

The University of Southern Mississippi
Staff Council Minutes
Tuesday, June 9, 2009
Thad Cochran Center Room 216 – 9:30 a.m.

Preceding the June meeting, council president Mandy Nace presented the spring 2009 Staff Council Service Award to Gayle Anderson. Gayle has 11 years of service with the university. She is currently administrative assistant for the Foreign Languages and Literature Department in the College of Arts and Letters. She was nominated by the department chair, Dr. Leah Fonder-Solano, who stated that in the short time Gayle has been in her department she has accomplished many things. She always goes “above and beyond” to make sure all students have a positive experience and that they receive the help they need. Tina Griffin, council secretary, presented Gayle with a “Southern MS goodie basket.”

President Nace recognized new staff council members. Those present were Candice Carter, Michael Chancellor, Valerie Craig, James Daniel, Jami King, Tim Laird, Chris McGee, Melissa Ravencraft, Michelle Templeton, Corrie Thompson and Brad Ward.

- 1.0 Call to Order – Mandy Nace, president
Called to order at 9:40 a.m.
- 2.0 Adoption of Agenda – Amy Byxbe moved to adopt the agenda and Dianne Coleman seconded the motion. The agenda was approved by council members.
- 3.0 Call for Proxies – Heather Brown for Mike Giles
Tina Griffin for Twillia Morgan

Members present were Teresa Loveless Allen, Rusty Anderson, Amanda Belsom, Christy Bjork-Elias, Heather Brown, Kay Bruening, Amy Byxbe, Dianne Coleman, Ida Coleman, JJ Crawley, Shannon Davis, Tommy Dye, Linda Dorsey, Tina Griffin, John Hayman, April Jordan, Bridgett May, Mandy Nace, Andrea Phillips, Cynthia Render-Leach, Susan Scott, Amy Thornton, Mary Virgil, Cory Williams, Lou Ellen Williams and Patience Wise.

Parliamentarian, Pam Posey, and auxiliary member, Kathy Hayman were present. Pat Foley, auxiliary member, was absent.

Verlee Breland, Larry Lee, and Paul Lott were absent without proxy.

- 4.0 Approval of Minutes
 - 4.1 Rusty Anderson moved to approve April and May minutes and it was seconded by Kay Bruening. The council members approved the April and May minutes. Tina Griffin will email the minutes to Amy Thornton to post to our Web site.

5.0 Officer's Reports

5.1 President's Report

5.1.1 Cabinet Meeting – Monday, June 8

- Mr. Richard Giannini was congratulated on the baseball team's success in going to the College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska. He was also presented a resolution from the state for the football team's New Orleans Bowl win this past fall.
- Dr. Joe Paul reported that Preview events have gone very well. They have started an overnight 2-day Preview with freshmen.

He also stated that parking decals are increasing to \$135.00 as of July 1 for all faculty, staff and students. There will be a provision for staff employees making \$18,000 or less which places the cost of their decal at \$81.00. There will be a pre-taxed payroll deduction option over a nine month period. President Nace asked about additional increases and Mr. Joe Morgan stated that we would continue to have increases, but not as significant as this increase (from \$50.00 to \$135.00 per month). There was much discussion among the council members about the parking decal increase and the parking garage.

Summer school numbers have increased from last year. In-credit hours are up 1.2 per cent in Hattiesburg and 1.8 percent overall.

- Dr. Cecil Burge stated that proposals have been submitted on \$17-18 million congressional funds.
- Governor Haley Barbour will be on campus June 29.
- Dr. Wolf stated that allocations for scholarships are out. Despite the economy they have over nine million in scholarships.
- Mr. Joe Morgan informed the cabinet of upcoming changes in travel policies effective July 1.
 - Conference registration fees will no longer be paid in advance by the travel desk. Employee must pay up front and then the travel desk will reimburse.
 - No more travel advances. According to the Travel Desk, with most of the advances that are being processed, the employee usually ends up having to pay back the university. They are trying to eliminate this. You must apply for an American Express Corporate Card through Human Resources; if you are denied, then you will be able to request a travel advance through Accounts Payable.

