

CUSS Meeting Minutes: Final
 April 24, 2012
 Towson University
 West Village Commons Bldg. Room 305
 8000 York Road, Towson, MD 21252

Members

Marie Meehan	BSU
Cynthia Coleman	BSU
Absent	CSU
Jay Hegeman	FSU
Jackie Eberts	SU
Absent	TU
Ron Butler	TU
Mary Hickey	TU
Karyn Schulz	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary
Absent	UB
Bill Crockett	UMB
Gynene Sullivan	UMB, CUSS Vice Chair
Kathy Miller	UMBC
Brian Souders	UMBC, CUSS Co-Secretary
Gus Mercanti	UMCES
Willie Brown	UMCP, CUSS Chair
Dolores Jackson	UMCP
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP
Anthony Scorsune	UMUC
Absent	UMUC
Mary E. Reed	USMO

Alternates/Guests

Karen Tyler	BSU
Mi'Shaun Stevenson	BSU
Absent	CSU
Brenda Der	UB
Colette Becker	UMB
Nancy Bowers	UMB
Joel DeWyer	UMBC
Absent	UMBC
Absent	UMCP
Chenita Reddick	UMES
Jayne French	TU
Noëlle Nelson	UMUC
Dale Schmertzner	TU/TUSC
Vicki Simmers	TU/TUSC

Welcome:

President Maravene Loeschke TU

Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS:

Rosario I. van Daalen USMO-HR

1. Welcome and Introductions. Ron Butler – TUSC and CUSS representative. The building we are in, West Village Commons, is a new complex. TU is very proud of this new complex. Close to 5,000 residential students out of TU's 20,000 students.

2. Special Guests

- a. JoAnn Goedert – Parental Leave/CASA Questions. Various drafts of a new policy for enhancing leave for new parents have been circulated. Proposals started at TU, largely faculty focused. Over the past two years, a great deal of progress has been made to get a coherent policy. It will be presented to the Presidents in May and to the BOR in June. Going through this process, we costed out first TU's proposal and alternatives to that proposal. Institutions were surveyed on how policy related to Faculty employees and, to some degree, to Staff employees. Final proposal was hammered out among Administrative Vice Presidents and Provosts.

In order to make the workplace more family friendly, we need to change our policies. While looking now at parental leave, care for other family members may be included in later renditions of policies.

Two groups are vulnerable here: 9-10 month Faculty and Nonexempt employees with little service time and leave accrued in the system; earn two weeks annual leave each year for first five years.

Regarding Faculty: Four parts of proposal.

1. Period of assured paid leave for birth/adoption of child under age of 6. Up to 8 weeks paid leave, using their own accrued leave first, then using extra leave afterward. Idea was to go to those who are most vulnerable as listed above. Issue of providing instructional continuity is problematic
2. Family support plan is worked out with faculty member and department, allowing for guaranteed paid leave and then Collegial Leave to the extent which it can be accessed, then unpaid leave of up to 90 days. Faculty member and department will work out work-load modifications, including part-time employment, spreading a semester's teaching load over multiple semesters, redistribution of duties, and other options as identified by department.
3. Tenure clock stoppage. Most Institutions do this already but they vary from Institution to Institution. Proposal sets minimum standards.
4. Requirement for Nonexempt Staff that there be nursing and lactation rooms where new mothers can go to express milk in private, comfortable setting. This space cannot be a restroom.

Presidents have weighed in on this proposal, will hopefully make final decisions in May meeting.

Cannot just respond to the needs of Faculty; Staff need this right as well. Challenges for Staff are greater. There are more Staff than Faculty employees, and there is no clear delineation of semesters for Staff as there is for Faculty. It is assumed that the cost will be higher. If we change any leave benefit, collective bargaining units have the right to weigh in, which may delay any implementation.

Just as we have eight-week guarantee period for Faculty, we are considering doing something analogous for Staff. Possibly expand usage of current Staff Policy on Sick Leave and allow usage for this type of parental needs to equate the guarantee to be given to Faculty.

Other possibility that can be considered would be whether we need to take a larger view of our current sick leave package for Staff.

Mary Hickey. Suggests a borrowing-and-repaying system for sick leave, to be given back after that leave is accrued.

JoAnn Goedert. There is a donation policy for State employees already available.

Jayne French. In her case, she borrowed sick leave from someone who was retiring. Why does this not exist in this State?

