

Council of University System Staff
Salisbury University
August 15, 2006
Meeting

ATTENDEES

<u>Executive Committee Members Present</u>	
Chair	Larry Lauer, UMCP
Vice Chair	Dave Delooze, UMB
Secretary	Loretta Hollifield, TU
Member-at-Large	Chenita Kollock, UMES
Member-at-Large	Judy Sabalauskas, UB
Past Chair	Joe Hill, UMBC
Chancellor's Liaison	Rosario I. van Daalen, USMO

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>Alternates</u>	
BSU			
CSU	Bernedette Bell		
FSU			
SU	Clacie Hubbard	Janine Vienna	Judy Lowe
TU	Joan Doremus	Gloria Gaguski	
UB	*****		
UMB	*****		John Barber
UMBC	Tim Champ		
UMBI			
UMCES			
UMCP	Marvin Pyles		
UMES	*****		
UMUC	Scott Wibbert		Cassandra Lewis
USMO	Mary Reed		

***** Represented by Executive Committee Member

Guests

Kevin Carreathers Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Institutional Diversity

Dave Parker Chair, Council University System Faculty

Call to Order:

Larry Lauer, Chair, called the August meeting to order at Salisbury University.

Welcome and Introductions:

Clacie Hubbard, CUSS representative as well as SU Staff Senate Chair, introduced Kevin Carreathers, Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for Institutional Diversity at Salisbury University.

Kevin Carreathers on behalf of Dr. Janet E. Dudley-Eshbach, SU President, welcomed the council to Salisbury University. Salisbury University has been designated one of two USM's growth institutions. This designation brings increases in student enrollment, faculty, and support staff. The University recently began construction of the Teacher Education and Technology Center (TETC). Anticipated completion is 2008. Joe Hill praised the award-winning landscaping throughout SU, which is a recognized arboretum. Kevin Carreathers thanked the committee and extended best wishes for the upcoming year.

The council welcomed new members Tim Champ, UMBC, and Marvin Pyles, UMCP.

An update regarding Roy Ross: He had suffered several mini-strokes and is continuing a course of tests & evaluations to determine possible cause. Roy has returned to work on a limited basis as ordered by his physician.

Approval of Minutes:

The July 2006 minutes were reviewed and a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended.

Report from the Chancellor's Liaison:

- Rosario I. van Daalen distributed a chart listing USM Staff Employees - Excluded vs. Union Represented (dated July 31, 2006). The chart depicts Staff employee groups across each institution. CUSS is the voice for nearly 8,000 USM Staff employees (on Regular and Contingent Category II status). CUSS needs to be proactive in addressing the needs of these excluded Staff members.
- The alliance between Staff, Faculty and upper-level management established through shared governance will move the University System forward as a partnership.
- Discussion took place regarding the need to resolve discrepancies between Performance Evaluations and USM's Pay for Performance Salary System. Systemwide funds were not allocated for Above Standards and Outstanding Performance for July 1, 2006 increases. Not all institutions are rewarding Above Standards and Outstanding Performance as stated in USM salary guidelines.

- Discussion among CUSS members took place regarding discrepancies between the 2006 Chancellor's Salary Guidelines and the distribution of one-time lump sum funds, given/not given to excluded vs represented staff who were at the salary maximums of their pay range, for the July 1, 2006 merit increases.
- The Biennial Market Salary Survey will be conducted this Fall for Nonexempt employees. Evaluators will use the Baltimore market corridor when comparing salaries. Proposals will be given to Board of Regents in March/April.
- Optional Retirement Plan (ORP): USM is drafting a proposal to increase the employer contribution percentage with a mandatory employee contribution. The proposed employer contribution increase from 7.25% to 9.25% will cost USM \$14 million. The mandatory employee ORP contribution would be a benefit to the employees since it is deducted from pre-tax dollars thus reducing employee's taxable income. CUSS supports a progressive mandatory employee contribution with a gradual increase starting at 3% year one, 4% year two, and 5% year three. This action parallels the law passed this past Spring by the State General Assembly for the State Employee Pension System. Employees may be given option to remain at the current 7.25% plan. Attorney General's Office is determining IRC guidelines regarding "window of opportunity". Rosario suggests at least a six month window of opportunity, if possible, in order to allow employees to adjust personal finances and take advantage of this essential benefit. Dave Parker, Chair, Council University System Faculty (CUSF) was present for the discussion and he will take the message to next meeting of CUSF.

