February 25, 2019
Expanded Council of Directors Minutes


Provost Moser offered congratulations to Dean Trent Gould for his work in securing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. High school students can graduate with both their high school diploma and an AA from the community college. Students who accomplish this can enter USM eligible for freshman scholarships and gold card eligible. This allows them to move seamlessly into teacher education programs in the School of Education.

Dr. Moser discussed the need to develop programs that give us a marketing edge. Increasing the freshmen enrollment is not enough to move us out of the precarious financial situation. There is a projected 10% market decline by 2025. Encouraged school directors to assess programs and create innovative and competitive programming. Particularly interested in accelerated master’s programs (3+2 or 4+1). Asked what directors are doing in this area and what the challenges are. Several directors have already begun this movement. Challenges include barriers at the university level such as completing the out-of-career forms. Creating work-arounds that are time intensive for directors.

Dr. Moser complimented directors on doing a much better job of scheduling this year. Dr. Moser then discussed low-enrolled courses and artificial caps. Concern directors are making scheduling decisions to give faculty a teaching load or for faculty preference. Wants to get back to course rotations with guides for students. Recommends we meet for a week this summer (prior to June) to work through a number of issues. He announced a policy change to cancel low-enrolled classes 5 days before classes start. The university has a $400,000 overage in adjunct salaries. Must reduce the number of low-enrolled classes.

Dr. Moser noted that a 1% increase in retention equates to funding 5-7 faculty lines. Again, what can we do to enhance programming and support retention? He also mentioned the need to invest in new programming that would give us a competitive edge but there are no funds for this.

No updates on KPI’s yet. Expects to have Helio report in April/May that will provide us accurate data on IR Dashboards. This data will be transparent and will guide decision-making.

Dr. Sims asked Dr. Moser to address the GEC concerns. He noted that the current GEC is inflexible, too expensive, and is not meeting the objectives it is intended to meet. Why go beyond the IHL requirements? Suggests opening up the GEC in each category to be more relevant to specific programs. A concern was expressed that too often our GEC courses are taught by adjunct, particularly on the coast campus.

Kathryn Lowery stated that this is a good time to revise the GEC as we are at the beginning of the 10-year cycle for SACCOCs review. Reminded directors to keep assessment in mind while making revisions.
Dr. Sims divided the directors into three workgroups. Lachel Story facilitated the GEC workgroup. Kathryn Lowery attended that as well to provide guidance as needed. Ann Marie Kinnell facilitated the A&E group and Pat Sims facilitated the faculty employment policy group.