

***** PROPOSED MINUTES *****

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Proposed Staff Council Minutes

December 1, 1998

Speaker:

Dr. Jeff Kudisch presented a project summary on the results of the Upward Feedback discovery phase. He commended the Student Affairs area for their support. It was a good survey with 83% response return. Some recommendations were:

- Implement upward feedback in Student Affairs and gradually implement throughout USM campus.
- Use the system for developmental purposes ONLY.
- Administer on a voluntary basis and encourage all to participate.
- Provide training for both raters and ratees.
- Conduct evaluations once a year.
- Provide professional facilitator to meet with supervisors and employees to discuss feedback. Agenda Highlights

* Assignment of Action Items

* Strategic Planning Document submitted by Staff Council

1.0 Call to Order

President Hill called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

The following members were present: Victoria Adams, Wes Barrett, Linda Bass, Terry Bethea, Carolyn Cawthon, Ruth Chapman, Tommy Dye, Kim Henson, Debby Hill, Becky Holder, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Patricia Linton, James Mackabee, Phil McCready, Larry

McMickle, Nelda Moree, Pam Posey, Joyce Sanders, Ray Scott, Sam Thomas, Tracy Townsend, Ruby Waits, and Carole White.

The following members were represented by proxy: Carol Boleware by Terry Bethea, Patricia Brewer by Mary Sumrall, Linda Davis by Merry Wilson, Janeal McKee by Carole White,

Cheryl Mowdy by Sam Thomas, and Ray Scott by Becky Holder.

Mary Ann Griffin, Regina Knight, and Larry Posey were not present nor represented by proxy.

2.0 Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda was approved with one change.

3.0 Call for Proxies

4.0 Approval of the Minutes

Minutes were approved with clarification statement from last month's University Relations Report:

Mrs. Cheryl Mueller, Director of USM's Child Care Center, called to clarify a statement in last month's minutes. She reported that due to some special circumstances, there were only 2 children belonging to alumni currently enrolled. Faculty/staff/students still have priority for child care as a benefit of the university. There is no outside recruitment for children to attend the child care facility.

5.0 Officers' Reports

5.1 President's Report

President Hill submitted a written report on her November Activities/Meetings.

* November 5 – Cultural Diversity meeting with Dr. Bud Ginn, Dr. Larry LeFlore, and Dr. Myron Henry. Dr. Ginn discussed ways to create an awareness of cultural diversity issues and future plans for establishing an Affirmative Action Council.

* November 16 – Cabinet. (1) Dr. Fleming discussed USM items to be presented at this month's IHL meeting. He reassured Cabinet members that if funding is approved to expand offerings on the Coast, then Hattiesburg will not be adversely affected. (2) Cabinet members discussed the Academic Standards Report from Dr. Hollandsworth's committee. The report was tentatively approved pending minor editorial changes and will be effective Fall 1999. (3) Dr. McGowan stated that security should be in place to open the lab in the library on a 24-hour basis beginning in the spring. (4) Dr. Paul stated that MTAG monies have fallen short and will have to be prorated for the spring term. (5) Dr. Gilbert stated that the Chief Financial Officers are discussing privatization issues.

* November 18 – IHL Meeting in Jackson. (1) Expansion of academic offerings on the Coast was the major topic. Concerned citizens from the Coast, Coast 21, made pleas to the IHL Board for approval of USM's proposal to expand the offerings on the coast. IHL agreed to give closure to this issue at the next meeting (January). (2) Shelby Thames gave a strong proposal to rename the Department of Polymer Science to Polymer Science and Engineering. A decision should be made at the January IHL Board meeting. (3) USM's proposal to create a research foundation was approved.

* November 20 – Personnel System Committee. As a follow-up to council's resolution regarding the evaluation of the personnel system, a committee has been (loosely) formed from the Executive Council, Salaries & Benefits Committee, Human Resources, and Dr. Gilbert to address our concerns. At this second meeting, Linda McFall explained our current personnel system and gave an update on their research of other personnel systems around the country. Monthly meetings are tentatively scheduled in order to keep this issue forward.