- Dr. Saunders asked cabinet members to give a brief statement on what they will be working on in the upcoming year:
 - Dr. Rex Gandy – Science and Technology
They will be focusing on the logistics program on the Gulf Coast in Gulfport. They are waiting for approval on the masters’ degree.
 - Dr. Forester – College of Health
They will continue the progression on the School of Nursing building. They will focus on development and continue looking for alternate funding sources.
 - College of Arts and Letters
They are working a collaborative effort. This fall they will have one big show, Moulin Rouge, which will include all of the arts. Tickets will go on sale July 1 and will cost \$100.00 each.
 - Graduate Studies
They are up 46 percent in applications and 21 percent in admissions. They will grow on that base of students and keep looking for additional funding.
 - Mary Dayne Gregg – 2 plus 2 Agreement
It is an agreement where a student will get a degree by attending a two-year junior college and then attend two years at a four-year institution. Delgado has contacted Southern Miss about a 2 plus 2 Agreement contract. They are the first junior college located outside the state to offer a contract. We currently have contracts with Pearl River Community College and MS Gulf Coast Junior College.
 - Dr. Nail – College of Business
Dr. Nail announced the launching of the “College of Business Honors House”. It will be made up of 12 male and 12 female honor students and they will reside in the former Kappa Sig house. They will have 24 private rooms. This is the only program of its kind in the state. The College of Business Honors House students will have special requirements in order to qualify.
He also stated that Dr. Skip Hughes will assume the position of director of the accounting department on July 1.
 - Becky Woodrick
Becky stated that we need to continue to work on increasing our minority faculty and administration. She had complaints from students who felt they were being treated unfairly based on their sexual

orientation. Becky will work on addressing these situations.

- The Library is discussing ways to protect The Collections and also expanding computer access for students. At times, all computers are in use. They are working with Homer Coffman and iTech to see where they can increase public access for students.
- Jana Bryant – Marketing and Public Relations
Jana announced that they will change their name to University Communications. They are also working on an overall university communication plan.
- Student Government Association – JR Robinson
SGA will be looking at ways to help with retention. They are looking at the possibility of all freshmen taking the UNV 101 class. Also, they will continue their service to students and will look at working with UPD on an escort service at night.
- Staff Council – Mandy Nace
Staff Council President Nace stated we would continue to focus on USM's Staff Excellence Awards, Staff Council Scholarship and Service Awards. The council will also work on a service project for next spring with Office of Sustainability.
- Russ Willis - Human Resources
They are working on guidelines for processing new hires for professor of practice. He also stated that a few staff positions have been eliminated and that if anyone needs a staff employee to please contact him.
- Dr. Lyman reported that Dr. Brett Kemker is assistant provost for Student Success. He will deal mainly with retention matters.
There will be a new faculty orientation on August 17. We have 35 new faculty hired for the fall semester and 22 are tenure track.
- Homer Coffman – iTech
There will be an upgrade to SOAR in August of 2010.
- Dr. Saunders has asked the Space Allocations Committee to look at space allocations campus wide not just space for classrooms. She has also asked Carla Cascio, Project and Space Coordinator with Physical Plant Administration for a Space Audit.
She would also like to have a retreat for all department chairs and directors. She is going to expand the annual retreat of the Executive Cabinet to include the chairs and directors. The retreat will be held on August 11 in the Thad Cochran Center.

5.1.2 New Action Item # 9 – Parking Fees for faculty, staff & students
Staff Council received the following Action Item on May 21 via mail:

“Please revisit the potential increase in parking pass costs for Southern Miss campus. The \$250 per year fee being discussed will create a hardship on some of the lowest paid staff on campus. Many of our lowest paid staff are working two jobs now just to meet expenses.

This large increase will create a hardship for many staff members. We already have a hard time keeping good staff due to low wages. Please consider a sliding scale for staff or a lesser amount for those making less than \$28,000.”

