

***** APPROVED MINUTES *****

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

January 11, 2005

1.0 Call to Order

President Kittrell called the meeting to order at 9:49 a.m.

The following members were present:

Robin Barnett, Susan Blackwell, Beth Bosarge, Kim Busche, Steve Coleman, Mathew Cox, Kameron Dale, Tommy Dye, Wynde Fitts, Diane Green, Keri Hensarling, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Bob Lowe, Pam Posey, Stacey Ready, Stephen Rey, Billy Sanders, Ratonia Shaw, Toni Stringer, 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:

Virginia Kittrell for Kady Beaoui, Trisha Wilbanks for Kalin Butirich, Ray Stevens for Donna Donegan, Robin Barnett for Carol Dunaway, Stacey Ready for Michelle Fleming, Robert Lowe for Valerie Horne, Keri Hensarling for Karen Lott, Toni Stringer for Beverly McNeese, Stacey Ready for Steve Rey, Mary Virgil for Frances Sudduth and Pam Posey for Vicki Watkins.

The following members were absent without proxy:

David Byrd, Myra Herndon-Wade, Ray Scott, and Hitomi Wince.

4.0 Approval of Minutes

4.1 November Proposed Minutes

The minutes of the November regular meeting were approved.

5.0 Officers' Reports

5.1 President's Report – Virginia Kittrell

MASCO – November 18, 2004

Representatives were present from the following universities: Mississippi Valley State, Delta State, Ole Miss, Mississippi State, MUW, Alcorn State, and Southern Miss.

Mississippi State is looking into supplementing employees' income with \$40 per month for cell phone expenses to eliminate university phones. They already completed a needs assessment to determine who needed a cell phone, so the supplement would only apply to those employees. Mary Harrington from Ole Miss suggested that everyone gather data to see if the university would save money if everyone was subsidized \$40.

Discussion about Staff Council and its representation on administrative committees took place.

Mississippi Valley State is requesting that their administration allow a Staff Council representative to serve on the Executive Staff Committee. They already serve on standing committees. Delta State requested that their administration allow a representative on the President's Cabinet. Their request was denied; however, the Faculty Senate president is on the board. The Staff Council at Mississippi State has a voting seat on the Executive Council.

The Staff Council at Alcorn State has no voice on the President's Council; however, the president meets with staff twice a year. The Southern Miss Staff Council has representation on the Cabinet, Provost's Council, President's Council (two representatives), search committees, Sexual Harassment Committee, Parking Appeals Committee, and Drug and Alcohol Policy Committee. The MUW Staff Council has a standing seat on the Administrative Council. The Ole Miss Staff Council has representatives on standing committees but none on the administrative cabinet.

MUW is almost finished with repairs from the tornado. The university is reorganizing from eight colleges to four.

Mississippi Valley State has formed two new committees within Staff Council: Recognition and Incentive Committee and Staff Development Committee. They will award a framed certificate, \$25 cash, a \$25 gift certificate from Wal-Mart, two free meals from Food Services, and a parking spot close to the recipient's building for one month. The first award will be given at faculty/staff orientation. December 1 is an AIDS Day event.

Delta State hosted the IHL meeting last month. Their Staff Council places a big emphasis on strengthening the relationship between Delta State and the Chamber of Commerce. Their Staff Council of over 40 members sets 10 goals, and the theme is “Communicate, communicate, communicate.” The Staff Council hosted a canned food drive. A letter was sent opposing the decrease in the required number of class hours. The bookstore, food services, and the iTech department were outsourced. Five top people lost their jobs. Their campus went to the one-card system for door access, ID, debit, and meal plan, with student information on each card. Parents can deposit money into the students’ card accounts.

Mississippi State sponsored “Decorate Your Front Entrance” (building) for homecoming. Twenty-two buildings participated. They were judged and winners received football tickets and trophies. Staff Council sold fleece jackets for \$15 and made about 85 cents for each of 1,000 that were sold. The president, his wife, and a couple of others were given a jacket. Health screenings began in July. A nurse practitioner will go to departments to do the screenings for \$15. This includes checking cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar. Staff Council worked with Human Resources to host a daylong health fair.

A classroom building at Alcorn State is undergoing major renovations. The recipe for a new soy nut cookie was developed at Alcorn State and the cookies are for sale in Natchez and in the bookstore for \$1 each. Trent Lott visited the campus to give a keynote address. The campus implemented online requisitioning, which is working well, and training was well attended.

