

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
October 7, 2003

1.0 Call to Order

President McNeese called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

The following members were present:

Robin Barnett, Kalin Butirich, Donna Donegan, Sally Donovan, Tommy Dye, Victoria Adams Fairley, Kathy Hayman, Willie Heard, Keri Hensarling, Myra Herndon-Wade, Charmaine Hill, Valerie Horne, Robin Johnson, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Karen Lott, Beverly McNeese, Kenton McNeese, Stephen Rey, William Sanders, Ray Scott, Ray Stevens, Mary Butler Sumrall, Mary Virgil, and Vicki Watkins.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted with reservation to change the order as necessary.

3.0 Call for Proxies

The following members were represented by proxy:

Cheryl Burnette by Karen Lott; Scott Carr by Kathy Hayman; Mathew Cox by Donna Donegan; Kameron Dale by Kay Bush; Stacey Ready by Stephen Rey; Tonia Shaw by Robin Johnson; Toni Stringer by Virginia Kittrell; and Frances Sudduth by Mary Sumrall.

The following members were absent without representation:

Susan Blackwell, David Byrd, Robert Lowe, Bobbie Martin, John Troy Ross, and Arlin Steen (Active Duty Military - excused).

4.0 Approval of September Minutes

The minutes of the September regular meeting were approved as submitted.

5.0 Officer's Reports

**5.1 President's Report - Kenton McNeese
Cabinet, Monday, September 8, 2003**

Jared Loftus reported that men's formal rush was this week, and some 200 students would be participating.

Bob Pierce of the Alumni Association notified the Cabinet of the death of Joe Johnson, and provided date and time of his memorial service. The Alumni Association is working to establish a foundation account to remember Johnson's dedication to Southern Miss. Pierce also

informed the group of the two Eagle Landing events scheduled for the Alabama and South Florida games. He stressed the importance of SCR 522 and asked that all inform our constituents of the need for this to pass. The Alumni Association is working with an entity to offer student loan consolidations to alumni of Southern Miss. Dr. Dvorak cautioned that consolidation plans need to be researched to ensure their benefits.

Tim Ryan of the USM Foundation reported many contacts were made while in California, and he intends on following up in the near future. He also reported that Friday, October 24, 2003, would be the foundation's first board meeting this year.

Richard Giannini reported on the upcoming Southern Miss Student Luncheon to be held on Tuesdays by asking all to promote the event to increase student involvement in the athletic events. He estimated the attendance for the Memphis game to be around 30,000.

Dr. Tim Hudson reported on his meeting with administration at Stanford University while in California and stated that many of the ideas gathered will assist him in his endeavors at Southern Miss. He reported that the Faculty Activity Report Committee will be comprised of three administrators and three faculty members to modify the existing report. He mentioned that four or five accreditation agencies would be on campus in the upcoming weeks and stressed that at any time, one or two agencies may be on our campus. He also mentioned that a review of the academic probation/suspension policy would take place in the near future.

Dr. Angeline Dvorak reported on the successes of our economic development endeavors in Leakesville by announcing the opening of a manufacturing plant in the old Peavy plant in that area. She noted a large number of proposals rolling in from the faculty, and she said that the number of proposals is remaining constant. Bids for the new Gigabit Ethernet network will be presented at the next IHL Board Meeting for approval. The new college technology officers will be announced prior to the end of the month.

Meeting with Jill Beneke and Technology Chair for upcoming November Meeting preparations, Tuesday, September 9, 2003

Toni Stringer, Virginia Kittrell, and I met with Jill Beneke to prepare for the November 4, 2003, Staff Council presentation. We look forward to Jill's presentation.

Ribbon Cutting at Athletic Center, Friday, September 12, 2003

I attended the ribbon cutting of the completed Athletic Center. The facility is noted to be one of the best in the nation. The presentation and recognition of its benefactors were superb. I would encourage everyone to contact the center and take a brief tour of this outstanding facility.

Legislative Weekend, Saturday, September 12, 2003

I visited with our legislative guests at the "Inn on the Hill" prior to the Memphis home game. Dr. Shelby F. Thames presented a proposal asking for the full 12 percent raise during this upcoming legislative session in order to bring all salaries up to a reasonable average instead of the proposal submitted by the IHL Board. He stated that by staggering the increases, as proposed by the IHL Board, we would still find ourselves lagging behind all other institutions in the southeastern United States.