The Executive Committee discussed the Action Item via email and agreed to assign to the Salaries and Benefits Committee, Dianne Coleman chair.

- President-Elect’s Report – Rusty Anderson

- 5.2.1 IHL Report

- Insurance options - Each individual university or college was handling their own insurance. They have pulled together and now the entire system is insured. All buildings are fully insured. The Gulf Coast has flood and wind insurance. The main objective was price reduction and cost savings.
 - Dr. Lucas’ Report
 - No funding level from the legislature.
 - Alumni Foundation had selected five states, Mississippi being one of them, to award one hundred thousand dollar grant for making education affordable.
 - Dr. Reginald Sykes and Ms. Vrita Delaine gave a report on the “African American Male in College”. They have found that African American males have the lowest graduation rate in Mississippi and it is extremely low rate for the region. They are going to continue the study with a goal to keep these students in school. The ideas presented were to create summer programs; co-curricular and cultural enrichment programs, academic advising and planning, parental involvement activities and peer mentoring. They ended the study with – where to go from here? They recommend more research over the next year including focus groups and visits to high schools to see where the best practices are. A year from now, they will come back to the IHL with a plan to increase enrollment of African American males in our universities and eventually graduation of these students.

- Budget Finance and Audit from the IHL
 - Southern Miss requests approval to enter into a procurement and service agreement with Dell Marketing to upgrade equipment and services for the Data and Communications Center at the John C. Stennis Space Center.
 - Naming the Innovation and Commercialization Park Building at Southern Miss – they want to name it The National Material Science Innovation and Commercialization Acceleration Building. The building is substantially paid for by the National Institute of Science and Technology and is projected to open in 2009.
 - Cedar Point Campus – Infrastructure Project Phase II. The board approved to contract documents and requests to advertise per receipt of bids. The design has been completed under Infrastructure Project Phase I.

5.2.2 Faculty Senate Report

- Dr. Oshrin, president report
 - Thanked staff for generous support.
 - Highlighted achievements including an electronic archiving system and electronic meeting notes with hotlinks.

Gavel was handed to Dr. Jeffrey Evans as new Faculty Senate President.

- President Saunders report
 - Budget still uncertain, 4.5 per cent budget reduction is current plan
 - Announced \$250,000 Madison Foundation Grant
 - Scholarships are down due to economic factors and anticipation of foundation awarding about one third the number of scholarships from previous year
 - The new eagle logo (head) is available on vanity plates
 - We can expect about 2 per cent enrollment growth this fall
 - Honors College is overflowing with applicants with ACT of 30 or higher
 - Graduate applications are up 35 per cent
 - Dr. Hank Bounds had been listed as the IHL preferred candidate for Commissioner
 - Marketing and Public Relations office has been renamed the Office of University Communications
- Provost Lyman report
 - 4.5 per cent budget reduction does not include any tuition increases as of now

- Dr. Ann Blackwell will serve for two years as interim Dean of the College of Education and Psychology
- Library governance and structure is being reviewed
- Nursing School request to form separate college not accepted at this time
- Summer school enrollment up 1.8 per cent

Dr. Lyman addressed a question related to fees on the Hattiesburg campus and the coastal campuses and the appearance that coastal students were not getting the same services. He expressed that students on both campuses were charged for different entities and some balance resulted in fees.

5.2.3 Academic Planning Group (APG) meetings

The Academic Planning Group has continued to meet weekly. The subgroup evaluating programs reporting to the Provost has completed the review of all programs and will move forward in the coming weeks with recommendations

5.3 Secretary's Report – Tina Griffin

No report.

5.4 Secretary-Elect's Report – Andrea Phillips

Andrea asked that all out-going council members turn in their Staff Council binders.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Nomination Committee for Election of Officers 2009/10 – Linda Dorsey
Linda reminded the council members that there was still time to turn in names for Election of New Officers.