* November 23 – Cabinet. Dr. Henry conducted the meeting in Dr. Fleming's absence. (1) Dr. Henry discussed the IHL issues and our next steps. We will have the opportunity to showcase our proposal at the January IHL meeting since it will be at USM. (2) Dr. Henry announced the membership of the Strategic Planning Committee. Janeal McKee and I will serve as representatives for Staff Council. (3) Dr. McGowan expressed concern regarding computer data being left on retired computers. We need to remember to have confidential information/files removed from our computers BEFORE

they are sent to stores or distributed elsewhere on campus. This poses a great security threat for many departments. Also, Dr. McGowan mentioned that voice mail will soon be an option for departments. (4) Jesse Palmer stated that the Faculty Senate is discussing ways to re-establish the University Club.

* November 30 – Cabinet at Stennis Space Center. (1) Dr. Fleming expressed the need to make sure mail and other important correspondence be handled during the Christmas holiday break. He reminded the Cabinet that offices are to be open on December 21. The Cabinet heard impressive presentations throughout the day by representatives from the Stennis Space Center regarding the history of USM's involvement at the center, current activities, and future endeavors of the academic and industrial partnerships.

SPECIAL THANKS to Tracy Townsend, Victoria Adams, Regina Knight, John Hayman, Sam Thomas, Ray Scott, Carole White, and Cheryl Mowdy for working the tents at the last few football games.

5.2 President-Elect's Report– Sam Thomas

* November 12 – Calendar Committee. The Calendar Committee met and decided to leave the summer schedules (Summer 1999 and 2000) the same as in the past. (Summer classes starting on Memorial Day) Also, the committee is going to recommend that the holiday schedule remain the same.

* November 13 – Faculty Senate Meeting. Faculty Senate is looking into the idea of reestablishing a University Club for faculty and staff. They are looking at the Peck House as the site.

* November 29 – Athletics Enhancement Task Force. As a representative of Staff Council, I have been asked to serve on an Athletics Enhancement Task Force. The task force is going to look into the following areas in the athletic program: Academic Support and Compliance, Administration, Competition, Facilities, Financial Management and Funding, and Marketing and Promotion. The first meeting was held last Sunday. We heard presentations from all of the areas mentioned above. Three USM people (Jesse Palmer, Robert Sanders and Sam Thomas) serve on this committee with the remaining members from the community.

5.3 Assignment of Action Items – Sam Thomas

Assignments were as follows:

Technology Committee

#40 Employee Handbook put on the web in the future.

#41 Institute for Marine Science at Gulf Coast Research Lab is currently not on the web.

President Hill updated us on the job posting issue. Linda McFall said the jobs are posted in a few key buildings and Physical Plant on USM campus. She will look into posting in more buildings for public view including GCRL and Gulf Coast area.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Strategic Planning Document– Debby Hill

President Hill presented a strategic planning draft document which was discussed at length and approved by the Council. It covered the thirteen points in Dr. Henry's speech that would apply to the staff at large and referred to the Commission Report. Debby Hill and Janeal McKee will represent the Council on the Strategic Planning Committee.

Phil McCready made a motion the amended draft be forwarded to the Strategic Planning Committee. Linda Bass second. Passed

6.2 Christmas Party– Virginia Kittrell

The invitations should be out next week for the Christmas party on Wednesday, December 16, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. in Union Room C. The legislators have been contacted to join us.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Constitution & Bylaws – Carolyn Cawthon No report

7.2 Legislature – Patricia Brew. The Christmas party invitations will be mailed to the legislators this week.

7.3 Salaries & Benefits – Becky Holder– Becky gave a report on the following action items:

#11 and #12 – Lower premiums and insurance deductibles. The committee feels there is nothing else we can do at this level. MASCO is drafting a letter to send the Board. President Hill will furnish the Council a copy when it is complete.

