

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES  
June 7, 2005**

**1.0 Call to Order**

President Kittrell called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

The following members were present:

Robin Barnett, Beth Bosarge, Kim Busche, David Byrd, Melissa Carpenter, Kameron Dale, Donna Donegan, Tommy Dye, Wynde Fitts, Michelle Fleming, Keri Hensarling, Myra Herndon-Wade, Kathryn Hood, Valerie Horne, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Pam Posey, Steve Rey, Billy Sanders, Ray Scott, Ray Stevens, 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:

Mary Butler Sumrall for Karen Lott, Toni Stringer for Beverly McNeese, Virginia Kittrell for Tonia Shaw, Kathryn Hood for Carol Dunaway, Michelle Fleming for Kady Beouui, Steve Rey for Stacey Ready and Donna Donegan for Frances Sudduth.

The following members were absent without proxy:

Kalin Butirich, Susan Blackwell, Steve Coleman, Diane Green, Mathew Cox, Bob Lowe and Vicki Watkins.

**4.0 Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 April Proposed Minutes**

The minutes of the April regular meeting were tabled until the July meeting.

**4.2 May Proposed Minutes**

The minutes of the May regular meeting were tabled until the July meeting.

**5.0 Officers' Reports**

**5.1 President's Report – Virginia Kittrell  
Provost's Council – May 6, 2005 – cancelled**

**Cabinet – May 9, 2005**

Dr. Paul announced that summer freshman admits were up 5.3 percent, transfer applications were down 1.2 percent, and financial aid awards were up 6.1 percent. The number of LuckyDay Scholars who accepted was 137.

Dr. Burge announced that HPER was working with Homeland Security. Lou Marciani is involved in this project that brought in a \$157,000 contract with the National Emergency Management Agency. The grant involves safety at athletic events. He did a quick inventory of how many companies have visited with Southern Miss. Over 35 companies have talked with Southern Miss, and a number of them have signed contracts. More are scheduled to visit. Stennis is one of four finalists for a location of a new company.

Bob Pierce reported the Alumni Association was hosting a golf tournament today. The Meridian Alumni Chapter meeting would be held tonight. A luncheon was scheduled on Wednesday in Tupelo. The next issue of the *Talon* will come out in August.

Jonathan Krebs reported that the one-card system is on schedule for next fall.

Dr. David Beckett reported that the Faculty Senate meeting will be held Friday. He discussed the issue of exams being given the last week of classes and that the policy is listed on Page 84 of the Undergraduate Bulletin. SGA had brought up the issue that some professors were going over new material and assigning projects during the week prior to finals. In the early to mid 1990s Faculty Senate and SGA made a joint resolution for dead week; however, the resolution never made it to the Faculty Handbook or Student Handbook. The actual days that no new assignments are to be scheduled are Thursday and Friday of the week prior to finals. It was mentioned that exams are to be held at the scheduled times unless 100 percent of the students agree to an alternate date. Dr. Paul, SGA, Faculty Senate, and Dr. Grimes will get together to resolve this issue.

Tenure track faculty numbers were discussed. In 2001, 72 percent of professors were tenured compared to 61 percent in 2000 and 44 percent in 2004. However, in 2001, there were 90 tenure track professors compared to 201 in 2004.

Dr. Grimes attended a conference at Long Beach. The goal was to connect the Gulf of Mexico to Human Health. There were 55-60 attendees.

There will be 1174 students graduating. There will be no orchestra due to lack of space. Dr. Thames commented on the small number of faculty in attendance at commencement. Dr. Grimes reported that attendance is mandatory at the Coast.

Virginia Kittrell reported that Gregg Lassen attended the Staff Council meeting to discuss the budget situation. Council members asked questions and made comments. Virginia reported the progress of how Staff Council is handling outsourced personnel's involvement on Staff Council. She also noted that Staff Council would be electing a representative to serve on the President's Council for the next six-month term, as well as officers for the upcoming year.

