

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
February 1, 2005**

1.0 Call to Order

President Kittrell called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

The following members were present:

Susan Blackwell, Beth Bosarge, Kim Busche, Kalin Butirich, Steve Coleman, Kameron Dale, Donna Donegan, Carol Dunaway, Tommy Dye, Wynde Fitts, Michelle Fleming, Diane Green, Keri Hensarling, Valerie Horne, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Karen Lott, Bob Lowe, Beverly McNeese, Pam Posey, Stephen Rey, Billy Sanders, Ray Scott, Ratonia Shaw, Ray Stevens, Toni Stringer, Frances Sudduth, Brad Sumrall, Mary Butler Sumrall, Mary Virgil, and Trisha Wilbanks.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted.

3.0 Call for Proxies

The following members were represented by proxy:

Carol Dunaway for Vicki Watkins, Michelle Fleming for Kady Beaoui, Stephen Rey for Stacey Ready, Wynde Fitts for Mathew Cox and Pam Posey for Robin Barnett.

The following members were absent without proxy:

David Byrd and Myra Herndon-Wade.

4.0 Approval of Minutes

4.1 November Proposed Minutes

The minutes of the November regular meeting were approved.

4.2 December Proposed Minutes

The minutes of the December regular meeting were approved.

4.3 January Proposed Minutes

The minutes of the January regular meeting were approved.

5.0 Officers' Reports

5.1 President's Report – Virginia Kittrell

January 20, 2005 – MASCO meeting at Jackson State University

Mary began the meeting at 10:15 and thanked Jackson State University for hosting the meeting. Jackson State Senators in attendance were Shirley Carpenter-Rogers, Cathy Turner, Linda Lewis, Rosie Harper, Wayne Daniels, and Brenda Stewart. Jackson State expressed apologies for the construction on campus; otherwise, it is a gorgeous place to work and study, and they were glad to have MASCO at Jackson State. They have about 1,300 staff, 700 faculty, and 8,600 students from all over the world with the majority from Mississippi.

Mary called the meeting to order at 10:20, and members introduced themselves. There was good representation from universities. The minutes were approved with one correction to 5b. The correction will read that the Southern Miss Staff Council representative can vote on the Provost's Council. John Johnson moved that the minutes be approved with one correction; Rose seconded.

Under old business, Cell Phones, Virginia Kittrell reported that Southern Miss has 246 cell phones with a total yearly cost of \$107,427. That amount averages to \$436.70/yr/phone, which is about \$36/month/phone.

Delta State recently reviewed cell phone usage. There is a new policy that cell phones can't be used for personal use. Jackson State reported that phones had to be turned in to cut down on costs. MUW has a new policy but it is not stringent. It was suggested that everyone bring their policies to the next meeting. Some people

have issues with inventory, overages, etc. Donna expressed appreciation for discussion on cell phones even though it is not a MASCO issue. One issue is that some people must carry two cell phones, a personal one and a work phone. MASCO probably won't take any action as a group but discussion is very helpful. Valley has a problem with inventory too, and John stated he enjoyed the discussion on the topic as well.

With regard to non-monetary staff recognition programs, Jackson State reported that tuition increases last year enabled some raises to be given. For example, grounds employees salaries were increased from \$6/hr to \$7/hr. Southern Miss is working on a Performance Evaluation document for merit raises for the future. Jackson State had no criteria/standards. It is too subjective. Valley's policy is based on merit, and it is subjective. Future raises for Ole Miss and Southern Miss will be based on merit. Valley staff helped prepare a merit plan that was presented to the administration, but they have not received a reply yet.

Jackson State has a new Human Resources Director. He attended the November Staff Senate meeting and discussed ideas for standardizations and equalizations. The personnel have been told that future raises will be based on merit only. MUW has a new classification system in the works. Mary asked everyone to bring performance evaluations, matrix, etc. to the next meeting. It would also be a good idea to bring performance evaluations for outsourced personnel as well.

The Valley representative mentioned that they have started a "Staff of the Month" award. Everyone is eligible except for directors. With the nomination form, examples of why a person should be selected must be included. They were instructed by Human Resources to include a statement on the form that reads: "The Staff of the Month award does not take the place of the performance evaluation." The recipient will also receive a parking decal for the next year, a \$25 gift card from Wal-Mart, \$25 cash, and two free meals from the cafeteria.