Provost Council, Tuesday, September 16, 2003

IHL Board Meeting, Thursday, September 18, 2003

The only item on the agenda affecting Southern Miss regarded the acquisition of the Gigabit Ethernet Network. This item passed unanimously.

MASCO, Thursday, September 18, 2003

Virginia Kittrell and I attended the MASCO meeting of which we did have a quorum. Virginia kept the minutes, so I will defer my summation of the meeting to her.

Cabinet, Monday, September 29, 2003

Jared Loftus reported on the upcoming Tuesday at Two with Thames to be held in Seymour's. Dr. Thames questioned Loftus as to the activities that took place on Saturday in the student section behind the Nebraska bench, and was asked him to provide a resolution to the problem to ensure this problem does not occur in the future. Loftus reported several students were escorted from the game for tossing items and yelling profanity at the visiting team. Dr. Paul and Loftus stated that they would work on controls to ensure that such an incident did not occur in the future.

Bob Pierce reported that Eagle Landing events would not be scheduled for the Cincinnati game or the East Carolina game. He once again made

mention of the SCR 522 awareness program for the upcoming November election.

Dr. Tim Hudson reported on an accreditation team that is reviewing the Construction Engineering program. He once again stressed the importance of these reviews to the strong academic programs we have at Southern Miss.

Dr. Jay Grimes mentioned that the administrative structure of the Gulf Coast campus is being reviewed. He stated that a new structure would be established in the near future.

Dr. Moore stated that names were needed for the search committees for the dean of Health and dean of Education and Psychology. I requested volunteers from staff and provided names to her expediently.

I questioned Dr. Thames in regards to our proposals, and he stated that he would provide a response to me at the next Cabinet meeting. I stressed the importance of these items to the staff, and the need for a response in a timely manner. I also proposed the Employee Appreciation Day luncheon to be held on Friday, October 31, 2003, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Dr. Thames asked that I gather responses to the need for this event as well as the proposed date which may present some conflicts with Homecoming events scheduled for that date. I informed him of the need for the event and told him that I would provide feedback to him following our upcoming Staff Council meeting.

5.2 President-Elect's Report - Virginia Kittrell

Thames at Two - September 9, 2003

There was a small group in attendance at the beginning of the meeting, but the number grew as students passed through Seymour's and noticed what was going on. Dr. Thames was very interested in students' comments. Parking, as usual, was high on the list of topics. Students also expressed interest in having one unified logo, the eagle, rather than having the dome and the eagle. Dr. Joe Paul, Dr. Eddie Holloway, Dr. Cynthia Moore, and representatives from the *Clarion Ledger* and *Student Printz* also attended.

Faculty Senate - September 12, 2003

One of the challenges for the upcoming year includes reapportionment of Faculty Senate. There was discussion about the number of members, and the agreement was that 42-45 was appropriate. The reorganization from nine colleges to five will realign senators in appropriate areas.

There was discussion about closing Faculty Senate meetings to senators and faculty only. Senate meetings have always have closed meetings for sensitive issues. The issues were assigned to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee for discussion. There was discussion to provide a provision to limit meetings only when sensitive issues arise. Concern focused around information getting out before appropriate action took place, i.e., letters to people or comments appearing in the paper. Some faculty feel inhibited about making suggestions/comments when visitors such as members of the press are present. It was noted that minutes are not taken in closed meetings.

Discussion about the faculty handbook continued. The new handbook is not being revised from the old one but will be completely new.

Evaluations were a topic of in-depth discussion. Faculty would like to have upward evaluations in addition to the current evaluations.

MASCO - September 18, 2003

John Johnson from Valley is the new MASCO president. The vice chair position should go to someone from Alcorn; however, Alcorn has not been active in the last two years. John will send a letter to see if they will be participating and to see if they have an active Staff Council. If they choose not to participate, Delta State will hold the vice chair position.

