

Council of University System Staff

Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2021

1. Call Meeting to Order (10 AM)
2. Welcome
3. President Anthony Jenkins welcomed CUSS members to Coppin University. He remarked that it's always a challenge with folks and although technology is wonderful it will never supplant human interaction. June will be one year for him as President. The drawback of being remote is not seeing the students, staff, and faculty. He's proud of what Coppin has done and some of the highlights from student, faculty, and staff include:
 - Forbes has named their Psychology Program one of the best in the nation
 - Nursing Program top 12 in the nation
 - Business Management Program top 40 in the nation
 - The retention rate has increased and the 6-year graduation rate increased to historic high in the middle of the pandemic.
 - At Eagle Nation we transform student into scholars.

President Jenkins thanked the group for what we do on the committee and affirmed that we are a value that adds to all the institutions.

4. Approve Minutes: January 2021
 - a. Approval request sent by poll
 - b. January minutes approved

5. Chancellor Liaison's Report

CUSS Advocacy Day

Thank you all for your efforts, planning, and participation for last month's Advocacy Day. We truly appreciate the staff that take time to help us reach out to our partners each year and engage with them throughout the Legislative period.

Supplemental Budget

Earlier this month, Governor Hogan submitted \$74.1 million in a supplemental budget focused on a bonus for State Employees. The funding will provide a \$1,000 bonus for all employees upon passage of the full budget by the Legislature in April.

These bonuses are made possible in part by the early and aggressive budget actions taken last year in response to projected revenue impacts from COVID-19. "This supplemental budget recognizes the hard work of our state employees, who have overcome significant challenges to deliver essential services to Marylanders during this public health emergency," said Governor Hogan. "We have been successful in weathering this storm without having to implement any layoffs or furloughs. I want to especially thank our front-line workers, including police officers, healthcare workers, highway maintenance workers, and all of our dedicated public servants for their exceptional service." We'll keep you posted!

MetLife

Effective April 1st MetLife will be the new supplemental life and long-term disability vendor to replace Unum. All eligible employees will receive information to their homes and work email announcing the changes and giving you an opportunity to enroll for the first time into these products or increase coverage for employees that already have the benefit.

This is your opportunity to make updates to all of your beneficiaries and, as always, increase your supplemental retirement contributions.

6. Chair's Report

Shout out to Lori and Vanessa on Advocacy Day. We learned a lot and may be meeting virtually with some of the representatives in the future.

The Staff Advisory Group at Shady Grove campus will be sending one or two people to our meeting starting in April.

Nomination for the Executive Committee for CUSS will start in April-May. If anyone is interested in what the positions entail, reach out to anyone on the committee. Voting starts in July. Next month the position responsibilities of each executive committee position will be sent out.

Question: Will bylaws have to be changed if Shady Grove attends?

Answer: Legislative Affairs will have to make changes if they are added to the committee.

7. **USG SAC Introductions**

USM BOR Strategic Plan by Huron Consultant Group

A year-long project that will focus the session with a set of questions that they have developed which are designed to stimulate conversation and engagement from the group. This listening session is really designed to be forward looking, getting CUSS's thoughts and perspectives on the issues and challenges facing the USM over the 3-10 year period to come as we prepare for a new strategic plan.

We met in groups and these were the suggestions:

- Support professional development
- Transparency
- Equity and access
- Collaboration within the system office and USM schools
- Highlighting the unique contributions to USM by telling individual stories from some of the staff or from our students (i.e. a graduate who has started a small business or made an impact in their community).
- Cohesiveness – HR policies

-Diversity and inclusion including focusing on faculty diversity

8. Committee Meetings

a. **Benefits & Compensation**

Kathleen Hebbel UMGC, Elizabeth Hinson UMCP, Suzanne Tabor UB,
Melanie Amy Nightengale FSU, Rhonda Schwinabart UMCES,
LaVel Jones BSU, Collete Beaulie- Excused.

