

Commencement Team: Communication Subgroup
Meeting Minutes
10/28/09

Attendees: Rickey Lattie, Kristin McDaniel, Yvette Morales, Michael Whitehawk

Commencement Guide for Guests

- The group agreed that a commencement guide for guests would be a helpful addition to the commencement website.
- The guide would be beneficial to those less “tech savvy” and who may not be able to navigate the website.
- Guests could print the document and bring it with them to the ceremony and email the document to other guests.
- A parent guide would contain mostly static information and would only need minimal updating each semester.
- A candidate guide would require constant updating and has the potential to contain incorrect or outdated information. The group did not recommend a candidate guide at this time.
- The guide should be no more than 10 pages.
- There were concerns that the guide would be redundant. Others said that sometimes it is good to repeat information.
- The group liked the guide example from American University in Washington, D.C.
- The guide should contain at least the following items:
 - Parking guide
 - Shuttle Bus Information
 - Strahan Interior Map
 - Driving Directions
 - A link and phone number for the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce
 - A welcome message/invitation from the President or Provost
 - Commencement photographs

Action Items:

- Kristin will draft a guide and send to the group for approval.
- Kristin will find out if we can include a welcome message from the President or Provost.

Facebook, Twitter and the University Events Calendar

- The group was reminded that Facebook and Twitter are currently being used to announce the graduation application deadline.
- Announcements can be tailored to parents and other guests since the public can subscribe to the University's Twitter and Facebook pages.
- It was suggested that periodic announcements appear that feature commencement items. Headlines other than "Commencement" may draw attention such as:
 - Shuttle Buses at Commencement
 - Key Speaker: T. Boone Pickens
 - Order your Commencement Merchandise Now
 - Attending Commencement? Download a Parking Guide
 - Questions about Graduation? Visit the FAQ page of the Commencement Website
 - Listen to Commencement Live on KTSW-FM 89.9
- Commencement now has its own calendar on the main University Events Calendar. Kristin will be adding key commencement information (application deadlines, ceremony schedules, and diploma pickup information)

Action Items:

- Kristin will send potential topics to University Marketing for posting on Facebook and Twitter and will notify the team when it has been done. UPDATE: Messages will begin after Thanksgiving break.
- Kristin will notify the team when the Commencement Event Calendar has been updated.

Commencement Website

- The group shared which questions are frequently asked and what terms are commonly misunderstood from candidates and guests prior to and on the day of commencement.
- Kristin mentioned that she receives many emails and calls about the ceremony schedule even though there is a main tab on the homepage titled "Ceremony Schedule".
 - The group mentioned that candidates and guests don't often associate the word "ceremony" with commencement/graduation, but with the Ring Ceremony.
 - The group suggested removing the word "ceremony" and/or adding the word "graduation". UPDATE: Completed.
 - The group recommended adding a link to information about the Ring Ceremony. UPDATE: Link added to the existing Official Ring page.

- Yvette receives many questions about candidate procedures on commencement day.
 - The group suggested renaming the title “Arrival” in the Candidate Information page to “Candidate Check-in” or “Checking in at the Ceremony”. UPDATE: Completed.
 - The group suggested moving the “Graduation Procedures” paragraph to follow the “Candidate Check-in” section. UPDATE: Completed.
 - Candidates often ask advisors and UPD which side of their cap the tassel should hang.

- The group discussed website format and layout. Group comments and suggestions:
 - Move the Candidate Information tab to a main tab in front of General Information. If room is needed on the main toolbar, the photo gallery can be moved to the General Information tab. UPDATE: Completed.
 - Add a subheading to parking and seating that is called “Shuttle Buses”. Add the ADA accessibility statement. Also, mention that guests should allow time for the shuttle route.
 - Consider condensing some of the subpages under Maps and Directions.
 - Under Merchandise, change “Graduation Announcements” to “Invitations/Announcements”. UPDATE: Completed.
 - Change “Commencement Photos” to “Candidate Photos”. UPDATE: Completed.
 - The group did not recommend a separate guest tab at this time.

Action Items:

- Kristin will make the suggested changes to the website and email the team.
- Yvette will review the Arrival and Procedure section of the instructions, adding details including that the tassel should hang on the right side of the cap.

Signage and Maps

- The group discussed the current and proposed sign projects including the following:
 - Gym directional signs (leading to Gym 101 and 102) to replace the yellow vinyl signs.
 - Candidate Directional Signs
 - Outdoor signs and banners
 - Concourse signs including restroom signs (similar to those in the baseball/softball complex)

- The group recommended having large copies of the Strahan Interior maps.
 - Copies with that semester's information on the advising center tables.
 - Generic copies with "you are here" laminated and posted on the main doors to gyms 101 and 102, and various places around the concourse. Ex. Near the Maroon and Gold Room and Restrooms.

Action Items:

- Kristin will print out maps for the advising center tables.
- Kristin will create a generic map for placement in the concourse.