#31 – Tenure for Employees. The committee recommends that this be included as part of the discussion in the classification recommendation by the Council during last year's session. Passed.

#32 – Leftover scholarship money for dependent children be transferrable to other students. The committee feels that this should be done at the recipient's discretion. If anyone has money refunded due to scholarships and tuition waivers, the recipient can donate the money to the foundation to be used for other scholarships.

#34 – Memorial Day as a holiday. The calendar committee has met and decided to leave the holiday schedule as it is currently.

#38 – Eye Care. According to state law we can not have eye care as part of our health care package. We do have some coverage included with the dental package through American Dental. The coverage is limited to Heritage Vision Center only. We can talk with Human Resources and see if they would be willing to look into finding a vendor to carry eye care. Linda McFall said she had previously looked into this a couple of years ago and it was not a good deal. We do have the medical reimbursement plan that helps with any health related expense that is not being reimbursed. This money is pre-taxed.

#39 – Insurance Cards and Premiums/Deductibles. Lynn Helton, Benefits Manager in Human Resources, said it takes 4–6 weeks to get insurance cards and PCS cards for new employees. If an employee has to order cards himself/herself, it takes 7–10 days. When you call to order the cards, Blue Cross verifies the address. If it is not correct, they will not accept the order and the employee will have to go through Human Resources. The person submitting the action item called Blue Cross himself and was notified that the

paperwork had been lying on someone's desk. The information was entered into the system, and he received his cards the next week.

7.4 University Relations – Tracy Townsen – No report

7.5 Other Committee Reports

Parking Appeals – Linda Bas – October – 12 appeals and 6 upheld;
November – 28 appeals with 3 upheld

Parking Task Force – Regina Knigh – No report

Technology & Training – Carol Boleware – No report

Upward Feedback – Pam Posey – No report

8.0 New Business

8.1 Cultural Diversity Issues

Dr. Ginn suggested that we either have a sub committee formed on the Council or to rename a committee and add that function to it to create awareness of this issue. Tabled.

8.2 Representative for Stennis Space Center

There is not a specific representative on the Council for the Stennis Space Center. They have some unique needs which may be overlooked due to their location and representation. Currently the employees are counted in the area of the Vice Presidents they fall under through the Hattiesburg or IMS campuses. Suggestions: We can change our Bylaws to have one per location and/or Council member based on the staff members at that site or we could have a person from Stennis to serve as an ad hoc non voting member. This item was assigned to the Constitution & Bylaws to consider as a Bylaws change.

9.0 Announcements

* AOP/Delta Tau Delta Fraternity Mega Garage Sale will be held Saturday, December 5, at the Sports Arena, 8 – 11 a.m. All funds received will go to United Way.

* Congratulations on our football team going to the Humanitarian Bowl in Boise, Idaho on December 30.

* The pharmacy at the USM clinic is now taking the PCS card.

* OTR has purchased a \$1.6 million telephone system for the university that will provide the additional telephone capacity and expanded features which includes voice mail. They are transitioning now and through the Christmas break. You may experience some telephone problems during the transition and they ask us to be patient and understanding.

10.0 Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. for the forum speaker.

Debby Hill, President
Susan King, Recording Secretary
12/10/98 sk

Strategic Planning Document for Staff Council

Although we realize that many administrators will include staff as a part of direct reporting documents, we feel compelled to offer opinions of the Staff Council in areas which affect staff at large instead of individual offices throughout the campuses. Since we do not have authority in our individual units as outlined in your guidelines, we have attempted to stay broad in nature and address major issues and give the staff voice as much as possible.

1. As USM plans for the next three-to-five years, which five-to ten external factors and issues are most likely to have an impact on the progress of the university?

The economic strength of the state and nation will affect the financial resources available for higher education. The gulf coast area will experience an increased population because of changing demographics within the state/nation. The competition for local skilled workers will increase with the growth of the local economy. Therefore, it will be necessary to increase salaries and benefits and the related increases in auxiliary service fees.