Jackson State usually doesn't seek approval to do certain things but sometimes gets monetary support. For example, a new program was developed in 2002 for Staff Development to help employees with training and development. Money was set aside for full-time staff. The program is scheduled to be funded through 2007, but hopefully longer. New employee orientation is being revamped. In March, new employees will receive a paid lunch. The football ticket program is available to employees with a salary of less than \$20,000. The administration will give four football tickets per game to eligible employees. They will select two people to get two tickets per game. The employee brunch is the Staff Recognition Day and is held around Thanksgiving. Some door prizes were given away last year. Fiscal Affairs paid for the event; most employees attended. Then, they were allowed to go home unofficially. Staff Senate had an awards program based on service/longevity. They are looking at reinitiating it this spring.

Southern Miss Staff Council presents an Outstanding Staff Member Award at the June luncheon and usually has an Employee Appreciation Day around Halloween. That did not take place this year, but Staff Council is working on having it reinstated. Virginia mentioned that Southern Miss was working on Staff of the Month award as well. Jackson State suggested that the Staff of the Month criteria be used for Staff of the Year award.

Ole Miss awards a \$25 gift certificate to their restaurant for Outstanding Staff Council Member of the Year award. Their Staff Appreciation Day ceremony is in May. Ole Miss has a Staff Development program for middle management. At the end of the program, participants receive a \$500 increase. They have a health screening program where staff members pay \$25 during the summer months for complete lab work, blood work, etc. People rotating off Staff Council receive a framed certificate.

Delta State reported that faculty members donate money to Staff Council for their monthly award. Nominations are taken for people who have performed above and beyond the "call of duty". Employees under level nine are eligible. Everyone on the committee, along with the executive staff, surprise them with the campus photographer. They also provide goodies like a batch of fudge, parking decal for one month, plaque, and a gift certificate. The recipient gets his/her name in the paper and on the web. There is a staff picnic at which employees play softball. If employees stay, they get the day off. If they don't stay, they go back to work. This may or may not continue due to low turnout. Staff Council took on the issue of 5-, 10-, 15-year employees at the picnic. A Staff Award is presented at graduation. There is an employee of the month luncheon with the faculty member who helped start the award. Delta State Staff Council president presents a "Roll Up Your Sleeve" award each month to a Staff Council member who has done a great job. They decided to use the idea from MS State of selling fleece jackets. The Chair of the Projects Committee called MS State to get information and guidelines. They thought they would start with 50-60 or maybe 100. The jackets were purchased for \$15 and sold for \$20. Staff Council received \$5 for each jacket sold. The main purpose of selling the jackets is for recognition of staff and Staff Council. They sold 150!

MUW took back the Staff Member of the Month award. Staff Member of the Year is selected from among the Staff Members of the Month and received \$100. Funds for this come from a Title III grant. At Christmas, Marriott provides a lunch for staff, and 5-, 10-, and 15-year pins are awarded. Drawings for health screenings are held during the summer. The president of the university provides 10 each year and Staff Council provides five each year. Otherwise, staff may pay \$35 for a health screening. This is only available to staff.

Alcorn had gifts left over from a picnic last year and awarded prizes to one female and one male after Staff Council meetings. The staff picnic was held in May before the summer session. A lot of activities take place that day. It starts at 8:30, and the president is there all day. Workshops take place on various topics such as: grounds, laundry tips, computer repairs for beginners, and safety. Five-, ten-, and fifteen year pins are awarded. The MS State Extension Service provided workshops on yoga, pressure on the job, etc. The general session was on personality conflicts. There are health screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, etc. From 11:00-12:30, the president leads the Walk-A-Thon. The Athletic Department puts it together. Everyone should wear appropriate sneakers. There are also events for kids such as a fishing contest, volleyball, etc.

Mary need to include full name suggested that the outsourcing issues be postponed until next month. Mississippi State will host the next meeting at the IHL building on March 17.

Valley is working on raising money for scholarships. The overall goal is \$1,000,000, and the staff is trying to raise \$20,000, which comes to \$55/employee. The faculty and staff will be competing with students in a basketball game. A \$2.00 admission fee will be charged for the January 26 game. There will be an old school dance on February 4, with an admission fee of \$2.00. On February 23, a faculty/staff talent show will be held. A \$2.00 admission fee will be charged. The Staff Council will make presentations twice each semester to cabinet.

Jackson State Staff Senator, Wayne, makes sure that the university as a whole is aware of Staff Senate due to his persistence that the administration follow through with its promises.