6.2 Action Item #8 follow-up – Gulf Coast staff unlimited visitor passes
Rusty Anderson reported that he had received additional information from Parking Management. He met with Lucy Bowens and there will be new parking policies coming soon. Lucy is aware of the concerns and believes the new policies will address these concerns.

6.3 Action Item #7 follow-up – Grant staff vs. university paid staff
The Executive Committee has received several phone calls asking for clarification on this action item. President Nace sent to all council members an Action Item #7, Resolution #2 via email on Tuesday, June 2. It reads as follows:

“All university policies, including leave policies, are applicable to all employees, regardless of funding source of the respective employee's salary.”

Russ Willis, Director of Human Resources
June 2009

The Staff Council supports all policies and procedures specified in the University Handbook. All university staff employees, regardless of

payment through grant or state funds, should adhere to policies and procedures stated in the handbook

If university policies regarding leave time are not being followed this should be reported to the direct supervisor. If a staff employee feels uncomfortable reporting this to the direct supervisor then the director of Human Resources should be notified. All information reported shall remain confidential.”

Tina Griffin, council secretary, made a motion to accept Resolution #2 to Action Item #7 and Dianne Coleman seconded the motion. The resolution was voted on and approved by all council members present. The resolution will be posted on the web site.

7.0 Standing Committee Reports

7.1 Constitution and Bylaws – Amy Byxbe

No report.

7.2 Legislative Forum – Mike Giles

No report.

7.3 Salaries and Benefits – Dianne Coleman

No report.

7.4 Technology and Training – Amy Thornton

7.4.1 Web Committee – No report.

Once again Amy asked for a volunteer to manage the Staff Council Web site. Amy offered to help train and work with anyone interested in continuing this work.

7.5 University Relations and Cultural Diversity – JJ Crawley

7.5.1 Action Item #1 – Compressed Work Week

JJ and the committee have put together a summary of the survey. Since the summary is rather lengthy, President Nace suggested that JJ send the summary via email to all council members for a vote.

8.0 Liaison to University Committee Reports

8.1 Department of Parking Management – April Jordan

The parking management meeting was held on May 21, 2009. Attendees were Dr. Scarborough, Rusty Postlewate, Roger Jackson, Linda Parish for Chief Hopkins, Lucy Bowen, Zoe Beckham, Dick Vogel and April Jordan. There were 3 ticket appeals reviewed and upheld because they each were parked in a handicapped spot. Some of the tickets were very hefty fees so please be aware that after your third ticket the cost is doubled. Lucy has asked Vicky Copeland to take over as the chair of this committee as the May meeting was the last meeting for Dr. Scarborough. The next Staff Council representative has not been named so incoming president, Rusty Anderson, was listed as the contact person. The meetings are set for the 3rd Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m. and the next one will be in September.

8.2 Fundraising – Twillia Morgan

No report.

- 8.3 IT Advisory Board – John Hayman
No report.
- 8.4 Wellness Program – Heather Brown
No report.

9.0 New Business

- 9.1 Fall 2009 Staff Scholarship Applications – Lou Ellen Williams
A few applications have been received. The deadline is July 2.
- 9.2 Fall Staff Service Award Nominations
President Nace stated a few applications have been received and the deadline is July 1. The award will be presented in August or September.
- 9.3 New issues and concerns
 - Council member, Patience Wise asked about the minimum wage increase to \$7.25 in July. Patience's concern was about new employees starting at \$7.25 an hour and making the same hourly rate as an employee who has been here for two or three years. She asked if adjustments were going to be made. President Nace stated that with on-going budget cuts, she felt departments would not be able to make such adjustments. She also stated that if we were aware of someone in this situation, we should complete an Action Item Form to have the council to look in to it.
 - Council member, Kay Bruening presented a new Action Item to Mandy.

10.0 Announcements

President Nace asked that everyone arrive at our luncheon today a few minutes early. Marketing and Public Relations will be there at 11:30 a.m. to take photos.

11.0 Adjournment

Motion was made by Shannon Davis to adjourn meeting; it was seconded by JJ Crawley.