Ole Miss’ theme is “Your Voice to the Administration.” They conducted “meet and greet” before class to assist students with directions, etc. They had almost 100 percent participation from the Staff Council. For their fall kickoff, they ordered pizzas and cake for the lunch hours of 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. and had a band. Thirty-five Staff Council members put together 20 Thanksgiving baskets for the needy. Valued at approximately \$80 each, the baskets included everything necessary for a Thanksgiving dinner. To get all staff involved, a Christmas reception was held and punch and cookies were served. The textbook scholarship is working well. The chancellor increased the budget to \$5,000. Terese Hannah was invited to speak to Staff Council for one hour. The entire campus,

including the Faculty Senate, was invited. They have initiated a Staff of the Month recognition program. Their campus is implementing a winter session that starts January 3 and ends before the Martin Luther King holiday.

Southern Miss had a regular monthly meeting October 5, 2004, at GCRL. Lunch was provided by staff, and tours were given around campus. The campus closed at noon October 7, 2004, for a football game. Homecoming was October 23, 2004. Southern Miss played Cincinnati on November 6, 2004, which was also the date of the America Recycles Day tailgating event. Staff Council will elect a new member to the President's Council at the December meeting. The campus is going to paperless pay. With IHL's approval to reduce the number of class hours, students will be given off the day before Mardi Gras in addition to Mardi Gras. Staff Council participated in a Student Affairs golf tournament. After expenses, \$800 was raised and Aramark matched that amount. The money will be used to fund a student scholarship and staff scholarships. The campus building liaison system was updated to assist with reporting work requests for Physical Plant and iTech. A training workshop is scheduled for November 19, 2004. A committee has been formed to come up with a new performance evaluation system for next year in the event merit raises are given. The committee includes Staff Council members, the director of Human Resources, and a faculty member from the College of Education and Psychology.

Provost Search Committee phone interview – December 9, 2004

Staff Council holiday reception – December 7, 2004

Provost's Council – Friday, January 7, 2005

This committee will now meet one Friday of each month. Dr. Joan Exline reported that they are working hard to meet SACS guidelines. On August 2, 2005, the university will provide a monitoring report on what has been done and what will be done. A special team appointed by SACS will come in to validate the report. A decision will be made in December as to what action will be taken. We are also looking at the next term. A site team will visit in 2006 on the new process. Margaret Sullivan, director of the SACS Consulting Network and approved by IHL, will assist with the SACS process. Dr. Exline will be available to speak with representatives of the administrative areas.

The credit part of Continuing Education will be removed from the department and put back into the education sphere. Non-credit programs will continue. International education is also being separated from Continuing Education.

Two sessions will be held in February 2005 for scheduling classes in Ad Astra.

Dr. Cynthia Moore reported that new classroom furniture has been purchased for GCRL, Long Beach, Gautier, and Hattiesburg. They are working with building liaisons to ensure everything is correct. Some rooms are still in need of white boards. Liaisons need to assist in maintaining classrooms. Some extra left-handed chairs and some larger tablet desks were ordered. Send a list of missing items to Dr. Moore. Each room has a handicap-accessible table.

Lin Harper reported that the Learning Enhancement Center is open and encouraged faculty to utilize the services.

Dr. Grimes reported that 95 faculty searches are under way. All requests to interview will be approved, but he is not sure that all positions can be funded.

Spring registration is up by approximately 200 on the Gulf Coast campus. Exact numbers will be available soon.

The FAR (Faculty Activity Report) is due January 17, 2005.

Suzy Steen reported that the grand opening of the International Center will be April 7, 2005, at 10 a.m.

Cory Wengreen is working on new budgeting processes and doesn't expect Southern Miss to receive new funding.

Dr. Harold Doty reported that they received a \$100,000 pledge for scholarship money (\$50,000 was received in cash, and the other \$50,000 will come when the CD matures).

Dr. Peter Fos reported that courses will be offered in HPR on the Gulf Coast.

Mitch Bernum reported that the number of applications for external funding has doubled. The Drug and Alcohol Policy Committee has sent a draft to Lee Gore and the IHL attorney. Once the attorneys have looked at it, it will go to the Faculty Senate and Staff Council for feedback.

Kay Wall invited everyone to the Starbucks grand opening.

Dr. Rex Gandy discussed the new student learning center.

The Faculty Senate is concerned with SACS. They are working on post-tenure review. The proposal is currently on Dr. Grimes' desk.

Dr. Jane Hudson will be moving offices to the VA hospital on the Gulf Coast. Her office will be linking technology on the coast with returning soldiers to help them with programs.

Greg Pierce reported that he appreciated everyone's help with grade entry.

Michelle Ransom discussed the FAR and reminded faculty to call if there were problems.

Dr. Grimes will be in Hattiesburg on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, but has class on the coast from 5 to 6:15 p.m. He will be on the coast on Wednesday and Thursday. He reported that seven people were interviewed by phone for the provost position before the holidays.