Ole Miss organized its first holiday reception with punch, cookies and coffee. People came and met their representatives. They held a fall exam breakfast for students from 9:00-11:00 p.m. This Thursday is "Ole Miss Cares Day". A table will be set up for relief projects to assist the Tsunami victims. New employees will be

welcomed with a letter asking them to come by one of the Staff Council officer's offices to pick up a cup and a card.

Delta State reported that they have a wonderful performing arts center in Cleveland. "Cats" was performed recently. They also have a wonderful summer program for children where they learn about stage production, art, etc. The IT department was outsourced as of January 1. Vicky went to the president to report that they were the only university where a staff representative doesn't meet with the president's Cabinet, and that is now happening.

MUW received its final SACS reaccreditation for the next ten years. They realigned their colleges from ten to six.

Alcorn's concert choir will be performing at the President's inauguration today. They are very proud. They will be on the road to five or six other locations too.

Joyce from Valley attended the IHL Awareness Day on Tuesday to talk with legislators. Wayne (Jackson State) said we might need to be in the mix of talking to legislators about funding education (not just K-12). He suggested we draft a letter and forward it to legislators. We could ask the presidents of the eight public universities what is being presented to legislators that Staff Council could support. We could find out if there is an IHL initiative and do a resolution in support of that.

January 21, 2005 – Provost Search Committee

January 24, 2005 – Cabinet cancelled

January 25, 2005 – Grand Opening of the Agora Café and Starbucks

January 28, 2005 – Meeting with Gregg Lassen

Valerie Horne and I discussed a few issues with Mr. Gregg Lassen to include Staff Council budget and the possibility of having it increased. We discussed the staff scholarship and ways to fund it. There was some discussion of the goals of Staff Council and ways to help the university reach its goals with regard to finding ways to save money and student recruitment. We gave an overview of things Staff Council is working on including the Performance Review Committee.

January 28, 2005 – Staff Council Scholarship Committee Meeting

January 31, 2005 – Cabinet

Dr. Shelby Thames stated that he was very proud of the students' preparation of the Miss University of Southern Mississippi pageant. The students did a great job putting on the event; it was well organized.

Walt Cain stated that SGA was working with the Commissioner on getting the bridge by Southern Miss painted. It is in dire need of a fresh paint job. He will submit the paperwork to Gregg Lassen. The University cannot paint the overpass bridge but can provide names of those who can. Traffic will have to be diverted while the bridge is being painted.

Walt Cain discussed dead week, which is the week before finals. He wants to get a group of students together to develop a proposal that no tests or major projects be due the week prior to finals since that week is supposed to be available to prepare for exams.

The Student Body President's Council put an amendment before the three major universities, Southern Miss, Mississippi State, and Ole Miss, so that all three elections will be held on the same day. They are also supporting an amendment that there will be a mandatory meeting of outgoing and incoming presidents.

Madeliene Hamilton, with SGA, is working on the Clean Air Act, which is proposed to ban smoking within 20' of building entrances.

SGA elections are coming up with a debate scheduled for February 9. Candidates are Jonathan Krebs, Neal Kirby, and Jamayus Smith.

Bob Pierce stated that the Alumni Board will have a meeting Saturday. He mentioned that the Jackson County Alumni Chapter is sponsoring a float in the Pascagoula Mardi Gras parade. If anyone has an interest in participating, let him know by tomorrow afternoon. Dr. Thames requested that two cabinet members attend.

Bob Pierce also stated that the Talon was scheduled to be mailed this week. He appreciated everyone who has replied regarding attendance at the legislative luncheon. It will be on March 10 at 11:00. The Alumni Association will roll out its new website July 1. He asked for feedback on the website.

March 30 is Founder's Day. The SGA will be installing officers. There will be an event in the afternoon on the history of Southern Miss.

Bob Pierce discussed the condition of the Ogletree House. There is a possibility of discussions regarding launching a campaign to do major renovations.

He mentioned concerns with some of the Alumni Chapters and lack of activity. They are working on plans to revitalize some areas.

Richard Giannini stated that Wednesday is signing day for football. There will be two functions: one at noon at Buffalo Wild Wings and one on the Coast. The Conference USA contract is complete. It will be a combo ESPN and College Sports Television contract. Southern Miss is the first to sign a non-exclusive contract with ESPN.