If approved, all new hires who choose the ORP will automatically be enrolled in the 9.25% employer / progressive 3-4-5% employee contribution.

Improved retirement benefits are crucial to the recruitment/retention process.

Faculty can choose the Maryland State Teachers' Retirement or the Optional Retirement Plan. Exempt Staff can choose the State Employee Pension or the Optional Retirement Plan. By law, Nonexempt Staff do not have a choice.

- Availability of State Health Benefits for retirees and their dependents differ between the State retirement plans and the ORP.
- A Blue Ribbon Commission has been established to address \$20 billion deficit for retirees' health benefits. Dependent issue as discussed in above bullet may also be addressed. Commission will meet in December.

Chair's Report:

- Larry Lauer discussed CUSS goals for 2006 – 2007. He stressed the importance of shared governance as detailed in the Board of Regents' I – 6.00 POLICY ON SHARED GOVERNANCE IN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND
www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionI/600.html,
In order to strengthen shared governance, CUSS will formally invite hosting institution's shared governance committee members to that month's CUSS meeting. Additionally, CUSS members should attend Board of Regents' meetings when hosted by their institution. Larry distributed a schedule and tentative holds for the BOR meetings. CUSS meeting minutes will be distributed to institutions' shared governance committees. Each CUSS member should establish communications with their institution's Senate council and CUSF representatives.
- Larry also stressed the need to form a stronger alliance between CUSS and CUSF. He has initiated a joint CUSS/CUSF meeting to take place December 12 at University of Maryland College Park
- Attendance to CUSS meetings will be monitored to ensure representation from all thirteen universities. CUSS by-laws 2.6 state, "If any elected member is absent from two consecutive Council meetings, or a total of three Council meetings, without prior notifications to the Chair, and without sending an alternate, the Executive Committee will notify the constituent institution with recommendation for replacement."

Guest's Report:

- Dr. Dave Parker, CUSF Chair, commended Larry Lauer for initiating a stronger alliance between CUSS and CUSF.
- Dr. Parker stated that the Legislative session is often a political battle in which CUSS/CUSF needs are rarely granted due to the reactive nature of politics.
- CUSF's focus this year will be ORP issues as they apply to exempt staff and the IRS/USM definition of dependent when applicable to tuition remission benefits.

Committees:

- A committee roster will be distributed at the September CUSS meeting detailing each member's committee selection.
- Larry has assigned each executive committee member specific responsibilities as follows:
 - Dave Delooze will be the Legislative Committee Liaison;
 - Loretta Hollifield will be the Communications Committee Liaison;
 - Chenita Kollock will track member attendance;

- Judy Sabalauskas will formally invite appropriate Shared Governance Council members to monthly CUSS meetings.
- The Benefits & Compensation committee will continue to focus on salary and ORP issues.
- The Communications committee will concentrate efforts on the CUSS Newsletter.
- The Community Development committee will spotlight BOR awards with specific attention given to increasing Nonexempt Staff participation.

Old Business:

- The draft 2005 – 2006 CUSS Newsletter was reviewed and edited as appropriate. Council members discussed format and decided to move CUSS Facts to front page as well as add statement pertaining to number of staff members represented.
- A misprint or potential error in designation of Exempt/Nonexempt status of BOR Award recipients was noticed. The Community Development Committee will verify status and correct error.
- Communications Committee will take lead on updating CUSS Website.

New Business:

- Council discussed publishing quarterly CUSS activity report and distributing through institution's list serve. The Communications committee will take the lead on this initiative.
- An annual retreat or workshop similar to CUSS Retreat held at Solomon's Island in May 2001 was suggested and will be discussed during September meeting. May 2001 Retreat Agenda can reviewed through: <http://www.usmd.edu/usm/workgroups/SystemStaff/retreat/>

The August CUSS meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m. The September CUSS meeting will be held at University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute – Shady Grove on September 26 at 10:00 a.m. Please submit any agenda items to Loretta Hollifield, 410-704-5191, lhollifield@towson.edu. A Proposed Agenda will be distributed to council members at least one week prior to September meeting. If unable to attend, please inform Chenita Kollock, 410-651-8387, crkollock@umes.edu.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Loretta Hollifield
CUSS Secretary*

10/12/2006