#### **IT Advisory Council – May 12, 2005**

The IT Advisory Council was provided a list of priorities that iTech established in order for the committee to help decide which projects needed to be accomplished and which projects would get put on hold or cancelled due to lack of funding. Due to the nature of some of the projects, a recommendation was given for Homer Coffman to provide a description of each of the projects to help give people a better understanding of what the projects encompass. Homer agreed to provide this to the committee. No decisions were made at this meeting. The committee will meet after better descriptions of the projects are provided.

#### **Commencement – May 13, 2005**

I attended both commencements.

#### **Cabinet – May 16, 2005 – cancelled**

#### **IHL – May 19, 2005 – Valerie and I were out of town on business**

#### **Cabinet – May 23, 2005**

A presentation was given on the summary and recommendations for the IVN Academic Assessment by Dr. Judith V. Boettcher. This proposal will go through the IT Governance Committee.

Dr. Cynthia Moore announced that Faculty Orientation Day would be August 23, 2005, and the new faculty luncheon would be August 24, 2005. A workshop on the Learning Enhancement Center would be included in the orientation.

Jonathan Krebbs, SGA President, suggested that faculty take a University 101 traditions course since so many are new.

Dr. David Beckett asked that the Faculty Senate President be allowed to speak 15-20 minutes to new faculty. He also suggested that new faculty be given a copy of *The Drawl*.

Dr. Moore mentioned it might be a good idea to have a workshop for new chairs on hiring, disciplining, scheduling, and budgeting.

Dr. Beckett discussed students withdrawing from courses. Students who wish to withdraw after the deadline should only be allowed to do so under extenuating circumstances. Full-time students are typically following the procedures and could receive a W/P or W/F. However, part-time students who withdraw automatically receive a W/P. The only way to change the grade is by completing a change of grade form. Dr. Grimes will ask Academic Council to review this procedure.

Jonathan Krebbs reported that he will meet with Bennie Sellers. SGA is working on Eagle Palooza. They are trying to get free transportation on campus starting at dark until midnight to transport students and thus increase safety. The pilot project SGA was working on to provide transportation downtown during the lunch hour (noon to 2:00 p.m.) didn't work because students were afraid they wouldn't make it back to campus on time for classes.

Dr. Burge reported that the MIDAS program is still going on. Some people were under the impression that the program had been discontinued.

Dr. Gandy visited with the Math and Science School. Some of their students will be attending Southern Miss.

Dr. Pierce thanked everyone who worked on NCATE. Faculty worked very hard even after commencement.

Dr. Paul announced the last call for summer Preview is this Thursday. Pre-registration is up 25 percent for the Hattiesburg campus.

Virginia Kittrell talked about the benefits of the Student Affairs Retreat and suggested that other areas do something similar so that the goals and priorities of the various departments could be shared with everyone. The methods of communication could be convocation or departmental meetings. The idea is to make sure everyone is on the same page and understands how their department will accomplish their goals.

**MASCO – May 26, 2005 – cancelled**

**Cabinet – June 6, 2005 - cancelled**

**5.1 President Elect's Report – Valerie Horne – No Report**

**5.2 Secretary's Report – Keri Hensarling – No Report**

**5.3 Secretary-Elect's Report – Kim Busche - No Report**

**6.0 Old Business**

**6.1 Elections**

Elections have been held. The winners were notified and invited to the June meeting with the luncheon to be held afterward. Their terms will begin July 2005. Sharon Hughes, Margaret Firth, and Tyia Brooks attended the meeting.

**6.2 Outstanding Staff Member Award**

The winner of this award will be announced at the luncheon later today.

- 6.3 **Staff Excellence Awards** – Kameron Dale  
The winners of these awards will be announced at the luncheon later today.
- 6.4 **End-of-Year Reports**  
Reports will be given during the Committee Reports section of the Agenda.
- 6.5 **Fund-raising Committee**  
Valerie Horne borrowed a fleece jacket and polo shirt to show the Staff Council examples of what is being proposed to sell to Southern Miss staff as a fund-raiser. Mississippi State University and Delta State University have sold these as a fund-raiser and did very well. The sales will be made only to Southern Miss Staff as a morale booster and because we are raising money for projects benefiting the staff. Kathryn Hood volunteered to help with this project. Wynde Fitts will inquire whether we can get permission to use the licensed logo without paying the fees since this is a fund-raiser.
- 6.6 **Golf Tournament**  
Valerie Horne stated that she has already gotten \$2,550 obligated by sponsors for the golf tournament. Please continue to help raise funds for this project to support our scholarship fund.
- 6.7 **Nomination Committee**  
This committee will poll the current and incoming Staff Council members and produce a ballot for election of President-Elect and Secretary-Elect. The election will be held during the July 2005 meeting. If you would like to place your name on the ballot, please let a committee member or current officer know of your interest.