1. Inquiring about the status of the survey re campus resources, counseling service, food pantries on campuses, tela-med, etc.
2. Did we hear back from the campuses regarding the tuition remission/fees and how it works on each campus?
3. Any updates on the ombudsmen for the campuses?
4. We discussed if any of the campus' was a site for the mass-vaccinations: College Park and Frostburg had agreed to be a testing site. UMGC, UMB, Bowie and UMCES had not heard if their schools were going to be a vaccination site.

b. **BoR Staff Awards & Recognition**

Board of Regents Committee Notes:

In attendance: Dolores Jackson, Kevin Joseph, Yvonne Oliver, Michelle Prentice

Committee had a discussion of how the grading process was going and how to improve the process for the next cycle. Committee members provided feedback for review after the process is completed for both grading system and rubric improvements.

A goal is to add more definition to nomination guidelines, for the existing categories to increase non-exempt nominations, to clarify the eligibility requirements for senior leadership, and for the number of allowable nominations per campus per category.

c. **Communications & Marketing**

Welcomed new member, Lei Zhang

Continuing to look into voice over for 90 second max. CUSS informational video. The goal is to embed video on the website, FB page, and push out to campuses. (LaVern) Vaccine info, newsletters: Post on FB & CUSS Website (Sheila or Christine)

Discussions:

Who is responsible for posting to CUSS Website?

Utilization of additional social media sites (i.e. Twitter, Instagram). Is it feasible or even necessary? How often does our campus staff access Twitter or Instagram? Which platforms are viewed more frequently?

Spring newsletter Institutional Update:

4/30 - send email to request articles

5/10 - articles deadline

5/17 - newsletter published

Spring Newsletter Spotlight - Benefits Committee

d. **Legislative Affairs & Policy**

Vanessa Collins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Lori Stepp, Vonzella McQueen, Michael Walsh and Megan Manley

Reviewed Advocacy Day 2021. Feedback from the event included the following:

1) Participants were hoping to attend more meetings with senators/delegates.

Unfortunately, we had fewer legislators participate this year due to the pandemic.

2) Would have liked more time with the representatives.

We are constrained by the time that the legislators make available to us for our meetings. We are also constrained by the times they request to meet due to their packed schedule and sessions. Even virtually, this is a tough obstacle to solve.

3) Did the legislators share about what they will do in support of the USM?

The general talking points are provided to us by the USM Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Government Relations. Our role is to advocate to support the State's overall budget while speaking about the impact USM intuitions have on the state. Opportunity was made in the case of any surplus funds to be shared with the USM. Andy Clark shares Legislative Newsletters each week with details about specific legislation being proposed.

4) Suggest creating legislative affairs CUSS Ambassadors who will lead each group who will be meeting with legislators. Ambassadors will lead and advise the group on the expectations of the day and bills to focus on. Ambassadors should first and foremost be members of the CUSS Legislative Affairs and Policy Committee then rounded out by other CUSS members interested in being an Ambassador.

5) In the Fall, send a survey to the CUSS body for topic suggestions for meetings with legislators. Share the feedback with Patrick and Andy to see if we can couple topics with bills that have been introduced.

6) Encourage meeting with government affairs representatives from each institution.

7) Invite the state legislative chairs of relevant committees to a round table discussion in the summer/fall. This could be done virtually between CUSS meetings. Solicit appropriate senators or delegates from Patrick and Andy.

8) Host a "How to be an Advocate" workshop for CUSS and other shared governance groups on expectations of Advocacy Day in December/January timeframe. Assign students, faculty and staff as Ambassadors for the group.

9) Set up a brief meeting with CUSF and USMSC at the November Joint Councils meeting to discuss ways to better include them in the planning phase of Advocacy Day.

e. **Executive**

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

--Discussion of assistance with reviewing Board of Regents Staff Awards nomination packets (Trish and Susan volunteered)

--Shared governance survey updates

--Laila will send Google Doc where we should add the critical functions of our roles with CUSS to allow for more transparency about what the roles entail

--Discussion on recruitment for executive committee discussion and voting for the 2021-2022 year

New Business

Old Business

Adjourn

Motion – Vanessa Collins

Second- LaVel Jones

Next Virtual Meeting: Towson on Tuesday, April 20, 2021