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September 2010 Minutes

USM Council of Chairs

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Council of Chairs
September 2, 2010
12:15 p.m.
115 Southern Hall

Minutes

- 1.0 Call to Order: 12:15 PM
- 2.0 Approval of agenda: Not recorded.
- 3.0 Guest: Provost Robert Lyman met with Council of Chairs to discuss the University Priorities Committee (UPC) report and related issues regarding the impact of the budgetary decisions made to date by the academic deans in a question and answer format during the meeting. Other issues included the appeals process and retirement option.

An addendum of unofficial notes taken during the meeting is attached.

- 4.0 Adjourn: Due to time constraints the business meeting was adjourned at 2PM. Will resume CoC business meeting on October 7th at 12:15, 115 Southern Hall.

Addendum to the CoC Minutes, September 2, 2010

Unofficial notes taken by A. Branton during the Council of Chairs monthly meeting September 2, 2010:

A proposed retirement payout of 50% of current salary is on the IHL agenda for October. The freed positions must remain vacant for the following year. For the proposal to work a minimum of 100 employees must take advantage of the payout. Departments may be able to fill positions with part-time employees if over 200 meet the payout criteria and resign. Payments would begin July 2011, most likely as installments. Q: What is timeline for informing staff who have been terminated? A: Delay as long as possible. There is a faculty salary pool of funds to support faculty and the colleges to supplement needs such as matching funds to grants from offices that report to the Office of the Provost: iTech, Libraries, International programs, for example. Q: Would retirement savings begin in May? A: Savings would be fiscal year 2011/2012. Q: Is the proposed payout connected to PERS/TIAA CREF or other retirement 401K? A: No, will not count as part of one's retirement. Q: Will UPC report be released with the Cabinet's report? A: Cabinet looked at programs more as an overview including enrollment, units – whole rather than single – and the Gulf Coast. Q: Compared to the UPC recommendations? A: Attached money to recommendations and estimated instructional cost as reflected in student credit hour (SCH). Q: What factors were considered other than programs? A: Students will select courses elsewhere in the case of philosophy and religion; requirement is determined by the program; programs menu options are from general education core options. We receive about 25% in state funding plus student tuition in revenues over costs. It is not about the significance of the program. We cannot exist as a university with tenured faculty and we need a greater mix of senior to junior faculty. Master/graduate programs do not bring in significant funds. Q: Regarding the Accounting department combination with the Gulf Coast. Faculty will need to drive to the Coast campus. Hattiesburg campus supports the MBA on the Coast via IVN. A: We need a closer identification with the Coast MBA. Comment: Graduates in Hattiesburg may go to [William] Carey. Comment: Part-time students are attending both campuses but more full-time students attend at Hattiesburg. Provost: About 1000 students will be impacted by program cuts. Masters in accounting has more resources and may not have needed these changes. Q: Why was the Honors College not cut? A: Honors College is independent and is part of the infrastructure and has smaller classes. The return to USM is 115 to 160 students, the ACT scores are 127 or above, and highlights opportunity for high achievers. Q: Latin is tied to pre-law and pre-med. Did it have to be cut? A: The attraction is limited. Q: In the UPC report the tiers did not seem to be implemented. What role did the deans' discussion play? A: Differed drastically in some cases and the deans made independent decisions. From a philosophical perspective they looked at cost and enrollment. The UPC looked at the quality of programs. It was difficult to

determine specifics. For example Philosophy can pick up some of the teaching with philosophy of religion. Philosophy is an alternative course or program in a cross-over discipline. Q: What about the appeals process? A: Faculty will be on the basis of seniority and course load. Programs are priority based on enrollment, uniqueness and history of the program. Success will depend on the presentation. Each appeal will have to offer alternative funding to off-set the cut. It is not useful to make recommendations outside of a department. Will need to answer what does the program do for students? Q: Will there be some justification shared to explain final selections. A: UPC presented rationale for each priority for each given program or position. 45% of the programs are on the Tiers 1 to 4 recommendation list. Q: Need to see the UPC report. A: Now that the twenty nine tenure track faculty have been notified, the report can be released. The retirement incentive will have an impact on the academic programs too. Q: Is there equity between enrollment and program needs? A: We do not have the resources to support the broad spectrum of courses currently provided. Q: When will we know more? A: We are working on the details and it must be approved by IHL. Furloughs will be considered if less than 200 retire. We will need to review and reallocate faculty positions and look at the program needs across the university. Short term needs will be to teach out the programs that have been cut. Waiving and/or substitution of course requirements and being more flexible about accepting transfer hours and other classes will be necessary. Q: What is the window for accepting the retirement incentive? A: Early as fall 2010. Q: How likely will it be that we have mid-year cuts? A: May not be tied to enrollment; do not know but it is unlikely. Q: About the student retention efforts, the investment does not match the success in re-enrollments. A: First, some had small debts that held up re-enrollments; second, system of return from probation, based on GPA, may take longer than expected. Teaching load increases benefits only by cutting down need for adjunct. Comment: Think we are already doing that; combining course loads. A: Not generally happening across programs. Comment: Teaching loads negatively impact research productivity. A: There is no organized method or formulae. Course release is based on pattern of productivity. Q: What are the other variables? A: Class size. We may need to remove the writing component and increase class size from 30 or 50 students to 130 or 180 student enrollment. Comment: We seem to be moving to a two tier faculty, tenure-track faculty and non-tenure track instructors. A: Our responsibility is not to preserve jobs but to focus on the future of the university. We need to find a balance within academics and research. Q: We would like a member of Council of Chairs on the RCM committee? A: Will look into that.