Cabinet – January 10, 2005

Lisa Mader reported that Dr. Thames will present a check to Moss Point Schools for their polymer science program. Tuesday, January 18, 2005, is IHL Day at the State Capitol. Each university will set up a table in the rotunda from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lisa needs Cabinet members to talk with legislators and man the table for a while. There is also a press conference on the Jan. 18 on the Gulf Coast campus regarding the partnership between Southern Miss and Biloxi Regional Medical Center. The Coca-Cola Classic Rodeo will be January 21 and 22. Discounted tickets will be available for \$10 each. The Trent Lott Center groundbreaking will be February 24, 2005, at 2 p.m.

Bob Pierce announced that the legislative luncheon will be Thursday, February 10, 2005, at 10 a.m at Denney's in Jackson. It is an annual event for which Southern Miss alumni and legislators are invited to lunch.

Walt Cain reported that SGA will also have their legislative day, when students go to the State Capitol, sometime in February. Academic issues will be Walt's focus this year. He wants to clarify "Dead Week" for students. This is the week before finals. SGA officer elections are in February. Walt suggested that there needs to be more support for international programs. He will meet with Dr. Jay Grimes to discuss this issue. Dr. Brian O'Neal has left the university; therefore, no capstone courses are being offered in international studies this spring.

Dr. Cecil Burge announced that the president has signed the Omnibus Bill. We are in a new congressional season. Southern Miss is in a number of interactions with companies currently. There are new federal guidelines on computer security. The Gulf Park campus experienced a virus attack last week. Southern Miss will face new challenges in the security area.

Dr. Joe Paul reported an increase in the number of new students. Exact numbers are not out yet. He provided feedback from a student who has decided to attend school at Southern Miss because of the personal attention he has received from people here. He will be coming from St. Andrews, which is a private school in Jackson.

Richard Giannini reported that two football players have been signed from Pearl River Community College. There were some coaching changes in December. The bowl game wrapped up well. Conference USA has almost finished the television package. Tomorrow night Southern Miss plays Louisville in basketball. A large crowd is anticipated. Louisville is ranked No. 16 in the country. This is an important game for us. Construction on six new tennis courts and fencing will start this spring. The south end zone project is going well. The suites are sold out. Southern Miss will go to the IHL Board for approval of an architect this month. The Board is getting the bond money together. The first phase of the coliseum renovation is complete; the second and third phases will start in late May.

Virginia Kittrell announced the Staff Council's next meeting will be Tuesday, January 11, 2005, in Union Room C, at 9:30 a.m. The speakers will be Bob Gates and Bill Powe. They will talk about the Longleaf Trace and its progress.

Dr. Dave Beckett expressed concern about customer service on the Gulf Coast. He will meet with Dr. Grimes. Caps were lifted on certain courses on the Gulf Park campus. Dr. Grimes said overages will be handled. Mitch Berman sent the Drug and Alcohol Policy to the Faculty Senate. There were a few issues. Mr. Berman will attend the Faculty Senate meeting this Friday. Dr. Joan Exline will also attend to the meeting to discuss SACS. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee will meet with Dr. Thames on Thursday. Dr. Jerry Mattson is leaving the university to go to the University of Central Florida. He will be in the Forensic Science Department. Dr. Beckett expressed his regret about Dr. Mattson's departure.

Gregg Lassen parked in the new parking lot which was previously West Building Material. About 400 spaces are located there. Gregg Lassen has added about 1,000 parking spaces since he has been at the university.

Dr. Joan Exline gave a SACS update. Margaret Sullivan, a consultant, has been hired to assist with the process. She is optimistic about the situation and feels that the problems can be easily fixed. Dr. Exline will be going around to all the colleges to explain what they can do to assist.

Dr. Jay Grimes reported an increase in enrollment on the Gulf Coast. A workshop will be hosted Thursday by Southern Miss and the Sun Herald on the coast, featuring guest speaker Robert Sternberg.

Dr. Joan Exline visited Einstein Bros. Bagels and suggested everyone visit it. Dr. Joe Paul announced that Starbucks is also open.

Gregg Lassen thanked Dr. Cynthia Moore and the Physical Plant for getting the furniture move coordinated. Dr. Moore reported that over 1500 pieces were ordered with only 10-12 damaged. Of those, eight have already been replaced. Dr. Thames thanked Dr. Moore for the good work.

Dr. Shelby Thames encouraged everyone to make sure we continue to increase enrollment this fall and thanked everyone for their good work.

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 – Hitomi Wince – No Report

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Employee Appreciation Day

Virginia Kittrell reported that she would send a message to Gregg Lassen stating that no request would be sent to Public Relations asking for an employee appreciation activity. This activity should be initiated voluntarily by the administration. The employees should not have to request appreciation.

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

The Salaries and Benefits Committee, after due research and discussion, recommends that Item 110 be closed with no action taken.

