

Jacquee Rosummy,  
Staff Representative Group  
Ramsey Center  
College of Education  
The University of Georgia  
CAMPUS

Hello Jacquee,

At yesterday's administrative cabinet meeting it was pointed out that there was concern expressed about the seating arrangements at our Friday 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – Centennial luncheon. Most faculty, alumni, and retirees were seated at departmental tables, but staff and custodians, faculty from other Colleges, and other attendees were offered open seating rather than assigned places. The intent was to have departmental faculty, retirees, and alumni together, and then allow all others to select who they would like to sit with during the luncheon. The open seating was perceived, though, as having lower priority than the assigned table seating, and was offensive to some people.

Please understand that there was no intention to convey that open seating was seen as less valued, or that any of our celebrants were less esteemed. Several seating plans were developed -- some with open seating tables throughout the room. Ultimately it was decided to keep the open seating tables altogether as we thought staff would prefer to sit in a group rather than be separated around the room.

It has also been pointed out that it would have been helpful to those toward the back of the room and those with poor eyesight to have had the speakers and presentations at the podium videoed and shown on the big screens during the course of the event. This would have enhanced everyone's experience at the luncheon. Please know that your comments and other observations will be discussed this week as the Centennial Planning Committee holds a debriefing about the luncheon. We definitely will learn a great deal from this event and how we can do better in the future.

As you know, it is my goal to create an environment of respect and dignity for all people in our College, and one in which we work across departments and programs to be a collaborative and cooperative group. I seek fulfilling a common goal of promoting an excellent education for our students and positive, fulfilling experiences for our family of employees.

If the seating arrangements were perceived as less respectful of some of our family, I truly apologize for the occurring. Please convey my regrets to our staff and custodians. I am always open to suggestions and recommendations for helping all of us become more sensitive to the real or perceived issues that we experience in our College. Thank you again for your comments and for your help in this regard.

Warm regards,

Arthur M. Horne, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean