

May 2009

Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting

May 19, 2009

UMBC

In attendance:

Members

| | |
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| Marie Meehan | Bowie State |
| Chris Thomas | Coppin |
| Absent | FSU |
| Shelia Murray | SU |
| Jackie Ebert | SU |
| Gloria Gagunski | TU |
| Brenda Yarema | TU |
| Kimberley Lynne | Co-Secretary, UB |
| Giordana Segneri | UB |
| David DeLooze | UMB |
| Colette Becker | UMB, CUSS Vice Chair |
| Deborah Geare | UMBC |
| Joe Hill | UMBC |
| Absent | UMBI |
| Chenita Reddick | UMES |
| Larry Lauer | CUSS Chair, UMCP |
| Sister Maureen | UMCP |
| Willie Brown | UMCP |
| Absent | UMCES |
| Ayman Abdo | UMUC |
| Jessica McCarty | UMUC |
| Mary Reed | USMO |

Alternates/Guests

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| Michael Dick | UMBC |
| Lori Smith-Watson | UMBC |
| Anne Roland | UMBC |
| Terry Aylsworth | UMBC |
| Joel Dewyer, Alternate | UMBC |
| ***** | |
| Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS: | |
| Rosario I. van Daalen | USMO |

Joe Hill called the **meeting to order** and introduced **UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski** who has been UMBC's president since 1992. He supports Shared Governance and believes it is based on trust. He spoke to the revenue shortage challenge to the USM and reminded CUSS members that students are the System's priority. Students provide Staff and Faculty employees job security.

The members approved the **March minutes**. Kimberley will re-send the April minutes to Rosario. They will have to be approved at the June meeting at UMCES.

Chairman's Report:

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Larry reported from the Chancellor's Council (all the Presidents and Vice Chancellors) Meeting on May 4, 2009 and the Staff Council at Towson University, Tuesday, April 29, 2009.

The Council discussed the General Assembly deliberations on the **FY 10 operating budget** and its outcome. The Council recognizes and appreciates how well the University was treated by the Governor and the General Assembly in this year's state appropriations and will write to express that to the Governor and selected members of the General Assembly. The CUSS Legislative Affairs Committee and many individual members wrote to delegates and senators during the session in support of the USM budget.

The Chancellor's Council members thanked the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors and Presidents for their efforts during the session and for **avoiding major layoffs** of employees during this difficult year. The Council pledged support in working on financial problems over the next year.

The Council discussed the **Nonexempt Staff Salary Structure** recently approved by the BOR. While there are no COLA or merit pay increases this year for any employees, the USM minimum pay grade equals the lowest pay grade for the State of Maryland. Historically, the USM has maintained the practice of not falling below the state's salary structure and it is important to continue to do so. There is a commitment to that effect made through memoranda signed by three high level officials on April 6, 2001: The Governor, the BOR and the Chair of the USM President's Council during the discussion that took place in legislation at the time that Section 12-111 of the Maryland Code was abolished.

From the Chancellor's Salary Guidelines: "That, notwithstanding any provision of law, State employees employed by any entity, including the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland, may not receive bonuses related to individual performance, merit increases, or cost-of-living adjustments in fiscal year 2010. This provision does not affect salaries for the constitutional officers or members of the General Assembly or increases necessary for the retention of faculty in the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland."

Essentially, the above language means that State employees, as well as University System employees, will not be receiving merit, cost-of-living increases, and performance-related bonuses in the upcoming fiscal year 2010.

The Federal Minimum Wage will increase on July 24, 2009 from \$6.55 to \$7.25/hr. This new rate applies to anyone employed at the USM currently earning less than \$7.25/hr – General Assistants, Graduate Assistants, Lecturers, or Student Workers.

The issue of **automatic inclusion of Excluded employees in the terms of union MOUs** was raised again. The Council has discussed this previously with the USM Office and understands that a policy will be developed that outlines how changes in employment conditions will be extended to Excluded employees. The Council asked the Chair to write the Chancellor and Presidents about this concern.