There was a discussion about insurance. It was recommended that we send letters to our legislators to at least keep insurance premiums the same. MUW plans to send letters to their legislators. It was noted that it is important to look at alternatives or other plans not through the university. MUW will work out the language and provide a copy for everyone to follow

5.3 Secretary's Report - Robin Johnson - no report

5.4 Secretary-Elect's Report - Keri Hensarling - no report

5.5 Assignment of Action Items

#98 - assigned to Salary and Benefits Committee

Please determine when job reviews (position audits) will resume in order to make position descriptions and classifications more accurate. Notification should be provided as soon as possible so that those affected, especially by the realignments, will have an opportunity to prepare.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Holiday Proposal

The holiday proposal was originally submitted to Cabinet on February 17, 2003. To date, President Shelby F. Thames has not provided an answer to Staff Council's proposal to close the University on Monday, December 22, 2003 and Friday, January 2, 2004. President McNeese stated that he was promised an answer by next Monday (October 13, 2003).

6.2 IHL Tuition Exchange Document (MASCO)

The IHL Tuition Exchange Document was originally presented to Dr. Thames on June 12, 2003. At the present time, the economic position in the state is not flexible enough to fund the tuition exchange as presented by MASCO. The MASCO body decided to pull the proposal and possibly resubmit at a later time. Other MASCO members are very supportive of the IHL Tuition Exchange Document.

6.3 Dependent Tuition Waiver Proposal/Letter

The dependent tuition waiver proposal/letter was originally submitted to Dr. Thames during June 2003. To date, there has not been a decision made regarding the dependent tuition waiver proposal/letter. President McNeese will bring up this topic at cabinet on Monday, October 13, 2003.

6.4 America Recycles Day Participation Proposal

President McNeese would like Staff Council to sponsor an event that would encompass the entire university. This event would have administrators, faculty, students and staff working together to improve the campus community. President-Elect Kittrell suggested an event similar to one held at Mississippi State called "Operation Clean Sweep." It was suggested that we hold a community service day to make Southern Miss a better place to work. A motion was made by Keri Hensarling and seconded by Valerie Horne. The motion reads: "That Staff Council supports and sponsors a community service day to be held on Friday, November 7, 2003." This would also be in conjunction with America Recycles Day activities. The Gulf Coast would also participate on their campus. Robin Johnson has already discussed the possibility with the Gulf Coast Physical Plant. Virginia Kittrell has also spoken with the Physical Plant and has a list of options for volunteers. We would ask that volunteers give one to two hours to this project. After all further discussions, 32 members approved the motion and Stephen Rey abstained since he will not be in town for the event. Motion passed.

President McNeese asked that we take this event seriously. The event will be called "Polish Your Piece of 'The Rock'." President McNeese will approach Dr. Thames and Lisa S. Mader for approval of the event and the title.

A motion was made by Kathy Hayman and seconded by Karen Lott regarding financial support for America Recycles Day. The motion reads: "Staff Council pledge \$350 to support the America Recycles Day activities at Southern Miss." The motion carried unanimously.

6.5 Permanent proxy for Arlin Steen

Last month President McNeese asked that a permanent proxy for Arlin Steen be named. Arlin was called to active duty in February 2003. In order to allow the staff Arlin represents to have a voice, the following motion was made by Charmaine Hill and seconded by Robin Barnett. The motion reads: "To have Charmaine Hill serve as Arlin Steen's permanent proxy until such time he can return to Staff Council." Motion carried unanimously.

6.6 Other

There was no other old business that was discussed.

7.0 Committee Reports & Assignments

7.1 Constitution & Bylaws - Kathy Hayman

The Constitution and Bylaws have been approved by Dr. Thames.

7.2 Legislative - Cheryl Burnette

The Legislative Committee mailed "thank you" cards to the 32 representatives, senators, and state officials who participated in Southern Miss' Legislative Weekend, September 13-14, 2003. The individuals who received a card are: Representatives Billy Broomfield, Lee Jarrell Davis, Joe Ellzey, James Evans, Joey Fillingane, George Flagg, Erik Fleming, David Green, Joey Grist, Frank Hamilton, Gregory Holloway, Roger Ishee, Mike Lott, Percy Maples, Warner F. McBride, Bobby Moody, John Moore, Bobby Shows, Johnny Stringer, Joe Warren, and Percy Watson; Senators Barbara Blackmon, Alice Harden, Billy Harvey, Billy Hewes, Tom King, Ezell Lee, Rob Smith, and Joe Stogner; State Auditor Phil Bryant; Lt. Governor Amy Tuck; and Secretary of State Eric Clark. The cards read as follows:

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The Legislative Committee of The University of Southern Mississippi's Staff Council would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation for your

attendance and participation at Legislative Weekend at Southern Miss on September 13 and 14, 2003.

