

CUSS Meeting – July 20, 2021 @ UMCES (Virtual)

Call Meeting to Order (10 AM)

Welcome

President Goodwin

Currently working on re-accreditation.

Thank you to the committee for their efforts and persistence. Very impressed how the staff has responded throughout the USM system which is commendable.

Thank you for selecting Julianna Brush for BoR award.

Because of COVID, UMCES field and labs were shut down except for animal care.

90% of faculty and staff have been vaccinated and we are going through the transition to bring people back and stressing the importance of getting vaccinated.

President Goodwin gave the committee a well-informed presentation of UMCES, established in 1925; the earliest science university and the catalyst for environmental issues throughout the state ensuring that the best are here for science.

### **Chancellor Liaison's Report**

#### **COVID-19 Vaccination Card/Exemption Reminder**

Many of you are experiencing mixed feelings in returning to the office ranging from "oh my goodness, I don't want to be here" to "I'm so happy to see my coworkers in person again" and everything in between. **You are not alone!!!**

Part of the hesitancy in returning to work is the feeling of the USM and your respective Institutions creating a safe environment for all employees. Your respective institutions are all rolling out or have already provided information for employees to certify that they have received their vaccines or ways to request an exemption. All employees need to upload their COVID vaccination cards or make a request for an exemption. You will find everything you need to complete these processes in the various communications from your campus.

#### **Telework Policies and Procedures**

During this last year of mandatory telework, many of you have reported experiencing benefits such as stress reduction, increased productivity, and having more time with family. It is also important to understand that while each of you have proved that you can get the job done (often going above and beyond) while working from home, telework is not an entitlement or USM Office-wide benefit. The USM is committed to having employees physically present to engage with our community as a higher education system.

Many of the Institutions are working on updated telework policies and agreements, they may not be finalized or in place yet and some institutions have decided to wait until the Fall to make decisions. Stay tuned for updated policies and agreements and feel free to share strategies that work and challenges that don't work. As we continue to figure things out with long term telework let's help each other with tips and strategies that work well.....

**Thank You!!!**

June 17, 2021: Press Release:

Report from USM Chancellor Jay A. Perman to USM Board of Regents on June 17

“And so I thanked the Class of 2021 for showing all of us what it looks like to face extraordinary challenges, and persevere anyway. Succeed anyway. Shine anyway. Despite an objectively terrible year, they fought through it. They threw down the obstacles in their way, and somehow made a path forward.

And so I asked them to remember what they accomplished this year. Every time new challenges present themselves, I asked them to remember exactly what it took to prevail—it took their focus, their resilience, their grit, their hard, hard work. I told them they were powerful, and I asked them to nurture that power in someone else—to give a little bit of their strength to the communities and people who need them.”

To our Council of University System Staff colleagues, we echo these words. You all rock! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! For all of your efforts over the course of the year to remain steady and stable for your colleagues in the USM. WE APPRECIATE YOU!!!

Question: Concerning the minimum wage/wage compression strategy?

In the next 3 years that may change or come faster and how would that affect the system overall? How will that impact compression – we are asking for a holistic view across the system. I will bring back more when I get more information.

### Chair’s Report

No BoR or Chancellor Meeting

The Remote Work and Return to work surveys were shared with each campus President. The raw data of every campus was sent to each campus and to whoever wants to review from CUSS we can send that to you. Be mindful of who you share it with as there are open ended responses.

BoR winner have been notified will share the winners in the minutes.

Revisiting the restructuring

#### 1. Do you approve the move to the new committee structure?



Question: Why are there two people from the executive board on the committee?

Because the committee is combined and the group will be bigger and the work will possibly be divided. More accountability to the executive committee.

Question: When will CUSS be meeting in person?

Waiting for guidelines from campuses, will be virtual until we know more. Waiting for BoR meeting. Joint meeting in November will be virtual.

Will be sending out a form for which committee you want to be on. Would like to see your group of representatives on different committee from you institutions.

## **Committee Meetings**

### **Benefits & Compensation**

Attendees: Colette Beaulieu, Co-Chair; LaVel Jones, Co-Chair; Obii Akaigwe; Elizabeth Hinson; Amy Nightengale; Rhonda Schwinabart; Jessica Scott; Lei Zhang

The committee voted and elected Obii Akaigwe to be co-chair next year with a member from the Executive Committee. All members of the group understand that this might change when the new session starts in August because certain committees, this one included, will be restructured.

