

Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting

October 21, 2008

Frostburg State University (FSU)

In attendance:

Members

Cynthia Coleman	BSU
Linda Parker-Ford	BSU
Victoria Kelly	Coppin
Jesse Ketterman	FSU
Jay Hegelman	FSU
Absent	SU
Absent	TU
Kimberley Lynne	Co-Secretary, UB
Ron Kasl	UMB
Joe Hill	UMBC
Jami Kosco	UMBI
Mary Stapleton	UMBI, new
Absent	UMES
Larry Lauer	CUSS Chair, UMCP
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP
Gus Mercanti	UMCES
Absent	UMUC
Absent	USMO

Alternates/Guests

Bernard Wynder	FSU
Stacy Wassell	FSU

Chancellor’s Liaison to CUSS:	
Rosario van Daalen	USMO

Larry Lauer called the **meeting to order**.

Jesse Ketterman from FSU welcomed the members to the campus. Patrick McLane, a staff member who served on CUSS for years, welcomed the members and commended our work. He believes in CUSS and its help to the institution and his coworkers. Bernard Wynder and Stacy Wassell from FSU joined the meeting as well.

September **minutes** were approved with changes. Sister Maureen moved and Jesse seconded.

Chairman’s Report:

Larry shared the report to the **Chancellor’s Council meeting 10/13/08** (all the presidents meet with Chancellor Kirwan, Vice Chancellor Vivona and AVC PJ Hogan) which was the same report provided to the **Board of Regents’ meeting 10/17/08**. In addition to the report there was a letter from the Council to Dr. Kirwan and Regent Chair Cliff Kendall regarding the state budget situation. This letter was composed and emailed to the executive committee for suggestions. Both reports contained the suggestion to upgrade the BOR staff awards ceremony and the legislation regarding the ORP

contribution. The Council discussed the changes to the rating system for UMCP's Performance Evaluation program for Nonexempt Staff.

The Regents received his report well. Some had questions, in particular regarding the non-exempt extra merit pay program from Regent Florestano. After the BOR meeting, Larry emailed both the Chancellor and VC Vivona, requesting a work group be formed to address the Non-exempt merit pay program as follows:

"As a follow-up to the request by Regent Florestano regarding the BOR policy on extra merit pay, the Staff Council would like to suggest again that a Systemwide work group be created to address the issue of the BOR policy on extra merit pay. This has been an issue on the Council's agenda for some time and we are interested in resolving it in partnership with the USMO and Institutions. I have attached two letters, one from the Council to the Chancellor in July 2007 asking for the work group to be established and a second letter Council members have recently sent at their campuses. While this year the likelihood of having funds for any salary increases are slight, a work group could examine and propose a solution to be implemented at the next positive funding cycle."

At the meeting, the BOR discussed the **Bohanan Commission** that is studying funding for higher education and should there be a new paradigm for funding?

Budget update: The Chancellor is relieved with the amount of the budget cut for USM. \$35M was cut from the USM budget but \$20M of that was pulled from budget surplus, leaving \$15M to be cut from operating budgets, across the whole system. At UMCP, Larry reported that his unit had a cut of 3% of state funds by 10/01/08.

On 10/15/08, Larry emailed the **Spending Affordability Briefing** to the CUSS executive committee. He distributed a copy to the members to read and promised to email the ecopy to them. The Spending Affordability Briefing presented to the General Assembly details the FY09 and FY10 budget prospects for a variety of state programs and how they fit into national trends. On pages 33 and 34 is a discussion of the responses to the fiscal crisis, including raising tuition.

The Governor reported the next round of cuts to the Board of Public Works. Larry distributed a copy of the Maryland Government Report for spending reductions. If slots don't pass, then \$100M could be cut from education. If slots pass, that money will support education throughout the state including higher education. Joe Hill said that in 2003 USM took the lion's share of the state cuts. Jesse said that cuts will impact institution's growth and enrollment growth will diminish.

Larry can't attend the **next Chancellor's Council meeting 11/4/08** and will ask John Wolfe if he can cover. Joe Hill is not available.

Larry emailed to the executive staff the 9/30/08 memo from UMCP HR on changing the **rating system for PRD** (performance evaluation program) **for Nonexempt Staff** from a five-category rating system to a

two-category rating system with: “meets expectations” and “does not meet expectations”. Larry cited the 500 people at UMCP who are Nonexempt Staff and not members of the union.

Rosario said that she has not heard of any concerns on this matter being presented elsewhere. She said that employees have to speak up or otherwise the VPs won't see it as a problem. Joe Hill said that the decision to make that change without any advisory consultation should be extrapolated as a case example of how the MOU is dictating the lives of Staff employees who are not represented by the union.

Staff Leadership Conference on Monday, 10/20/08. Only one person attended, other than a CUSS representative, so the presentation was less formal in a more intimate setting. All still believe it's important to hold the conferences. Larry discussed holding one in either Bowie or at Coppin. The next scheduled conference is in April at Towson University.

Larry emailed **Bill Chapin of CUSF** the CUSS meeting schedule. Bill Chapin is checking with CUSF to schedule a combined meeting. He recommended to Larry that he be very diplomatic in asking the BOR to upgrade the staff awards ceremony.

Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS - Report

Rosario spoke to an attendee at the Board of Public Works and apparently the Governor did not discuss **furloughs** and said that he wouldn't even address that until January. The budget reviews will be in by the end of December. USM operates with a certain degree of autonomy from the state, so, even if the Governor mandates state employee furloughs, it will be up to the BOR to make final decision. USM is responsible for its own budget. The positive side of furloughs is no job or benefit loss and it affects all instead of a few employees.