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When the union votes on the MOU, all Excluded employees are not captured, i.e.: how UMCP changed the Performance Evaluation process without notifying Staff employees.

The Council discussed the recent **state-mandated changes in benefits providers** and the problems that those changes caused many people during open enrollment.

The Council discussed whether or not there should be a policy about **presidents shaking graduating students' hands** in the face of recent health-care concerns.

The Council discussed current **textbook legislation** developed to keep textbooks inexpensive. Currently it is the BOR's policy to keep legislation uninvolved with this question, but legislation was passed. It's confusing, so USM will continue to follow BOR policy on textbooks.

The Bohanan Commission recommendations regarding developing legislation to make higher education mandatory and not discretionary to the state (like K-12) is being reviewed by MHEC. MHEC hosted a workshop codifying the recommendations into law and will shop it to legislators and the Governor over the summer, seeking endorsements. No need now for members to write letters.

Legislation can put riders on the budget and force USM to hold a hearing on **unionizing Graduate Assistants and Adjunct Faculty**. Already had a panel with the Governor and stacked with union representatives. This legislation might happen; it's part of a national movement.

USM does have a seat at the table during legislative discussions but would be good to have representatives from administration and faculty. The study focused on GA and adjuncts' benefits, hours, pay, packages and guarantees. Joanne Goedert is gathering material to submit a report in November.

UMBI is currently under review to determine its future. Larry reported on a May 7 public hearing that hosted a tour and a meeting with ten expert speakers, almost all UMBI faculty. Everybody who spoke was in favor of UMCP becoming coordinating institution of the four UMBI research centers. The Council suggested to Regent Kendall and Chancellor Kirwan that when and if this happens, UMCP should assimilate as much of the UMBI staff as possible.

Dave DeLooze commented that UMB is also bidding for the UMBI research centers. He reported from a 5/12 meeting with UMB President Dr. Ramsay who is interested in acquiring the centers.

On May 14 there will be presentation of proposals followed by May 21 Finance Committee Retreat.

Rosario remarked that the institutions will submit proposals in response to the RFP for the bidding of the research centers.

Before June 19, Larry will email the BOR and urge consideration of the staff of UMBI. On the BOR webpage on www.usmd.edu is an address of umbireview@usmd.edu where anyone can post. Larry hopes that if there are any released UMBI Staff that they could be re-hired into other USM institutions.

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Giordana heard that the hiring freeze was over at UB. Rosario said that ending the freeze was at the discretion of each institution's president.

Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS Report:

Due to budget difficulties, there will be no State Match to SRA plans in fiscal 2010.

Open Enrollment Materials: The delivery of the enrollment packets began 4/26/09.

Update from DBM-EBD - The language on pages 6 and 7 of the benefit guide is inconsistent with the methodology used to calculate the imputed income. **The medical Active Employee rate charts are correct**, but the information was reversed on page 6. This has been corrected and two new examples with actual rates will be posted on the website this afternoon so you can print them from the website and give them to employees as needed. The Employee + Domestic Partner and Domestic Partner's Child rates for the dental and prescription had an incorrect variable in the calculation. This, too, has been corrected and will be posted on the DBM website this afternoon. The retiree over 65 retiree domestic partner imputed income needed to be revised. This has also been done and will be posted on the DBM website this morning.

The post cards to the Kaiser and DBP participants were delayed by the printer and did not actually get mailed until 4/17. The delay occurred at the mailing house. Kaiser and Dental Benefits Providers HMO plans are no longer available.

As a result of all of this, open Enrollment for both IVR and paper forms has been extended to May 26th. The IVR will remain open with no shut down period until midnight May 26th. Paper forms will be due to EBD by 4pm on Tuesday May 26th. The DBM website and the DBM/Health Benefits website will also be updated to reflect the new end date. Notices are included in the enrollment kits for the retirees and direct pays.