Item 110 – Online courses have additional fees. These fees are not included in tuition reimbursement. This poses a hardship for staff. The Staff Council should investigate these fees and suggest solutions for this issue.

After checking with Greg Pierce, university registrar, we determined that the \$30 online course fee (\$10 per credit hour) is considered a “lab” fee. This money is used to support the university's WebCT.

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

7.6 Technology and Training – Donna Donegan – no report
This committee is sending a formal request to iTech to update the Staff Council Web page.

7.7 Other Committees:

A. Department of Parking Management Committee – Stacey Ready – No Report

B. Scholarship Committee – Virginia Kittrell

The committee has met and is setting the criteria for scholarship eligibility. The account has been set up with the USM Foundation and should be ready for the initial disbursements for the summer semester.

C. Drug and Alcohol Policy Review Committee – Mathew Cox

The latest version of the DAPPER (Drug, Alcohol Policy, Programs, Education, and Research) committee was forwarded by committee chair Dr. Mitchell Berman.

In essence, the legalities of the policy are being reviewed by Lee Gore's office (university counsel), and the activities that surround staff assistance programs such as a proposed EAP (Employee Assistance Program) are the primary focus of the document thus far. Attention has been focused toward the EAP section as it pertains to the "assistance" side of the drug and alcohol policy, not the "legalities/laws" side of the policy. The EAP would assist faculty and staff with issues which are challenging and might impair or have potential to impair work performance. The EAP is not only for substance abuse, but also for other challenges as diverse as financial, family, marital, or behavioral issues that might result in lowered job performance or absenteeism. The EAP section of the document outlines the goal of such a program, eligibility, types of referrals (self and supervisory), supervisory training, and rehabilitation. While this initiative is meant to accommodate the needs of individuals who face such challenges so that they can be dealt with in an effort to improve themselves and improve the job performance of the individual, the EAP is not intended to take the place of proper disciplinary action by supervisors.

D. President's Council – Stacey Ready – No Report

E. Performance Review Committee – Robin Barnett

The Performance Review Committee met December 15 in OMH 127 at 10 a.m. Present were Pam Posey, Dr. Mike Vest, Russ Willis and Robin Barnett (chair).

Russ Willis provided the committee with performance review sheets from other institutions, of which many were similar to ours. Dr. Mike Vest and Russ Willis discussed job–skill versus trait–based evaluations. Job–skill evaluations are based on the duties performed daily. Trait–based evaluations are composed of items like communication skills, customer service, ability to get along with co–workers, absences, tardies, etc.

Also discussed was training for supervisors to use the evaluation properly. Evaluations should be mandatory and statistical analysis should be prepared for comparison purposes. If evaluations are mandatory and if supervisors know that someone is going to be checking that they are turned in and that summary comparisons are going to be used, compliance will increase.

This led to a discussion about a timeline for the process. First and foremost, job descriptions need to be reviewed every year before the evaluation process. Since evaluations are customarily done in the spring, March would be a good time for job description reviews and April would be a good time for evaluations to be conducted, with April 30 as the last day to turn in evaluations.

In reviewing our evaluation, the committee felt that nine levels were too many and that five levels should be sufficient. The committee plans to define those levels and incorporate them in the draft evaluation for February.

The appeals process was briefly discussed, but nothing was decided about what that process would be.

The Performance Review Committee met January 5 in OMH at 9 a.m. Present were Russ Willis and Robin Barnett (chair).

The committee members present reviewed the committee's report to Staff Council. They decided to design a draft evaluation to be reviewed by Staff Council in February with the goal of having an approved document by early March. This would put the committee a little behind schedule for this year, but the document would be on time in 2006. The committee will meet again in late January and develop the draft form.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Nominations for Election Committee

The Election Committee will consist of Keri Hensarling (chair), Robert Lowe, Susan King, Wynde Fitts, Trisha Wilbanks, William Sanders, Mary Virgil, and Toni Stringer. Keri Hensarling will contact the members for a meeting as soon as the inquiry letters are ready.

8.2 Community Service Project

A community service project is being held to benefit the tsunami victims in Asia. "Can a Lunch Week" will donate all monies collected to the Hattiesburg Red Cross with the distinction of being used to aid the tsunami victims. Please participate by donating the equivalent of whatever your lunch would cost for one day. Donation cans will be placed in various locations around campus from January 18-21, 2005.

9.0 Announcements

9.1 IHL Meeting - Thursday, January 20, 2005

9.2 MASCO Meeting at Jackson State University - January 20, 2005 at 10 a.m.

9.3 Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting - Tuesday, January 18, 2005, at 10 a.m.

9.4 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - January 17, 2005

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Keri Hensarling
Secretary

January 2005