

**Roger Williams University
University Life Committee
Meetings October 17, 2018**

Attendance:

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|---|---|---|---|
| X | Roberts, Joseph (Senator, SSNS - SS, Chair) | | Tsankova, Jenny (SHAE-Ed) |
| X | Coon, Julie (SJS) | | Yonan, Scott J (Student Life) |
| X | Duffy, Elizabeth (SHAE-VPA) | | No Representative (SAHP) |
| X | Fagan, Christine (DAS) | | No Representative (SHAE-HUM) |
| X | Jeznach, Lillian (SECCM) | | No Representative (SSNS -MNS) |
| X | King, John J (Student Life) | X | Cole, Robert (Provost — Guest) |
| X | Matos, Gerald (GSB) | X | Stone, Melanie (Assistant Director University |

Commencement — Guest

NOTE: X: Present/ O: Online

New Business

Commencement

There were numerous concerns from the May 2017 Commencement changes that parents, students, and faculty mentioned after the ceremony. The concerns included the following:

- Students expected to be met by the President when they marched, and that became the luck of the draw, and that was a disappointment. They did not seem to even know who/what the Provost is.
- There was no formal march across the stage, just a few steps, then down, no “moment” on the stage
- There was a poor vantage point for filming and projecting onto the screen.
- There was no way to follow the printed program and know which student was walking across the stage when — it was not alphabetical (because the ABC rows

were split up. By the time families figured out where the student was, it was over

(see above, no "moment" on the stage), and in some cases, maybe there were two

degrees/schools going at the same time?

- The announcers often spoke over one another, so names were not clear; also many

names were mispronounced.

- There was no verbal recognition of Latin honors in the announcement of the

student--I think one dean/reader might have done that?

The meeting to discuss these issues became more of a brainstorming session to think about ways to improve the ceremony while also trying to keep the length manageable.

Suggestions included rethinking the organization of the stage to have a center exit with the President there for pictures with each graduate. This would allow for every student to have their moment with the President and would provide a clear photo moment for the students and their parents. This would also allow easy projection of the graduate to the audience.

There needs to be a clear template for the reading of names including timing. Every graduate deserves the same treatment but the length of the service is also an issue. For

example, reading Latin Honors is important but each addition may add 1-2 seconds to the

ceremony which quickly adds up. This will be further studied by the Commencement

organizers and the cabinet. In the future, it may be possible to have a bar code that will

allow for the projection of the student's name on the screen as they walk across. The

committee will also make sure that the students will know before the ceremony which side

of the stage they will enter so that they can communicate that with their parents.