## 7.0 **Committee Reports and Assignments**

### **Assignment of Action Items –**

An action item was presented regarding a parking ticket. It was determined that this subject was outside the responsibility of Staff Council. The submitter will be notified that the issue should be presented to Mike Giles and the Parking Management Committee for review.

### 7.1 **Constitution and Bylaws – Ray Stevens**

Your Constitution and By-Laws Committee recommends that Section G, Outsourced Employees, be added to the Standing Rules for Staff Council. By doing so, the 2004-05 C&BL Committee may bring closure to the deliberations discussed and voted upon this year, setting a process and procedure in place while the 2005-06 Committee is organized and begins working. These are Standing Rules and should not preclude changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, should future committees and Staff Council deem such changes as in the best interest of the Council.

Section G would read . . .

1. The President of Staff Council or appropriate appointee will make a good-faith effort in contacting the CEO or business representative of each of those areas that are outsourced by the university. The purpose of Staff Council shall be discussed and the CEO will be invited to send a representative to attend Staff Council monthly meetings.
2. The selected representative should be identified by the CEO, and the President of Staff Council should be notified so that proper meeting notices can be sent.
3. Any current Staff Council member who is outsourced shall remain on Council until their term expires if agreeable with the outsourced unit's CEO. If an outsourced unit's CEO does not allow their employee to complete their elected term on Staff Council, then that position will be declared vacant and will not be filled.

4. An outsourced representative shall serve as a member-at-large and provide assistance to committees as needed and determined by the Staff Council President.

5. Employees of outsourced units who were employees of the University prior to July 1, 2004, who serve on the Council, shall retain the same privileges accorded to university employees serving on the Council.

Ray Stevens introduced a motion to accept the Constitution and Bylaws committee recommendations. Robin Barnett seconded.

In favor: 28      Nay: 0      Abstained: 3      Motion Passed

**7.2 Legislative – Kameron Dale - no report**

**7.3 Salaries and Benefits – Mary Butler Sumrall**

1. The Staff Council Salaries and Benefits Committee has had a productive year. We considered four action items. Action Items #108 and #109 dealt with using the Payne Center in lieu of taking a class or in lieu of a tuition waiver for children to attend the University. The Payne Center staff is planning to propose to the administration that University employees be allowed to use the Payne Center free or at a greatly reduced cost. Payne Center personnel launched an Employee Wellness Program, which was quite successful, so they are currently compiling data obtained in the program to “make the case” that well employees are better employees and are in better condition to help the University reach its mission. Members of the Staff Council will support these efforts as needed.

Action Item #110 dealt with additional fees for online courses, which are not covered in the tuition waiver. The \$30.00 online course fee (\$10.00 per credit hour) is a lab fee and is used to support the University’s WebCT. The committee recommended that the Staff Council take no action.

One last action item #111 dealt with Employee Appreciation Day, which did not occur in 2004. Many employees were upset that this did not occur, while others thought the Revelry in September replaced the traditional Employee Appreciation Day. The Salaries and Benefits Committee is making a recommendation today that all full-time staff be given their birthday off (eight hours) to express appreciation for their commendable work and committed service to Southern Miss.

The chair of the committee with help from other committee members as well as other Staff Council members compiled a list of alternate health insurance providers for those wanting to cancel their family plans through the University’s policy. This information was disseminated to Staff Council members, Human Resources, and others throughout the University who requested it.