The Athletic Foundation has purchased one-third of an airplane. MS State and Ole Miss have three or four planes. We have one-third and want to market use of the plane to the rest of Southern Miss so they can use the one-third that Athletics has. It is a nine-passenger plane. It took two-three months to work out the contract with attorneys. It should really help the university with savings and time commitments. The cost of salary will be paid by those using the plane.

Dr. Dave Beckett stated that the Post Tenure Review Committee had a meeting Friday. Lee Gore recommended that Post Tenure Review be part of the Faculty Handbook. The deadline is coming up in early February. Dr. Thames stated that there were two basic changes. He wanted to make sure it was consistent with the IHL policy and that it was legal. He stated that the Southern Miss policy needed to be brought in line with the IHL policy. There were no conditions for termination or the use of sanctions.

Dr. Joan Exline stated that progress is being made with SACS. A report will be provided at the next meeting. She will meet with Faculty Senate on Friday. The consultant hired to assist Southern Miss is helping with probation and reaffirmation. She also went to the Chairs and Directors meeting.

Dr. Cynthia Moore stated that she has received a lot of nice notes regarding the new classroom furniture.

Dr. Thames commended Gregg Lassen on doing an outstanding job with outsourcing. The powerhouse renovation has been moved up a year! Starbucks is first-rate.

Dr. Thames stated that we will have to work very hard because of SACS. We need to look carefully at retention. We need to give students special attention.

Dr. Cecil Burge stated that we have 359 pure online students. Enrollment in online courses has grown 40-50% over the last two years. 15% of students are taking online courses.

We are different from State and Ole Miss because we have more sites. It's very difficult to coordinate multiple sites. We're seeing more and more strain on the budget. We are trying to utilize space as wisely as possible. We need to remember we have different challenges. We are meeting those challenges and needs.

Dr. Thames announced that Anthony Perkins is a fine athlete. The competition is trying to use the SACS probation to lure students away. We will need to be aggressive in recruiting.

Virginia Kittrell stated that as we head into another difficult year with regard to state funding, Staff Council would be looking at ways to help the university save money. The next Staff Council meeting will be at 9:30 tomorrow. Russ Willis will discuss the Performance Review document that he and the committee are working on. Gregg Lassen will also be in attendance to discuss some university issues (outsourcing, budget cuts, Starbucks and Agora Café).

5.2 President Elect's Report – Valerie Horne – No Report

5.3 Secretary's Report – Keri Hensarling – No Report

5.4 Secretary-Elect's Report – No Report

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Employee Appreciation Day

Virginia Kittrell reported that she will submit an Action Item to Staff Council next month concerning this subject.

7.0 Committee Reports and Assignments

7.1 Assignment of Action Items – no items to assign

7.2 Constitution and Bylaws – Ray Stevens

This committee will be meeting very soon to assess the Constitution and Bylaws and determine what actions need to be taken.

7.3 Legislative – Kameron Dale - no report

7.4 Salaries and Benefits – Mary Butler Sumrall – no report

7.5 University Relations and Cultural Diversity – Stacey Ready - no report

7.6 Technology and Training – Donna Donegan – no report

7.7 Other Committees:

A. Department of Parking Management Committee – Stacey Ready – no report

B. Scholarship Committee – Virginia Kittrell

A brochure is being prepared for solicitation of funding. It will be presented to the Council as soon as it is completed.

C. Drug and Alcohol Policy Review Committee – Mathew Cox – no report

**D. President's Council – Stacey Ready –
January 18, 2005**

Faculty member Scott Piland was unanimously elected to act as the council facilitator.

We then moved into the body of the Agenda with Dr. Thames giving his update on the following items.