Biennial Nonexempt Market Salary Survey: Dr. Kirwan's commitment has always been to survey the market, despite the budget and economic crisis. HR is still working on it, investigating market trends, unemployment, and salary structures. The first draft will be presented to the HR directors in December and then to the VPs, to the Presidents, and to the Regents by April. USM is committed to use the living wage in Maryland (different than the minimum wage) as the starting point (the minimum) of the USM salary structure. The USM is highly competitive over the state.

Roger Ferguson, CEO and President of **TIAA-CREF**, met with Chancellor Kirwan. On 9/19/08, Rosario emailed this message from TIAA CREF:

“Many employees are concerned about recent developments in the financial services industry and the long-term health and viability of some firms. They are particularly interested in how these events affect their own retirement plan investments. While investments in the CREF Accounts, the TIAA Real Estate Account and the TIAA-CREF Institutional Mutual Funds are not guaranteed, the amount of money in these funds and accounts will rise and fall each day as the value of the investments changes in the marketplace. In order to help minimize the effect that any one investment can have on a single fund or

account, each fund or account holds many investments. When one investment loses value, that loss can often be offset by another investment's rising value. While many people monitor daily and even hourly developments on Wall Street these days, TIAA-CREF continues to remind its participants of its investment philosophy of seeking competitive returns over the long term. Even in turbulent times, you are best served by sticking with your long-term investment game plan and diversifying your holdings across a variety of asset classes."

10/2/08 email from Rosario: During the next **Open Enrollment for Health Benefits**, a note will be added by DBM-EBD to the benefits booklet to address issue of doctors charging \$1500 (not payable through flex spending accounts or covered in health insurance) for patients to join their practice.

10/16/08 email from Rosario: The Employee Benefits Division, DBM, will offer **flu shots** to State Employees at wellness fairs and flu clinics during November and early December, at various locations across the State. Attached is a schedule of Wellness Fairs and Flu Clinics. The State Employees Credit Union (SECU), once again, is generously sponsoring the flu shots at a discounted price of \$10 per person. Since there is a limited supply, vaccines will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis. However, no appointment is needed.

10/19/08 email from Rosario to all USM Employees who are customers of **UNUM's Life Insurance and Long Term Disability**. There is a dedicated phone number for the University System of Maryland that comes directly into Expanded Services. That phone number is: **866-762-8705**.

Committees held working lunches:

Executive Committee: Larry, Joe, Rosario, Kimberley

Larry will send a letter of introduction to the Governor, the Lt. Governor, the Comptroller and all the Delegates and Senators with a copy of the CUSS newsletter.

The Legislative Committee will draft a Regents budget letter with budget recommendations (from page 33 of the Spending Affordability Briefing) and reminding the Regent of the folly of layoffs. The institutions are already lean; they cannot continue supplying the same service with a reduced staff.

The issue still exists of MOU making changes without any shared governance advice. They violated BOR policy. There is still a lack of communication in the Shared Governance process. The committee decided that UMCP President Mote should know that Larry will talk to the Chancellor. Larry should wait until Staff Affairs meeting this week.

Legislative: Gus, Stacy, Ronald

They will draft Larry's letter to Chancellor Kirwan with a copy to the Governor, legislators, chairs of the budget and tax committees and the Comptroller. The committee will draft a cover letter and send it to Dave DeLooze and Roy Ross in email before the December budget figures are in.

Community Development: Victoria, Jesse, Cynthia

Committee chair Deb Geare could not attend but sent this update on the BOR staff awards: “the **BOR Award packets** were sent out last month. In the cover letter to the Presidents, I requested the name of a "contact person" for their University. To date, I have only received contact information from UMBC, UMCP, Towson and UMCES. Please reiterate to your university's internal committee, that I need the name of a contact person. This way, the members of the Community Development Committee can follow up and remind them to submit nominations. In the event someone has misplaced their packet, I am attaching a copy.”

Communications: Jami

- Changes from the Executive Committee were made to the newsletter, but it still needs final review. John’s year end report is four pages long.
- Kimberley will email Bernard Wynder’s new member information to Mary Reed.

Benefits and Compensation: Mary Stapleton, Sister Maureen, Linda Parker Ford

The committee discussed climate action plans, including closing down some campus areas in order to lower the carbon footprint. The committee is tracking what each institution is doing to lower its carbon footprint.

Old Business: CUSS Meeting Schedule

Resolved date adjustments: CSU in January, TU in April, UMCES in July

Was	At	Notes
10/21	FSU	keep date b/c FSU has already coordinated 10/21 meeting & 10/20 leadership conference
11/18	BSU	3 rd Tuesday OK b/c of Thanksgiving
12/16	USMO	3 rd Tuesday OK because of the holidays
1/27/09	CSU	Victoria confirmed
2/24/09	UMCP	4 th Tuesday
3/24	UB	4 th Tuesday - Keep that date
4/28	TU	Larry thinks that Brenda confirmed 4/28 but Kimberley will email her and double check
5/19	UMBC	3 rd Tuesday OK because of Memorial Day
6/23	UMES	4 th Tuesday
7/28	UMCES	Gus confirmed

New Business: The ORP discussion has been tabled: ½% over four years would be \$3M/year for a total of \$12M.

Next meeting: November 18 at Bowie State University

Respectfully submitted by Kimberley Lynne, 11/12/08