The results of the survey taken earlier this Spring have been shared with Elizabeth Hinson, who had indicated that she will be serving on this committee in the upcoming session. LaVel Jones has also volunteered to help with the reconfiguration of this committee so that it can be more successful in the upcoming session addressing the needs of the staff throughout the system.

Colette Beaulieu thanked the committee and LaVel for all their hard work over the past session. She will not be returning to CUSS in the upcoming session because she is no longer serving on the UMB Staff Senate.

### **BoR Staff Awards & Recognition**

Attendance: Dolores Jackson, Kevin Joseph, Yvonne Oliver, Deniz Erman

The committee went over the goals we accomplished for the past year and the future goals we would like to see for this committee. We also discussed how we want to make the USN institutions aware of the award all year. We want to keep sending those notifications and information all year.

The Board of Regents met in closed session on Thursday June 17, 2021 via Zoom. During that meeting, they officially approved the nominations of the Council of University System Staff (CUSS) for the Regents Staff Awards to be awarded in during the September 10, 2021 board meeting.

### **Exceptional Contribution to the Institution and/or Unit to Which a Person Belongs**

Julianna Brush, Exempt Staff – UMCES

Victor Fulda, Non-Exempt Staff – UMBC

### **Outstanding Service to Students in an Academic or Residential Environment**

Donna Hammer, Exempt Staff – UMCP

### **Extraordinary Public Service to the University or the Greater Community**

Patricia Watson, Exempt Staff – TU

### **Effectiveness and Efficiency**

Julie Leary, Exempt Staff – TU

Crystal Kelly, Exempt Staff – SU

### **Inclusion, Multiculturalism and Social Justice**

Amanda Preperato, Exempt Staff – UMCP

### **Communication & Marketing**

Attendance: Dawn Stoute, LaVern Chapman, Paul Gasior, Kerby Francesca, and Rubin Stevenson.

- LaVern Chapman updated us on the CUSS voice over video. Cara McCandless and Paul Stackpole from the USM Communications and Marketing Office are requesting photos to include in the video. We put out a request for photos to be added to a [shared Google Drive](#).
- It was suggested that a preliminary meeting with the members of the new Awards and Outreach Committee be conducted prior to our first regular CUSS meeting in August.
- We reviewed the Communications and Marketing draft final report and LaVern will submit the final report.
- We thanked the members for their service and expressed our appreciation for each other.
- Next newsletter to be published in August once the new members are identified. Tentative schedule: Institutional Update request email to be sent August 2<sup>nd</sup> with August 16<sup>th</sup> due date. Highlight on BOR.

### **Legislative Affairs & Policy**

Attendance: Vanessa Collins, Lori Stepp, Vonzella McQueen, Michael Walsh

A small group of us met for our final FY21 CUSS committee session. The discussion was mainly centered around return to work and telework agreements and how each of us are currently working. As a committee, we are interested to see if the State of Maryland will implement any consistent guidance or if telework agreements will continue to be determined on a decentralized basis per agency and USM institution. It appears within USM, return to work is not uniform. Some institutions are back full time, some are allowing hybrid, and some are still working under full time telework agreements. We commented that the FY22 Legislative Session should be quite interesting considering with all that changes that occurred during the pandemic and what effect it will have on budgets going forward. We mentioned that CUSS should not forget to follow the pending outcome of the Prescription Benefit plan for retirees. The rest of the discussion was more personal in nature sharing our work experiences and vacation plans.

### **Executive Committee**

Present: Trish, Kalia, Antoinne, Chevonie, Susan, Carol, Laila, Lisa

- Speakers at meetings - who to ask to speak and when (Chancellor, USM staff, etc.)
- When to do invites - do them seasonally/semesterly
- Discussion on who is returning and what other elections need to still happen (members at large)

**1. Do you vote to approve the May 2021 meeting minutes?**



**2. Do you vote to approve the June 2021 meeting minutes?**



**New Business**

Committee preference forms are changing.

Member information form Bowie 3; Coppin 4(2); Frostburg 2(4); Salisbury 4; Towson 6; UB 4; UMCES 2; UMB 6; UMBC5 (1); UMCP 5(1); UMES 1; USM 1; UMGC waiting If you know those that are missing, please get them sent in.

New member orientation dates in August, if returning you are welcome to come early - the meeting starts at 9am.

Thank you to everyone on the council as it has been an unusual year but we met every month.

Awesome to work with you all, if you are not returning we thank you for your service and working together despite the virtual year. We will keep in touch if returning to CUSS and we look forward to next year.

We will be sending out certificates.

**Old Business**

Adjourn

Motion – Vonzella McQueen

Second - Paul Gasior

Next Meeting virtually August