- A. SACS: a SACS approved consultant, Margaret Sullivan, has been hired. We are sending her materials on a regular basis which she is reviewing and commenting on. Basically, as most of you probably know by now, we are being cited on one area: distance learning. It looks like basically we will be moving assessment of online courses back to the colleges of their discipline from CICE.
- B. Gulf Coast Enrollment Caps: apparently there was a bit of a conflict going on at the Gulf Coast between the administration and the instructors because enrollment caps were removed during the last orientation. The administration did this so that they could determine if the demand was greater than the pre-determined set class size. The problem seemed to be that the instructors were not informed of this prior to the event happening. They were informed after their classes were enlarged. They again felt it was a lack of communication between administration and faculty. Dr. Thames said he agreed and that he has asked Drs. Grimes and Malone to include professors in all committee meetings in the future.
- C. Gulf Coast Library: many changes are taking place on the Gulf Coast campus structurally. Buildings are being razed that are not functional and cost efficient. Along those lines, proper building use is being analyzed as well. Hardy Hall is no longer being used as a conference center, but is now being used as office space, and the third floor of the Library is going to be utilized as classroom space. Dr. Myron Henry said that on Friday he saw a memo that suggested that the classroom space would be used for an Executive MBA program and asked if that were true. Both Dr. Thames and Gregg Lassen said that the Executive MBA program is something that is being explored for the Gulf Coast campus. Dr. Anne Wallace expressed that her colleagues on the Coast campus who helped raise funds for the Library are upset that the Library will be converted to classroom space for fear that it might not ever be converted back to library space.
- D. Recruitment: according to Dr. Kristi Motter, spring '05 recruitment is up slightly compared to spring '04. There is a push to increase the parent initiative since parents are more involved in students' lives. They will be doing more parent mail-outs, etc. The Admissions Office conducted registration at JCJC as a way to facilitate registration for transfer students who are coming to Southern Miss. They will be expanding that service to include PRCC this summer as well.
- E. Expansion of FYE: the administration has approved the name change to First Year Experience. This will make it more inclusive for the transfer students. Southern Miss is the University of choice for transfer students. This office will be expanding services to transfer students and reaching out to them more with mentoring programs, career exploration, transfer leadership board and so forth.

Next, Rusty Postlewaite from Physical Plant took the floor to discuss campus updates. Many physical changes are taking place on campus. The Power House is an exciting one that is on the horizon. It is an estimated 1 _-2 million

dollar project that should be completed by the fall semester. This project will be paid for by Aramark. The Power House will be a dining centerpiece located across from the Library (in the historic Power Plant building next to the Textbook Center.)

The Southern Drive project should be completed within 60 days; the West Building Supply building is completely gone, and in its place we now have 450 paved parking spaces that are zoned commuter. He stated that West Memorial Drive will be a paved pedestrian plaza and that once the ELI building is razed, a parking lot will be built to accommodate those displaced spaces.

The Union expansion is on schedule and is now about 60% complete. The expected completion date for the project is January 2006.

There are plans for a Coast Coffee Shop. The Friendship Café is gone; it was in really bad shape. Bankhouse Coffee Shop which is located in Long Beach has agreed to go into the Provost's Home on the Long Beach Campus and establish a coffee shop there.

Russ Willis was there to inform the Council about the Staff Performance Review Committee. He informed the Council of the committee's plans to change the evaluation range from a scale of 1-9 to 1-5. They want to strive for consistency, for evaluation of the evaluation process, and for updating the job descriptions.

Last on the agenda, Gregg Lassen updated the Council on budget issues. He stated that we could plan on a 5-10% budget reduction from the Legislature. He also informed us that university energy costs go up each year just as our home energy costs do and that we have the new CICE building to which we now have to provide power. Mr. Lassen informed us that only one-third of our budget comes from state revenues and that we have to look for alternative ways to increase revenues. He did encourage us not to panic though.

In closing, Dr. Thames encouraged us to contact him or Dr. Exline with agenda items for next month's meeting.

E. Performance Review Committee – Robin Barnett – no report

8.0 New Business

8.1 March meeting at Gulf Park

The March meeting of Staff Council will be held on the Gulf Park campus in Long Beach on March 1, 2005. Please let Virginia Kittrell know whether or not you plan to ride in one of the University vans to the meeting.

8.2 Replacement of Vacant Positions

The clerical position that has been vacant will be filled by next month by contacting the person who received the next highest number of votes on the ballot in the original election. Vicki Watkins has resigned from Staff Council. We will return to the original ballot and contact the person receiving the next highest number of votes from that election to fill the remainder of that term.

8.3 Replacement for Secretary-elect position

Kim Busche volunteered to assume the Secretary-elect position. After asking three additional times for other volunteers to run for the position, Virginia Kittrell called for a vote to be taken. Kim Busche was unanimously elected.

8.4 Outstanding Staff Member Award

The nomination form was handed out to the Staff Council membership. Virginia Kittrell stated that all nominations must be submitted by the April meeting and a vote will be taken at the May meeting.

9.0 Announcements

9.1 IHL Meeting – Thursday, February 17, 2005

9.2 Valentine’s Day – February 14, 2005

9.3 Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, February 15, 2005, at 10 a.m.

9.4 Trent Lott Center groundbreaking – February 24 , 2005, 2:00 p.m.

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

**Keri Hensarling
Secretary
February 2005**