Ad Hoc Veterans Recognition Committee
Summary Report 3/29/11

This committee was charged last August to “Identify appropriate methods/venues to recognize veterans’ service.” It examined several documents and consulted with a number of people involved in the earlier discussions including members of the Academic Standards Committee.

Minutes of 3/4/09 of the Academic Standards Committee include discussion of the text of FS 8.22.25 from 2006/2007 stating that the current policy on the type of graduation regalia is that it is subject to administrative decision taken by the Office of the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.”

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee minutes dated 3/11/09 indicates that “the recognition of individuals at commencement is at the discretion of the Provost and a request had been sent to the Provost to include recognition of veterans.”

The ad hoc committee researched the practices of other colleges and universities across the country resulting in the following summary.

UW-System veterans recognition
1. UW-Eau Claire—honor cords
2. UW-Green Bay—“have been looking into the issue but have nothing in place yet”
3. UW-LaCrosse—Prior to beginning of graduation band plays the UW-La Crosse song. All veterans are asked to stand by the branch of military in which they served. No tassels/honor cords.
4. UW-Madison—nothing
5. UW-Milwaukee—could not reach
6. UW-Oshkosh—nothing
7. UW-Parkside—nothing
8. UW-Platteville—nothing
9. UW-Stevens Point—nothing
10. UW-Stout—waiting on return call
11. UW-Superior—under discussion but no decision made yet
12. UW-Whitewater—nothing

Schools whose veterans wear red, white and blue tassels at commencement.
1. University of Washington-Tacoma
2. Averett University
3. Grossmont College
4. Western Michigan University
5. Petersburg College
6. Virginia Commonwealth University
7. Washington State University

Schools with other special veterans recognition at commencement
1. University of Massachusetts-Amherst—maroon and silver stole
2. Texas Wesleyan University—red, white and blue honor cords
3. Pennsylvania College of Technology—honor cords
4. University of North Texas—silver medallion with green and white ribbon
5. Broward College—college president acknowledged each graduating veteran by name and branch of service
6. Penn College—red, white and blue honor cords
7. Columbia University—red, white and blue honor cords
8. Marshall University—red, white and blue honor cords
9. Richard Stockton College of NJ—honor cords
10. Michigan Tech University—red, white and blue honor cords
11. Oakland University—red, white and blue honor cords
12. Youngstown State University—red, white and blue honor cords
13. University of New Hampshire-Manchester—red, white and blue honor cords
14. Bloomfield College—honor cords

The ACE code doesn’t officially allow the use of cords in any form, however some institutions have allowed their inclusion.

The manager of Veterans Services is a member of the ad hoc committee. She identified a number of campus existing existing programs and activities to recognize veterans including the Veterans Day ceremony each fall and inviting veterans to stand at commencement. Most events and activities involve a small group of people, sometimes limited to the veterans themselves.

It’s true, standing during commencement shows the university’s acknowledgement of veterans’ service to the nation. Once they sit down, however, no one can tell who the veterans are.

The ad hoc committee believes that the proposed red, white and blue tassels would offer tangible recognition to the veterans’ service and to their academic accomplishment in earning a degree from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.