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Meeting Minutes

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Senators in Attendance: Adam Smith, Ahmed Al-Ostaz, Allison Bell, Andrew Paney, Brad Cook, Breese Quinn, Brice Noonan, Carolyn Higdon, Christian Sellar, David Murray, Donna Davis, Erwin Mina Diaz, Gregory Heyworth, Jason Solinger, Jeff Roux, Jodi Skipper, Joe Sumrall, Joshua First, Judy Greenwood, Karen Christoff, Latoya Brooks, Leigh Anne Duck, Lorri Williamson, Matt Long, Michael Barnett, Mike Mossing, Milorad Novicevic, Mitch Wenger, Mustafa Matalgah, Oliver Dinius, Philip Rhodes, Rahul Khanna, Ricky Burkhead, Robert Barnard, Robert Doerksen, Robert Holt, Ruth Mirtz, Seong Bong Jo, Susan Allen, Tom Garrett, Will Berry, Yongping Zhu, Yunhee Chang

Senators absent with prior notification: Matthew Hill, Mark Dolan, Hugh Sloan, Daneel Ferreira, Brian Reithel

Senators absent without notification: Susan Bennett, Dennis Bunch, Chuck Ross, Allison Ford-Wade

- **Call Meeting to Order**
 - Senator Barnett opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- **Approval of December 4, 2012 Minutes**
 - Moved
 - Seconded
 - Approved
- **Address by Director of Athletics Ross Bjork**
 - Key talking points: changing the culture of how we do things at Ole Miss; building on the foundation laid over course of year; journey and process; and people can make a difference.
 - Athletics are a key ingredient to the institution. Mission has to align with institution on every front. Athletics has to be operated in this context. Obligation and balance. Society views university through that filter.
 - Knight Commission, created in 1989, is the watchdog of athletics.
 - A 2010 report identified challenges: spending; isolated from mainstream of campus; allow athletics to creep away from mission. If athletics operates at its best, it can provide enormous benefits to the community and campus.
 - Knight commission suggests: greater transparency; reward practices (academics); and treat athletes as students first.
 - What UM Athletics are doing:
 - Budget – generating 96 % of own revenue
 - 76% graduation rate of student athletes that have exhausted their eligibility
 - 26 of student athletes had 4.0 GPA last Fall of 400 athletes
 - 12 out of 14 SEC teams increased GPA of athletes 2011-2012
 - 170 student athletes had 3.0 or higher GPA last semester
 - Hitting APR (academic proficiency rate)
 - Core Values:

- Student athlete welfare top priority
- Academic excellence- 2.86 cumulative GPA, goal is 3.0
- Everyone graduates
- Integrity
- Social responsibility
- Integration – part of university
- Community engagement
- Win
- Tells students 3 things:
 - Attend class & study
 - Act responsibly
 - Compete at their highest level
- Vision is to have the #1 academics and athletics program. Give students a life-changing moment through athletics.
- Opportunity to showcase your area in athletics.

Questions from the floor:

Q. Can you discuss recruitment of athlete and job offer to father?

A. It is being handled by legal counsel.

Q. Students come here for athletics; current students are improved academically. Can we promote or celebrate former successful athletes as role models?

A. Little things add up. Promoting former athletes that have gone on, we're working on it.

Q. Why is there a gender divide in academics for student athletes? Can we be doing something differently?

A. Deal with student population every day. Females are typically better prepared. We are trying to find the piece that motivates the student.

Q. Data points. How do we compare?

A. We are in the upper part of the SEC (grad rate). APR is just a minimum so we have no comparison. GPA we do not track. It's more about the graduation rate.

Q. Financially?

A. Budget is 12 out of 14. We are at the low end of the spectrum.

Q. Grade reporting system and absences?

A. Required in SEC to have attendance policy. Watch and monitor very closely. GDS – have access to view grades in Bb. Compile weekly report to coaches.

Q. Should we contact Athletic Department with behavior issues, academic dishonesty issues, etc?

A. You may contact Senior Associate Athletic Director Derek Cowherd, the Athletic Compliance Officer or Athletics Director Bjork. You will receive a response.