Legislative commitment at both the state and federal level will influence not only the financial resources but the operational activities as well. As long as governing bodies (both legislative and IHL) are allowed to impose unfunded mandates on higher education, these mandates will force us to reallocate resources which in turn will hinder our progress in other areas.

Once the University defines its mission as a dual campus system, we must clearly and effectively communicate our mission to our communities and throughout our state to receive support.

We have to be engaged with employers both locally and nationally to meet the demands of a competitive marketplace while providing an opportunity for a well-rounded education.

Technology will continue to be a financial and human drain on resources within higher education. Changes in technology will greatly impact USM and our ability to stay abreast of the advances. The changing technology will greatly impact our academic programs offered by the university. Job skills that are based in technology will be demanded by the marketplace.

The traditional student population base will decrease as the mini baby boom will come to an end. The traditional student population will change in composition and culture because of the growth of minority groups. Distance education will also change the student population. Therefore, the quality of our programs will be forced to compete with national name schools for students.

As USM plans for the next three-to-five years, which five-to ten internal factors and issues are most likely to have an impact on the progress of the university?

Morale for staff members can be enhanced by increased recognition of staff as an integral and valued part of the university system. Administration can positively impact through equitable salary compensation between faculty and staff. Open and effective communication among administration, faculty and staff at all levels can positively influence the growth of USM.

The Gulf Coast will continue to grow and become more important to the university and will therefore change the university's culture and self-perception.

As buildings age, substantial funding will be required to repair/renovate and maintain buildings, mechanical systems, and the physical plant (streets, sidewalks, etc.)

The climate and culture of the University have to be seriously discussed. We must decide what this University will be and then educate all constituencies, both inside and outside, about how we will achieve these goals. Staff must be active participants in designing as well as implementing policies and procedures and should be seen as active partners in achieving the collegiate experience.

Continuous professional development of both staff and faculty must be a high priority. If we do not have a skilled workforce, then we will not meet the best laid plans. Many of the managerial positions of the university are held by aging personnel and the retirements will result in a tremendous loss of knowledge and skills that have allowed this university to succeed. As technology becomes more prevalent, there will be a shift of clerical staff to skilled professionals.

3. Under each major heading of the ROC, identify the five (or fewer) main initiatives that related most directly to your unit and why. (Maximum of 20 initiatives)

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Addressing the special needs of non-traditional students including child care, night and weekend courses and expanded hours in business offices, labs, and libraries will affect the staff through increased work hours and possible benefits. Since staff are non-traditional students themselves, they could take advantage of more offerings at night and weekends to assist them in their professional growth. Flex scheduling will need to be introduced in order to staff the business services, labs, and libraries to accommodate the special needs of the non-traditional student. Adequate child care for the staff should also be included as it is for non-traditional students.

Developing a more interactive career counseling and placement system that emphasizes personal advisory services on equal footing with information processing and opportunity matching services will require more support staff with special skills to address these issues.

Encouraging lifelong learning and expanding course offerings will give more opportunities for staff members to advance in their careers and provide better services for students.

RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY

Providing the facilities, equipment, and staff support essential for successful research and creative efforts will enhance the job opportunities for staff.

SCHOLARSHIP IN SERVICE TO SOCIETY

Encouraging and supporting faculty, staff, and students who use their professional expertise in direct service to the community will strengthen our relationship to the community and will honor the deep commitment we espouse.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Reviewing the staff performance and evaluation system and linking it to the strategic goals of the university and rewarding outstanding achievement will greatly enhance the morale of the staff and ensure that there is a rational, equitable review process for staff aimed at their development.

Revising the Position Evaluation Plan and Staff Classification System to reflect changes in the workplace will give staff the career tracks needed to foster professional growth and to eliminate compaction.

Establishing and maintaining competitive salaries, increase the salaries for summer school teaching, and improve the benefits package especially in regard to health care and child care will enhance the University's image.