Your attendance on campus and your participation in the events scheduled for the weekend had a positive impact on the staff members at Southern Miss. If Staff Council's Legislative Committee or any staff member at Southern Miss can be of assistance to you or your staff, please feel free to contact us at any time.

The University of Southern Mississippi
Staff Council 2003-2004
Legislative Committee “

Dr. Thames stressed during his presentation that his goal was to increase the faculty/staff salaries at Southern Miss to be more in line with the other state higher education institutions in order to improve the faculty/staff retention rate.

The Legislative Committee will be preparing and distributing a listing of representatives, senators, and state officials after the November election.

7.3 Salaries & Benefits - David Byrd and Myra Herndon

The Salaries & Benefits Committee met on September 30, 2003.

Present were: Myra Herndon-Wade (co-chair) and Stephen Rey.

The committee reported on the following action items:

Action Item #82:

Recommendation made to legislative agenda to have retirees insurance premiums paid in full was passed into law. Russ Willis of Human Resources informed us that a discount for retirees will be implemented in years to come but has been put on the back-burner at this time.

Action Item #84:

Staff members in the Administration Building received level adjustments and raises with those level adjustments in a year of no raises and staff members being laid off due to budget restrictions. Human Resources informed us that the reclassification of positions was reopened for a brief period and these level adjustments and raises took place at this time. Reclassification was again closed.

Action Item #85:

Stephen Rey reported on the Employee Wellness Program that is still under consideration and a pilot program is being considered but funding is a problem that has not been worked out as yet.

Action Item #88:

Request that the Christmas/New Year holiday schedule be rearranged to allow staff December 22, 2003 and January 2, 2004 off. President McNeese has presented this item to Dr. Thames and to the Cabinet on numerous occasions since February 2003 with no action taken as yet.

Action Item #94:

Request for upgrade on compensation of completion of degrees, and a request for compensation for completion of a specialist degree. At present, there is a specialist degrees offered within the College of Education & Psychology.

Action Item #98:

When will the job reclassification open again? We will meet with Human Resources and present information to Staff Council in order for all to be able to take advantage of this opportunity.

7.4 University Relations and Cultural Diversity - Robin Barnett and Mathew Cox

The University of Southern Mississippi Staff Council University Relations and Cultural Diversity Committee met September 29, 2003, at 1:15 p.m. in Union Room D. Those present included Mathew Cox (co-chair), Robin Barnett (co-chair), Stacey Ready, Valerie Horne, and Susan Blackwell. The committee opened the session with a general discussion about what the committee's focus is on, what its responsibilities are and what the life cycle of an action item is.

The committee moved on to some pending action items:

#83 This book loan/\$100 allowance proposal had previously been submitted to Dr. McFall's office. The action item is still open, and the committee will follow-up as soon as a replacement is named for Dr. McFall.

#96 This parking decal prorated reimbursement issue was assigned to Valerie Horne. She will contact Transportation and Human Resources and find out what the university policy is on this issue. Additionally, it was suggested by the committee that if a disclaimer about reimbursement is not on the hang tag or discussed during in-processing, then it should be considered.

#80 This action item discussed a great many Physical Plant issues regarding upkeep on buildings. We have a response from the Physical Plant regarding being understaffed. Also, it was pointed out that each building has a building liaison and that concerns about maintenance should be referred to that individual. If a staff member does not know who his or her building liaison is, that staff member should contact the Physical Plant. Action item closed.

#81 This action item discussed staff receiving fall break off. This item will be deferred to the Staff Council president for discussion in

Cabinet.

#93 This action item regarded parking studies when large numbers of staff and faculty are moved around on campus. The response from Transportation follows and the issues include: IHL approves parking zones for the upcoming year and cannot be changed until the next review; also moves are not communicated to transportation, so they have no prior knowledge about the moves. Valerie Horne will ask about this when she contacts Transportation.

A few other items of interest: Public Relations information: October 9, 2003, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Payne Center there will be a video conference on "Sustainability on College Campuses" discussing planning for change. It is free and a free box lunch will be provided. Call Tricia Linton at 266- 5405 to reserve a spot.

American Heart Walk is November 8, 2003 on campus.

Black and Gold Day is November 15, 2003. This is the largest on-campus recruiting event.

The next committee meeting was scheduled for October 27, 2003, at 1:15 p.m., with the location to be announced.