A. Faculty Athletic Representative may be contacted as well.

- **Senate Committee Reports**
 - **Executive Committee**
 - No report
 - **Academic Affairs**
 - Update on Grade Appeal Process (See attached [policy draft](#))
 - Consider the ramifications of creating a new Standing Committee (similar to the Academic Discipline Committee) to create continuity in the Grade Appeal Process

Senator First: Summarized points. Nothing further to add

Questions from the floor:

Q. Clarify formal consultation as pre-requisite.

A. See Step 1.

A. Meeting with professor takes place anyway. Committee didn't feel it was a necessary formal component of 1st step. Until Chair involvement process is nothing serious. Formalizing would up the ante. Should there be paper-work at the beginning?

Q. Chair might need to check back with faculty that conversation actually took place. Some way to demonstrate that informal consultation occurred.

A. Theoretically faculty or student would confirm conversation.

A. If not, chair would send back to begin appropriate process.

Q. Possibility to have mechanism to allow more variance within unit? Law school has process in place.

A. Associate dean makes probable cause decision then it goes to a committee

Q. University wide or by academic discipline?

A. Different routing for graduate or undergrad, started with University policy already in place. Does not differentiate between schools; if it goes through approval process, language could be added to allow individual schools to make decision.

A. Importance of document is to say there is now a Grade Appeal process above the Dean.

Q. Room for variance internally before it gets to above the Dean?

A. Stated policy, already in place.

- Update on Repeating Course and Forgiveness Policies

- Explore the impact of updating repeating course policy to make it more consistent and potentially more lenient.

- The current forgiveness policy is quite strict compared to similar universities and has a negative impact upon retention. Explore updating this policy to be more in keeping with similar universities.

Committee surveyed @20 other universities.

Repeating course: @50% any course, @50% only <C, maybe a couple who allow <B. UM current policy allows repeat grades if <C. Proposal to increase to <B. Surveyed limits- @75% surveyed have no limit (UM current policy). 25% allowed 1 repeat per

course- proposals for revamping policies involve different proposals for levels. All count into GPA calculations.

Forgiveness: Equal number allows 2, 3, or 4 courses forgiven. UM currently allow 2; proposal to increase to 4. A small number limit to lower courses. Another task force meeting scheduled, possible data on number of students, number repeated courses, and number of times, etc. will report. Target May for approval, implementation in Fall 2013.

Q. Why do we want to make it easier?

A. Student retention is main concern.

Q. Impact on retention?

A. No numbers at this point. More data is needed.

Q. Question of fairness with plus/minus system. Why bump it up to C+?

Q. Should we do something about C- before we change policies? Some departments are using ad hoc strategies for dealing with it. Should we discuss policy about C-?

A. Not addressing just C-; some courses require a B.

A. Addressing University-wide problem where C is not acceptable for some majors.

A. Departments are modifying program.

Q. Why have a cut-off at all? It's going to self-select.

A. If repeating factors into GPA, why as well?

o **Academic Support**

▪ Update on Fall Academic Break Schedule

- It has been proposed that the University have both a "Fall Break" and a Thanksgiving Break. This would allow both the faculty and students the opportunity to recharge closer to the middle of the semester rather than only at the end of the semester as we do under our current structure. There is concern that both faculty and students begin to lose focus well before we reach the current academic break and that by having an additional break earlier in the semester may forestall this problem.

Fall Break - Discussion with Associate Provost. Committee looked at schedules of other schools comparable to ours in SACS. In 2000 there was a 1 day Fall Break; in 2001, no break. That is the timeframe shift occurred. In that time, the state legislation that sets the number of minutes for a semester reduced the number of minutes allowing more flexibility. Issues impact: a lot of UM student are from out-of-state, public school calendars, increases faculty load, etc. Difficult to compare with other schools as some start earlier, some start later. Do we want to start earlier or go later? Should committee proceed?

Comment: Changing it is awful idea. Move to bury this suggestion.

Q. Discussion?

A. Not only do students travel far but so does some faculty.

- Motion to extinguish.
 - Approved unanimously.
 - **Finance**
 - No report
 - **University Services**
 - No report
 - **Governance**
 - Update on Ombudsman

Meeting with Vicki Mahan, University Counseling Center- EAP entirely confidential program- cannot say anything to anyone; confidential process is beneficial.
 Facilitator/investigator proposed structure. 2-person structure: facilitator and investigator.
 Contact with facilitator is confidential
 If necessary, can be addressed by investigator

Remaining:

- Who is paying for this?
- Find candidates for investigation position
- Talk with EO/RC
- Finalize proposal and resolution for Senate vote.