JoAnn Goedert. Leave reserve fund already exists. It is not an individual one-for-one where unused personal days go, available for major illnesses, but not for maternity leave. Gus Mercanti. Pool makes this donation equitable.

Rosario van Daalen. State has a leave donation program, but USM does not participate in this fund. USM has its own policy called Leave Reserve Fund. There is no intended donation. Any unused Staff Personal Leave hours are lost at the end of the calendar year. However, those hours are automatically added to the Leave Reserve Fund for use by any Staff employee who meets the policy's criteria. Policy has been in place since April 1991, and it is only available to Staff. Embedded in Sick Leave Policy is Advanced Sick leave, up to 60 days of leave, which is paid back at half the earning rate, after employee returns. There is also Extended Sick Leave, up to twelve months, which does not need to be paid back. Once that leave is over, there is the Leave Reserve Fund, at a maximum of 20 days per request round. Idea now is to open this leave bank open to maternity as well.

b. P.J. Hogan, Legislative Update. Usually these wrap-up sessions are easy, but not this year. General Assembly completed its session, but did not do everything they wanted to do. Only thing that Maryland Constitution requires the General Assembly to do is pass a balanced budget. They did not pass a balanced budget this time around. Current budget is out of balance by \$70 million, not including contingent cuts. As we sit here today, the only thing that exists is the budget as the General Assembly passed it, without revenue raisers. Contingent cuts of \$512 million are fairly specific, of which \$38 million is a cut to higher education. Also, statewide there will be increases in state-employee health care coverage, plus elimination of 500 positions in the state.

USM is about 23% of discretionary general fund of the state. If there is no special session, then Governor will need to go back to Board of Public Works for additional cuts. General funds will be reduced by well over \$50 million, a very significant cut with the budget as it stands.

We are asking for the Governor to call a special session of General Assembly to prevent these dire cuts, with illustrations of what will happen if the current budget stands. The progress in Maryland public education over the past decade will be erased if the current budget stands. [Note: After today's CUSS meeting date, a special session was scheduled by the Governor for May 14, 2012.]

What are we waiting for? As bad as the current session was, it would be even more embarrassing to have no solution if a special session is called. It makes sense to have a deal before General Assembly special session is called. P. J, thinks it will happen the week of May 7.

Best case scenario is a \$5 million cut. Worst is the approximately \$50 million of doomsday budget. A middle ground could be also problematic of somewhere in between

the two. Governor's budget gives us a flat budget, with buy-downs to keep us at a 3% tuition increase.

Capital budget was phenomenal. Every single capital item was approved by the General Assembly. They even added to it, with projects on a number of Institutions. We got \$221 million in general obligation fund bonds for these projects.

Doomsday budget does not have a COLA. We argued to legislators to give us flexibility to give merit increases. The USM is an anomaly within the state, with more flexibility than other state agencies. We do retain ability to give retention raises for Faculty, but not necessarily for Operationally Critical Staff as we did for FY2012. We are losing employees to private universities and the private sector. We are asking for it again for this year, but that legislation is not in the doomsday budget.

Gynene Sullivan. Have potential federal budget shortfalls affected Maryland General Assembly's budget?

P.J. Hogan. Yes, but we don't get a great deal of money for the university funding. We do for grants, but not for direct funding.

We have a \$1.2 billion dollar structural deficit. The budget that we planned for eliminated 53% of that deficit.

Willie Brown. How is it that the fund balance not going down to zero. How does the fund Balance work?

P.J. Hogan. Unlike every other state agency, USM funds do not have use-it-or-lose-it funds. It stays in a fund balance. It is our rainy day fund. There are many states where, in times of financial trouble, the state has come in and taken huge amounts of fund balances. We would prefer it be taken from fund balances than our base.

Willie Brown. What is the major source of conflict that is causing this impasse?

P.J. Hogan. Gaming is one major issue – additional table gaming, plus a sixth slots site, are what President of the Senate Mike Miller wants. President Miller wants it for this November, as the next opportunity is in November 2014. It delays things in President Miller's eyes. There is also disagreement on tax package, on who would pay the higher taxes. To that point this doomsday budget focuses the minds so that everyone can understand the consequences of these cuts. Legislators are also very County-centric. Counties are not sure where they are better off – under doomsday budget or solution budget. Strongly suggested we use CapWiz to make our attentions known to our Legislators. Legislators need to hear of the impacts. They need to hear the public say, "Do this!" Encourage our co-workers as well.