7.5 Technology & Training - Ray Scott and Toni Stringer

Ray Scott reported that the Technology Committee did not meet this month. Tech will announce its reorganization October 8, 2003. More information will be forthcoming. President McNeese reported that Pam Posey and Toni Stringer are working on our Web site to bring it up-to-date.

The meeting was suspended for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 12:32 p.m.

7.6 Other Committees:

A. Institutional Effectiveness - Mathew Cox - no report

B. Sexual Harassment - Charmaine Hill

The Sexual Harassment Committee has not met. Charmaine announced that she will be teaching self-defense classes for women at the Payne Center. She also stated that she would be happy to come to the Coast for this class if there is enough interest. The cost is \$5 for non students. This fee will cover the cost of the book.

C. Transportation Committee - Mary Butler Sumrall

The Transportation Committee has not met.

D. Scholarship Committee-Virginia Kittrell

Ben Samel with the USM Foundation met with the Scholarship Committee to explain annual scholarships, endowments, and planned giving. The committee met again to discuss long-term and short-term goals.

The committee decided to investigate a textbook scholarship. Ole Miss implemented such a program in 2001, which allows staff with salaries of \$30,000 and under to apply for a \$100 textbook scholarship. Since then, Ole Miss has raised the salary cap eligibility to \$35,000 and the scholarship has been increased to \$150. Southern Miss would model the program with minor changes. The scholarship committee will configure the application and eligibility requirements.

I met with J.T. Johnson to prepare a survey to send to staff with salaries \$30,000 and under to find out how many classes the staff member is taking, the level of interest if a textbook scholarship was offered, and what reason might encourage one to take a class. After the surveys have been compiled and sufficient interest has been determined, a letter will be drafted by the committee to be approved by Staff Council and sent to Dr. Thames requesting funds.

This is the committee's short-term goal with hopes of getting this approved for the spring semester. Our long-term goal includes pursuing endowments for professional development; however, obtaining such funds takes time and is something we can work toward.

Stephen Rey asked if the textbook would then belong to the student employee if said employee receives the scholarship. Virginia said that the book would belong to the student, however, if the student fails or drops the course the student would be required to reimburse the fund. A motion was made by President McNeese and seconded by Keri Hensarling and Myra Herndon-Wade. The motion reads: "I move that Staff Council's scholarship committee move forward with the pursuit of funding of the "Book Scholarship Program" by President Thames if the survey submitted results in a positive feedback (51 percent or greater of respondents) for the pursuit of this program." The motion carried unanimously.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Arlin Steen Care Package

It has been suggested that a care package be put together for Arlin Steen. Charmaine Hill announced that Arlin is home for a short period, but he will be leaving again soon. A motion was made by President McNeese and seconded by Keri Hensarling. The motion reads: "I move that Staff Council collects care package type items to be sent to Arlin Steen." Motion carried unanimously. It was determined that Kathy Hayman would get a list of items from Arlin's wife, Mary Ann. Items may be brought to the University Police Station and to Robin Johnson on the Coast.

8.2 Employee Appreciation Day, Hattiesburg Campus October 31, 2003 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Employee Appreciation Day will stay on October 31, 2003, this year. This coincides with Homecoming activities this year. President McNeese has discussed the event with all university entities involved; Food Service, Physical Plant, and University Police. They feel that they will be able to handle Employee Appreciation Day in conjunction with the other events. It was decided that an individual costume contest would take the place of the office costume contest.

8.3 SCR 522

President McNeese distributed out information regarding Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 522. SCR 522 is a constitutional amendment on the November 4, 2003, election ballot regarding the terms of office and regional representation of the state College Board. SCR 522 changes the length of office from 12 to 9 years. A vote of yes on SCR 522 will ensure that all Mississippians will have a voice in determining how the representatives are selected and that all universities in the state receive an opportunity for fair representation. President McNeese urged all of us to spread the word and to vote yes for SCR 522.

8.4 Selection of United Way representative

Dr. Dvorak has asked that Staff Council have representatives to help with the United Way efforts for our university. The following Staff Council members volunteered to help: Robin Barnett, Charmaine Hill, and Susan King.

8.5 Other

There was no other new business to be discussed.

Meeting was suspended at 1 p.m. for a tour of Stennis Space Center, which included the history of Stennis Space Center and a view of the Space Shuttle main engine test area. The meeting reconvened at 1:38 p.m.