Increasing the numbers of support staff for student services, academic programs and general support services will reduce the "burn out" for many staff and enhance the morale of the staff to provide better services to students. These programs should not only be properly staffed, but also adequately funded.

Restructuring the management and administrative organization to provide adequate training of its managers will provide better communication at all levels. In-house workshops and seminars are vital to provide an understanding of USM's history, mission and governance and to allow exploration of key issues that need attention if we are to flourish.

Implementing a professional development program that includes "cross training" opportunities will enhance the communication channels and provide career growth and a sense of teamwork.

THE COLLEGIATE EXPERIENCE

Building enhanced support for intercollegiate athletics on the part of USM students, faculty and staff will increase the awareness of staff as an integral part of the university.

GULF COAST

Increasing the number of full-time support staff at the Gulf Coast branches in accordance with the expansion of programs will provide better services to students and the community. Increased communication and cooperation are essential to a "seamless delivery" of services.

Increasing enrichment activities and opportunities for students, faculty, and staff so that USM can become a cultural center for the community.

Allowing staff a voice in the master plan for buildings, grounds and the allocation of space.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Developing a comprehensive facilities maintenance plan should include hiring additional custodial and technical staff to maintain and enhance the usefulness of USM facilities. Emphasizing aesthetics in plans regarding buildings and grounds will create a healthier work environment and build community spirit among the staff.

Extending campus computer networks and advanced technological capacity to all buildings will enhance communication channels internally and externally and enhance computer skills to provide better services.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Strengthening relationships with IHL, other state universities, and community colleges for more effective use of the state's resources will greatly enhance our working environment. We need a "highly effective, centralized communications program." Our steps to build a stronger, external image will benefit staff, students, and faculty.

REALIZING THE VISION

Recognizing internal teamwork and public collaboration will positively influence staff if they are seen as a team player and contributor to the goals of University. Administration needs to face the difficult issues, such as child care, and actively seek creative, responsive resolutions.

4. How do the top five initiatives connect to each other?

Inclusion of staff is integrated in every initiative already sited. Giving staff the opportunity to be involved, to contribute, to grow professionally, to be recognized, and to be compensated fairly will provide a healthier work environment and will foster staff support of the University's mission.

5. REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

Although the Staff Council does not have resources to reallocate, we feel compelled to offer opinions on how a reallocation of monies could be enforced to assist the University in its strategic plan.

Monies designated to positions which are vacated should be reviewed and adjusted as needed prior to filling the vacated positions. Currently, a new person is hired sometimes at the same pay of the previous employee even though the new employee may not have the experience or longevity with the university or whether that position is still needed.

In the same respect, administrators who return to faculty positions are able to maintain a percentage of their administrative salary which greatly inflates the faculty's market pay. A thorough review of the administrative supplement should be completed to see if the supplements should be given up once the administrative tenure is discontinued. This is especially problematic with short term or interim positions.

OTHER STAFF ISSUES:

Staff sabbaticals should be considered in order to give staff the same opportunity for professional growth that faculty currently have. Unfortunately not all offices allow staff to complete the formal education or professional training needed to advance in their jobs due to time conflicts and work schedules.

An Upward Feedback Program should be closely examined and possibly implemented university-wide in order to begin developmental communication throughout the university. This program must include a team of faculty and staff who are qualified and willing to train employees in areas such as managerial and supervisory skills, stress and time management, technology, team building, etc.

Employee wellness education, programs and services should be considered as part of the standard benefit package to all University employees. The objectives of USM's Comprehensive Employee Wellness Program includes the following:

- *Educate individuals to the benefits of having healthy minds, bodies, and environments and educate the administration to the benefits of having nurtured healthier employees.

- *Improve job quality and productivity.

*Decrease absenteeism.

*Improve morale and camaraderie.

*Reduce health care costs to the University and the employee through increased health care awareness, lower life insurance premiums, lower health care utilization, and lower workers' compensation claims.

*Enhance the University's image as a result of supporting the well-being of employees and contributes to the University's efforts in the recruitment and retention of quality faculty and staff.