. A schedule for next year will be made and presented. Other comments include proofreading the names in the program. Photos are taken at the ceremony, but consideration is being given for other options, such as videos or a picture place for students to take their own photos as well. Dr. Patton commented that we want the students to leave being happy.