9.0 Announcements

9.1 November 15, 2003, American Recycles Day.

President McNeese will ask permission to hold, "Polish Your Piece of 'The Rock'" community service event. The following members have agreed to coordinate the event: Kenton McNeese, Charmaine Hill, Kathy Hayman, Stephen Rey, and Robin Johnson (coordinator of activities on the Coast).

9.2 Football, October 11, at Alabama; October 25, South Florida at "The Rock"; November 1, Louisiana Lafayette at "The Rock".

9.3 Open enrollment for Human Resources is coming up October 20-23, 2003.

9.4 Gulf Coast Campus Employee Appreciation Day, October 10, 2003.

9.5 Health and Benefits Fair, Gulf Coast Campus, October 14, 2003.

9.6 IHL Board Meeting MSU, Thursday, October 16, 2003.

9.7 Staff Council Executive Meeting Tuesday, October 21, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

9.8 Other

The university will hold a ceremony to unveil the "One Ring" design. This ring will represent all areas of the University including the Coast. The ceremony will be held in front of the Administration Building October 30, 2003. Students with 60-plus hours will be eligible to order a class ring. Class rings will be presented by the university president during the Founders' Day activities.

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2 p.m.

Robin Johnson

Secretary

October 7, 2003

Staff Council met at the Stennis Space Center to learn what part Stennis Space Center plays in our comprehensive university. The following Southern Miss

colleagues presented an overview of activities that take place at Stennis. Dr. Peter Ranelli, Center for Higher Learning; Keith Long, Center for Higher Learning; Jim Matthews, GIS Laboratory; Conrad Johnson, Visualization Center; Dr. Dennis Wiesenburg, Marine Sciences; and Capt. Don Roman, Hydrographic Science.

Dr. Peter Ranelli, director, Center for Higher Learning

Overview of Stennis Space Center

There are a number of university activities at Stennis Space Center. The Center of Higher Learning (CHL) coordinates these activities.

Stennis Space Center was created in 1962-1963. Stennis Space Center is a unique federal city comprising more than 35 federal and state organizations. When President Kennedy committed the nation to going to the moon, NASA needed to create a location to test the rockets that would take the Apollo Capsule to the moon. There was a nationwide search for a location to do the rocket testing. They selected Hancock County, Mississippi, for the testing facility. NASA owns 4,500 acres in the center of the site. There are another 125,000 acres that surround the site called the buffer zone. The land in the buffer zone is privately owned; however, there cannot be any inhabitable buildings within the zone. The Honey Island Swamp runs through the site, and the Pearl River is just to the west of the site. The Pearl River was a major factor in the site selection. NASA created a canal system to move the rocket engines from the test stands down to the Gulf of Mexico and then to Cape Canaveral. There were several small communities of approximately 2,000-3,000 people that were relocated due to the site development.

The test stands are rated at 12.5 million pounds of thrust and can hold it statically for seven to eight minutes. The engines that were tested in the early days - the Saturn 5 rocket - were 7.5 million pounds of thrust. In the '70s, the site began to expand. The Navy Oceanographic Office, Naval Research Laboratory, and the Commander of the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography had offices at Stennis. In addition to the Navy, there are other agencies represented at Stennis. The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration has offices on-site to support fisheries. The Environmental Protection Agency, Customs, and Coast Guard are also on site. There are also a number of private contractors who support the federal agencies directly or do business as a result of being located at Stennis.

There are a number of state agencies located at Stennis as well. The majority of the state agencies are in the form of universities. The universities are here to support the other agencies on site. In 1989, the decision was made to create an organization to coordinate all university activities. The CHL was created at this time. CHL is a joint effort between the Institutions of Higher Learning and NASA as the manager of the site. Southern Miss is the predominate university at Stennis Space Center.

Keith Long, academic director, Center for Higher Learning

Stennis has a huge economic impact on the state of Mississippi. Last year, that impact was \$817 million. CHL reports to the president of Southern Miss. CHL does represent all universities at Stennis, but they are Southern Miss employees.

There are about 600 students who enroll each year in CHL-sponsored courses. They offer programs in Business Administration, Hydrographic Sciences, Marine Sciences, and a new program through Southern Miss in Geospatial Sciences. CHL receives about \$4.5 million per year from the state of Mississippi and through research grants. The CHL falls under the umbrella of the Gulf Coast and reports to Dr. Jay Grimes, provost for the Gulf Coast Campus.

