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Clarification and Transparency on Commencement Changes

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Senate Executive Committee Request for Information

Clarification and Transparency on Commencement Changes

Submitted by: Christopher Cartright
2/20/2019

Question(s):

How was the commencement task force formed and who was assigned to that committee?

With whom, specifically, did the committee speak?

What mechanisms were used to collect feedback?

What was the nature of the response?

What has been the Registrar's Office's role in planning commencement activities, and why was that unit assigned to this task?

Can the university indicate, in a unified statement, the specific requirements for faculty attendance at commencement ceremonies this semester?

Rationale:

The FAQ on commencement said there was a committee that decided on the new procedures. Student reaction (in the George Anne and elsewhere) indicate high levels of disapproval of the decisions on commencement. The Faculty Senate has a responsibility to ensure transparency in University decision making. While several statements have been made regarding attendance at commencement ceremonies, some faculty remain unsure of the overall requirements for attending commencement at the new University. Since attending both ceremonies would require more than two hours of travel time, particularly during an important grading period, changes to faculty responsibilities in this regard may be significant. The Faculty Senate should ensure that these changes are communicated as clearly and transparently as possible.

Response:

2/22/2019: The SEC did approve this to move to the floor. After this RFI was submitted, the SGA voted not to pursue repealing the changes to commencement (re: student response at the time of announcement). The majority of this has been answered in other venues (including the previous Senate meeting), and the SEC does not see the need to revisit these on the floor. Faculty were contacted by their SEC reps during the Fall semester for feedback; please check with your representative for the nature of the collection and feedback for your college.