Same sex domestic partners will have health benefits coverage. The Maryland Register did not receive any objections.

HR directors are reviewing the Family & Medical Leave (FMLA) policy so it can be in compliance with federal law. All the new language has to do with the military. After the HR director review, FMLA policy is sent next to the AG's office and the vice presidents and then the Presidents & BOR.

The Blue Ribbon Commission to study Retiree Health Care Funding Options has not re-scheduled a replacement meeting for the cancelled March 2nd meeting (snow closure). Their report is due in December 2009. The Blue Ribbon Commission is composed of representatives from the legislative General Assembly, the Attorney General's Office, USM rep (Jim Sansbury) and union representatives.

Committee Meetings: committees did not meet. Some chairs reported:

- Deb Geare of **Community Development** reported that the committee is working on revisions to the BOR Awards Program and guidelines.

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- Dave reported for the **Legislative Committee** that Roy is tracking the Blue Ribbon Commission. There are websites that list legislative representatives and recent bills. Brenda said that she wrote to her representative Steve Schuh about USM funding and received a packet of information.
- There was no report from the **Communications Committee**.
- Jackie reported from the **Compensation Committee** that she sent the list of different institution “discounts, merchant promotions, no-cost benefits” to Rosario for sharing purposes but there is no office in USM that is responsible for tracking those benefits. Rosario will share with the HR directors and Benefits Coordinators.
- Larry reported for the **Executive Committee** that he will draft a letter to the Chancellor, requesting that UMBI Staff employees be protected.

New Business:

Nominations: new CUSS officers will be nominated in May and June meetings and elected in June and August. The members nominations for Chair, Vice Chair and Co-Secretaries so far are:

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|--------------|---|
| Chair | Joe Hill nominated Willie Brown, UMCP Willie Brown nominated Dave DeLooze, UMB |
| Vice Chair | Willie Brown nominated Dave DeLooze, UMB (if not elected chair) Joe Hill nominated Lori Smith-Weston from UMBC Sister Maureen nominated Colette Becker, UMB |
| Co-Secretary | Karyn Schulz, UB, has volunteered to serve as Co-Secretary Kimberley Lynne nominated Giordana Segneri of UB as her replacement as Co-Secretary |

Nominations are still open; anyone can e-mail nominations to Larry. Elections of Chair, Vice Chair and Co-Secretary are held in June. Alternates can vote if only one member is voting. To update new members: UMCP has 4 CUSS members, UMBC has 3 and all the other institutions have 2 representing members.

Meeting Calendar for CUSS:

Larry remarked that the meetings are scheduled for June 23 at UMES and July 28 at CES. Usually CUSS meets the 4th Tuesday of the month, however there are several months when that date changes due to holidays or other common calendar events. He suggested that the group entertain a motion from the membership not to meet in July if there is no pressing business. The July meeting would be the 28th and

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the August meeting is the 18th. CUSS members are not required to meet monthly according to the bylaws.

The members protested and the July meeting remains on the calendar.

Proposed meeting dates for the upcoming year:

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| June 23 | UMES | Definite |
| July 28 | UMCES - Horn Point? | Gus was not available to confirm |
| August 18 | SU | Jackie confirmed |
| September 22 | UMB? | Colette will check |
| October 27 | FSU | No FSU rep to confirm |
| November 17 | Bowie | Marie will check |
| December 15 | USMO | Mary Reed confirmed |
| January 26, 2010 | UMUC | |
| February 23 | UMCP | |
| March 23 | Coppin? | Chris will check – and when is spring break? |
| April 27 | TU | |
| May 18 | UMBC | |
| June 22 | UMES | |
| July 27 | UMCES | |

Old Business:

Marie Meehan asked about the **union service fee issue**. Larry said that it has to be negotiated between USM and the union and then the employees represented by the union need to ratify.

Larry said that CUSS can't provide a recommendation because it is not under our purview.

Next meeting: June 23 at UMES

Respectfully submitted by Kimberley Lynne