There are 12 post graduate degree programs and one certificate program offered through our participating universities. Pearl River Community College offers some of the traditional freshman- and sophomore-level classes through the CHL. A new Southern Miss graduate program in Computer Science will begin in January on-site.

Current Southern Miss Degree programs:

M.S in Marine Science

Ph.D. in Marine Science

M.S. in Hydrographic Science

Master of Business Administration

Mississippi State University and University of New Orleans also offer degree programs at Stennis.

Southern Miss has the highest enrollment of all institutions represented on site.

The CHL also coordinates nonacademic programs through Continuing Education at Gulf Park.

In addition to the academic and nonacademic training, there are also three research groups that develop and implement new technologies in support of the agencies on site. The research also helps provide a learning environment for the students. The research groups are

GIS/Remote Sensing - Geospatial Applications Laboratory

Scientific Visualization

High Performance Computing and Algorithm Development

Jim Matthews - director, Geospatial Applications Laboratory

Geographic Information System (GIS) is the digital mapping used in remote sensing. Matthews detailed a research project to help illustrate their contribution. The National Guard Bureau helps assist in the counter drug efforts. The counter drug office within the National Guard Bureau approached the GIS Lab to work on a remote sensing unit to detect outside marijuana growth. The GIS Lab decided that if the search field was reduced, it would be equivalent to having more aircraft

searching for the growths. The GIS Lab created a prototype in Mississippi called MCEDSS. Because of its success in Mississippi, a national implementation is in the works for all 54 US states and territories. The project was recently pitched to the Drug Czar's office. Matthews detailed how this project is used to determine where the growths are likely to be found.

Conrad Johnson, chief scientist, High Performance Visualization Center

The Visualization Lab offers immersive visualization. This is a cave-like system, which can be reconfigured into different shapes. The walls are 30 feet tall. The center also uses collaborative visualization, which entails people in remote areas communicating and looking at the same data set. The center has an ACCESS (Alliance Center for Collaboration, Education, Science, and Software) grid center, which is a group to group communication system. Meetings can take place with people in up to 190 different locations. The Visualization Lab will move into their new state of the art building in the next few weeks.

Dr. Dennis Wiesenburg, chair, Department of Marine Science

The Department of Marine Science comprises 10 faculty and 30 staff. In 1985, the Center of Marine Sciences was created to help meet the educational needs of oceanographers on site. The program is research intensive. The department produced more than \$5 million last fiscal year. The Department of Marine Sciences offers graduate level degrees.

Capt. Don Roman, director, Hydrographic Research Center

The Department of Marine Sciences consists of the academic programs in Marine Sciences, Hydrographic Sciences, and the Hydrographic Science Research Laboratory.

The Department of Marine Sciences mission:

Education of graduate students and development of a high quality basic research program in Marine Sciences, Oceanography, and Hydrographic Science.

The Department of Marine Sciences serves not only the population at Stennis Space Center and South Mississippi, but there are several international students in their programs. The Department of Marine Sciences is located at Stennis because Stennis Space Center is the center of the world's largest population of hydrographers and oceanographers.

Southern Miss has nationally recognized faculty. A leading Soviet oceanographer teaches for the Department of Marine Sciences.

The Department of Marine Sciences has preformed local research that benefits Mississippi. They have created a long term monitoring system in the Bay of St. Louis that checks the water quality.

The Hydrographic Sciences program is the newest offered by the Department of Marine Sciences. Hydrographic Sciences deals with the surveying, sounding, and charting bodies of water. Hydrographic data is used to manage marine resources and in engineering studies. The Hydrographic Sciences is an applied degree. The students are required to apply what they have learned in the field. The students earn a master of science in Hydrographic Science and they also receive a Category A Certificate of Academic Proficiency. The students are eligible for a certification in Field Proficiency after two years of field experience after graduation. This Hydrographic Science program is the only one like it in the United States. As a result, there has been an overwhelming interest. A typical master's degree in Marine Sciences takes about two and a half years. A master's degree in Hydrographic Sciences takes one year and is research intensive.

The Department of Marine Sciences received the following funding:

University Budget \$1,013,137 (FY03)

Research Funding for the past three years

\$2,016,000 (FY00)

\$5,165,287 (FY 01)

\$2,633,744 (FY 02)