Willie Brown: He has not seen a formal e-mail from USM encouraging use of CapWiz. Has such a note gone out?

Ron Butler. Is it 2008 when we last received COLA and merits.

Rosario van Daalen. Last COLA and merit increase was given on July 1, 2009. This July it will be four years.

Rosario van Daalen. Would you clarify for the group why capital funds cannot be switched with operational funds? That is a question that comes up frequently.

P.J. Hogan. Capital projects are built with general obligation bonds. They cannot be used for day-to-day operations. Many hundreds of bills were passed this year, many of which affected USM, but right now we are focusing on the budget. In general what we wanted to pass passed, and what we wanted to not pass did not pass.

Willie Brown. We thank both P.J. and Andy for all they do for us in Annapolis on a daily basis.

P.J. Hogan. Thanks us for Annapolis Day, coming down to Annapolis to show the USM flag. It helps tremendously in keeping our visibility up with our Legislators.

3. Approval Of Minutes. Minutes tentatively approved.

4. Chairs Report

Status Re: New BOR Award/Dinner. Karyn Schulz sat on our behalf. Chair of BOR asked why this could not be part of Exceptional Service award. Regretfully, there will be no award for shared governance.

Bill Crockett. How many new awards do faculty have?

Willie Brown. There are 17 for faculty.

Nancy Bowers. The money is actually minimal for this new award.

Gus Mercanti. Do we know what the faculty awards are?

Willie Brown. They are available on the web site.

BOR Meeting in Frostburg. How can we make the awards more prestigious? This year at FSU they had breakfast for BOR awards, all said there was positive feedback. They want to hold a similar breakfast in September when meeting is held at UMUC. It would be a good thing, not regular part of BOR meeting, separate from regular meeting though. Do we have any comments?

Jackie Eberts. Maybe it could be a brunch? If traveling a distance, it is very hard to get to UMUC that early.

Mary Reed. Who pays for the brunch?

Willie Brown. Foundation. Not sure if they pay for room and board.

Delores Jackson. Foundation paid for overnight hotel for faculty awardee.

Willie Brown. I'll bring it up with Foundation to have someone pay for hotel costs other than the recipient. At UMCP they have been working on BOR Award best practices. There are two subcommittees for going through BOR Award process. It was suggested we sit down with representatives at home Institutions' BOR processes for going through the nomination process. Wants to put this on next month's agenda. It was also suggested that BOR awards are Exempt Staff heavy. Also, what defines above and beyond? Ask for a 50-100-word blurb as to what is above-and-beyond regular job duty. At the next meeting we suggest looking at packet and tweaking it. He suggests that we also send this package out to representatives ahead of time.

Regent Florenstano. Willie Brown. She is retiring this year. This June is her last BOR meeting. We had discussed a special CUSS mention to her. It was asked if we mention faculty as well. Willie asked if we mind including faculty.

Bill Crockett. It is an excellent suggestion. We are a community, so it shows an olive branch to the faculty side, that we are collaborative and forward thinking.

Willie Brown. No objections. Who wants to work on wording?

Mary Hickey. She recalls that Brenda Yarema was going to work on the wording.

VOTE – CASA Support. Andy sent an e-mail regarding our activity on a controversial issue. As an organization, we can use CapWiz, but we cannot do so for our own personal causes.

Ron Butler. It puts to rest the questions of the last meeting.

Motion was brought to bring the motion to a vote. Motion passed. We have a quorum. Voting if CUSS does support Dream Act. We need to bring it up for discussion.

Willie gave Jackie Eberts a brief recap of the discussion last month.

Nancy Bowers. We asked presenter last month to get his slide show. Did we get that presentation?

Willie Brown. No, we did not.

Noelle Nelson. Can you clarify the part that includes the military aspect of the Dream Act?

Willie Brown. He has this information in his office.

Bill Crockett. Includes both active military and families.

Karyn Schulz. How many campuses have had a chance to bring it to their campuses?

Jackie Eberts. What costs are involved? Was this discussed at the last meeting?

Willie Brown. We have to make very broad assumptions as this discussion goes forward. There is no way to factually say what it will cost at each institution.

Bill Crockett. It was also stressed that it simply is a differentiation of in-state vs. out-of-state tuition. It is an issue of affordability.

Joel DeWyer. To clarify, folks who qualify would simply be taken from the out-of-state pool.