2. The University administration acknowledges the worth and significant contributions of each individual staff member to the overall mission of the University. Administrators continually look for ways to express appreciation to the staff and reward them for the good job they are doing; however, during these strained budget times, it has become extremely difficult to find ways to reward staff for their hard work since money for raises is not readily available and funds for events such as Employee Appreciation Days are virtually nonexistent. In view of these challenges, the Staff Council proposes the following:  
Each full-time staff member will be given eight hours of leave time not charged to annual or sick leave on his/her birthday.

The employee may take the day off on the actual birthday or on a day determined in consultation with the employee's supervisor to assure that work will not be interrupted.

In offices with several employees, should two employees share the same birthday, both will not take the day off at the same time.

If the birthday falls in a "holiday" period such as the Christmas holidays, then the employee may take another day deemed appropriate in consultation with the employee's supervisor.

The Staff Council feels this is a tremendous morale booster to the staff on all campuses and will not necessitate the University's closing or work being negatively affected.

**7.4 University Relations and Cultural Diversity – Stacey Ready**

Wynde Fitts made a motion to adopt the form for Staff of the Month award. Seconded. Motion passed.

**7.5 Technology and Training – Donna Donegan**

The Technology and Training Committee has been working on upgrading the Staff Council Web site per President Kittrell's request. Donella Wallace, Presentation Specialist with iTech, has been helping with the updates. Below is a list of items new and/or updated on the Web site:

- \_ New Look
- \_ Staff Council Student Scholarship Information
- \_ Update Monthly Minutes
- \_ Update Staff Council Officers
- \_ Update Staff Council Committee Assignments
- \_ Useful Links to include: President's Update from Dr. Thames, Physical Plant Work Requests, iTech Help Desk Work Order, Southern Miss Human Resources, Association of Office Professionals, and Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity

Presently, the Web site requires updates for past Staff Council minutes for 2003 - 2004, which at this time are not available to the committee. The Web site contains minutes approved through January 2005.

**7.6 Other Committees:**

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

**B. Scholarship Committee – Virginia Kittrell**

There will be a meeting held in the next couple of weeks to select the winner of the Student Scholarship.

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

**D. President's Council – Ray Scott – no report**

Ray Scott is rotating off the President's Council in July. Mary Butler Sumrall was elected to replace him on this committee.

**E. Performance Review Committee – Robin Barnett – no report**

This committee was an ad-hoc and has served its purpose. It should be removed from the agenda at this time. The committee can be re-formed at a later date if it is warranted.

**F. University Planning Committee – Virginia Kittrell –**

The University Planning Committee met quite a few times this year to work on the mission, vision, commitments, broad strategies and goals of the University, which is available on the Institutional Effectiveness Web site – [www.usm.edu/ie](http://www.usm.edu/ie).

During the course of this work, colleagues were encouraged to provide input at each step of the process. A message board was established for online comments at [www.usm.edu/strategicplan/](http://www.usm.edu/strategicplan/).

In addition, two open forums were held for comment on the planning document. These forums were managed by members of the University Planning Committee and were held Wednesday, March 23, at noon in the Union Hall of Honors and Thursday, March 24, at noon in Hardy Hall on the Coast.

The document was presented to the Executive Cabinet and a few minor changes were made. The document has been incorporated into the Environmental Assessment, which is currently a work in progress.

This committee was an ad-hoc and has served its purpose. It should be removed from the agenda at this time. The committee can be re-formed at a later date if it is warranted.

**G. IT Advisory Board – Virginia Kittrell – no report**

**H. Wellness Program – Robin Barnett – no report**

**8.0 New Business**

**8.1 Replacement for term on President's Council**

This issue was dealt with during the Committee Reports section of the agenda.

**8.2 Fleece Jacket and Polo Fundraiser**

This issue was dealt with during the Committee Reports section of the agenda.

**9.0 Announcements**

**9.1 Speaker for July meeting will be Theresa Hanna from State Insurance Office**

**9.2 Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, June 21, 2005**

**9.3 IHL meeting – Thursday, June 16, 2005, 8:30 a.m.**

**9.4 Southern Miss Trivia from *The Draw!***

**10.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

**Keri Hensarling  
Secretary  
June 2005**