Questions from the floor:

Q. Goal for the office is to handle what?
 A. Bullying, malfeasances, not harassment

Q. Why combine with counseling?
 A. Confidentiality

Comment: Issues are not black or white; counselor is qualified to make determination.
 Comment: Structure suggests faculty and staff don't understand proper standards for workplace behavior are.

Q. Is facilitator an EAP person?
 A. Not decided, but possibility.

Q. Conflict of interests if same person in both roles. How is this different from EAP?
 Concern with confidentiality.
 A. Confidentiality always in place. Must give consent to disclose.

Q. Structure creates filter in order to get to investigator. There needs to be a direct mechanism to get to investigator who can be tasked with confidentiality.
 A. Office not to replace existing (formal) mechanism is existing mechanism has failed, that is when Ombudsmen comes into play.

Comment: Similar to Vice Provost and Provost Office, 2 in office of Ombudsmen.
 Comment: EAP shouldn't be part of Ombuds, Ombuds should represent my concern.
 Comment: Model where we have multiple investigators.

Comment: Mental health is an issue that is getting more attention. If person needs to go through therapist to get help, it may be a barrier. EAP is perceived to be a therapist.

Comment: Conflict of interests for a therapist to be in a facilitator position.

Q. Shouldn't administration be aware of need? Why aren't they setting up structure?

A. We want to be involved in what is implemented; importance of position to be effective.

Q. Why shouldn't the Legal Office tell us the structure?

A. Talked to legal. No problem with structure.

Comment: Faculty not the only ones using Ombuds. Shouldn't we get feedback from Staff Council? We may want pool of investigators to include staff.

Q. Other schools are doing this. Why reinvent the wheel?

A. Structure is unique; trying to combine two different types of Ombuds.

Q. Do we need more than one?

A. Yes, one person doesn't work, for example Tennessee.

Comment: Tennessee much larger, but one person.

Q. Has EAP provided feedback?

A. EAP did not raise any concerns.

Senator Rhodes: Main concern is that Counseling Office is involved with Ombudsman.

Comment: Similar to bringing in a Chaplain to deal with issue.

Comment: Counseling Center viewed as dealing with mental health.

Comment: Narrowing from Counseling Center to EAP changes game. Functions should be separated.

Senator Rhodes: Ombudsman, not EAP.

Comment: Changing titles doesn't make it different, same problem. Should be different person, different line.

Senator Rhodes: Will take contributions into consideration.

- **Old Business**

- **Update on Second Bachelor's Degree Task Force (Dr. Robert Doerksen & Dr. Adam Smith)**

- The University of Mississippi may confer a second bachelor's degree upon either its graduates or those of another institution when a student has completed the specific course requirements for the second degree as defined by The University of Mississippi. In addition to the credits used for the first degree, the candidate for the second bachelor's degree must complete at least 30 semester hours in residence from the school or college recommending the degree, with a minimum 2.00 GPA for those courses.

Upcoming committee meeting.

- **New Business**

- Recruit, Admissions, Orientation & Advising Committee met with Enrollment Management Council. Found there was a lot of overlap and duplication; recommended merging. Co-chair and leadership with Charlotte Fant and Brandi Labanc
- Vice Provost Noel Wilkin contacted Senator Barnett asking Faculty Senate to look at creating or generating a Faculty Excellence Task Force as part of the UM 2020 initiative. What this asks for: Appoint a faculty task force to review promotion, merit, and tenure criteria; make recommendations for strengthening the significance of teaching performance in those decisions; and identify means and resources to help faculty develop as teachers and perform with increasing effectiveness. Meet with Executive committee after meeting brief discussion.

Q. Is there going to be a standing committee?

A. No, FS will evaluate areas Senate should address and make recommendations.

Q. Can you define excellence?

A. Create a task force on faculty excellence, and charge it with systematically compiling an overview of current programs and consulting best practices at comparable institutions. The first thing on here is to define faculty excellence. Several members of the Senate served on the Strategic Planning Task Force. Perhaps they can provide some insight.

- **Adjournment**

- Senator Barnett closed the meeting at 8:45 p.m.