Karyn Schulz. Was there any word from CUSSF and other Senates on what their discussion were like?

Willie Brown. The approvals were unanimous at their ends.

Bill Crockett called the vote.

Vote as 14 ayes, 6 nays, 1 abstention. Ayes have it.

Dr. Maravene Loeschke. Welcomes CUSS very warmly to Towson's campus. Staff members are vital to the students' success. If a Staff employee is out for a week, it truly affects the students, and how we treat them affects them for life. She has a tremendous respect for all of the important and vital work we do here.

5. Vice - Chairs Report. At UMCP, CUSS elections were held, all three of our current representatives were re-elected, with two new alternates.

Rosario van Daalen. Now is that time of the year when CUSS members need to start thinking about nominations or volunteering for the CUSS-Executive positions.

Karyn Schulz. Thanks us for input for Shared Governance stipends for Staff. UB is currently in final stages of adoption of new policy. Stipends for staff chairs of committees look as if they will go through.

Rosario van Daalen. You may wish to have that stipend run past the USM Internal Auditors.

6. Chancellor's Council Report. Gynene Sullivan. There is a very comprehensive discussion of the budget, which is now moot due to doomsday budget scenario. As a vice-chair of CUSS's perspective, for our 20th anniversary she wants to include stories of how CUSS has enriched our lives. She would like to see how shared governance has affected the lives of staff. She would appreciate if we could share with our campus PSS bodies for newsletter.

Rosario van Daalen. CUSS has material in the archives that can be scanned. Joe Hill at UMBC has a huge, three ring binder full of material.

Jackie Eberts. Jerry Waldron, 2nd CUSS chair is retiring in May and going to College of New Jersey.

Rosario van Daalen. A farewell letter from CUSS may be a nice gesture. Rosario asked Gynene if she is taking the lead again this year on preparing the annual CUSS Newsletter.

Willie Brown. We have had very busy agenda this year, with little time for break out for sub-committee adjournment. Has this been a problem?

Joel DeWyer. Not really. We have not had time for it.

Chancellor's Liaison Report - Rosario van Daalen PJ and Andy covered the hottest topic – the budget this morning.

We are in the middle of Open Enrollments for benefits; this year started on April 17. We have not seen the rates yet and there may be slight increases. There is a new concept called Co-Insurance and it impacts the PPO and the POS plans. We do not think that the level of services covered will change. The rates could be at risk of being increased further, given the doomsday budget. The ScriptsExpress service starts May 16. As soon as we get that card, take it to our pharmacist.

Nancy Bowers. At UMB, there was a question that if doomsday budget goes through, will there be a second open enrollment period?

Rosario van Daalen. No. We hope that the budget decision will be made prior to end of Open Enrollment period.

Nancy Bowers. Do HR offices know that?

Rosario van Daalen. They should, unless there have been changes in HR management on individual campuses.

Lunch

Biennial Exempt Market Salary Survey and requested 15% overall adjustment to the Exempt Salary Structure was approved by BOR. Strong commitment was made to adjust

the Nonexempt Salary Structure next year, budget permitting. By policy, anyone who falls below new minimums must be adjusted. This adjustment helps us to remain competitive with the market. If we cannot remain competitive with the market, we will have to settle for mediocre hiring. By the time we have to do Staff Retention, it is too late to keep excellent Staff employees.

Ron Butler. Towson to be affected the most with the greatest cost. Why is that?

Rosario van Daalen. This is all based on how close current employees' salaries are to the bottom of their Pay Range within the salary structure.

Jackie Eberts. Is it an old BOR policy that there is a reason why promotions are limited to 6% for Nonexempt?

Rosario van Daalen. Historically when we were linked to the State, the maximum was 6%.

Willie Brown. At UMCP, can be as high as 15%, for Exempt Staff with approval.

7. The two topics: Performance Evaluations and BEST Policy. With permission, Willie is asking to table them until next month.

8. Old/New Business. Next month, Performance Evaluations, BEST Policy, BOR Staff Award procedures. Rosario mentioned that TU is working on Staff development issues and may want to share for next meeting.

Nancy Bowers. When will we hear who BOR awards recipients are?

Willie. Not quite yet ready for release.

Jackie Eberts. Do you know if any of the efficiency awards were sent forward?

Willie Brown. We will discuss refinement of this category at next month's meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: May 15, UMBC