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Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
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MEMO TO: Gavin Townsend  
President, Faculty Senate

FROM: Herbert Burhenn 

SUBJECT: Proposal to eliminate summer commencement

DATE: November 2, 2006

At our lunch meeting this week, we talked briefly about a proposal to eliminate our summer commencement ceremony. This proposal was considered a few weeks ago by the Chancellor's Executive Staff and received their support. The principal rationale for this change is to save both the costs and the considerable personal time and energy required to put on each of our commencement ceremonies. UT Knoxville last held a summer commencement in 1999.

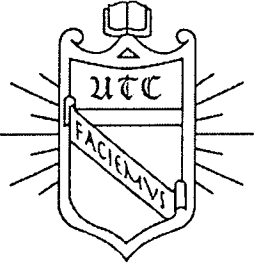
Once this proposal is enacted, students who would ordinarily come to the summer commencement would need to attend either our spring or our winter commencement ceremonies. Attached you will find a memo from David Pittenger and Jocelyn Sanders that delineates a set of policies we can use to determine when students are eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies. Under these policies many students who would have graduated in the summer will be permitted to participate in the preceding spring commencement if they wish.

Chancellor Brown would appreciate the advice of the Faculty Senate on this matter.

Cc: Chancellor Roger G. Brown

MEMORANDUM

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TO: Roger Brown, Chancellor

FROM: David J. Pittenger, Acting Associate Provost for Academic Administration  
Jocelyn Sanders, Acting Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Handwritten initials, possibly 'DP' and 'JS', in black ink.

DATE: October 26, 2006

RE: Commencement Policies

CC: H. Burhenn

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If the University moves to hosting two commencement ceremonies, we propose that we adopt the following policies for determining who may participate in the event. Our goal is to open the occasion to students who have completed the degree work and to students who will most likely complete the degree work during the following semester.

Students who have not yet meet the requirements for the degree may participate in the Commencement Ceremony if they meet the following criteria:

- Currently hold the grade point averages required for the degree. These GPAs shall include the major, institutional, and cumulative GPA.
- Have submitted the *Application for Graduation* during the previous academic term.
- Require 20 or fewer credit hours of course work to compete the requirements for the degree, and are currently registered for the coursework.

Please note that the first two points are required of all students participating in commencement. The last criterion represents the maximum number of hours for which a student may enroll.

This policy is sufficiently broad to allow students who will complete their degree work during the summer term to participate in the spring commencement exercise. Nevertheless, some students may elect for personal reasons to participate in the winter exercise; this policy affords that option.

We can continue the practice of listing in the commencement bulletin student honors using the students' current cumulative GPA. Our commencement bulletin includes a disclaimer that the announcement of honors does not reflect the student's final grades. Once the student graduates, his or her transcript will accurately report the honor the student earned.