

**Deans Council Minutes**  
**September 17, 2012**  
**1:30 PM**  
**Allen 611**

Members Present: Jerry Gilbert (chair), Elton Moore (for Richard Blackbourn), Steven Brown, Linda Buehler, Tim Chamblee, Frances Coleman, Lou D'Abramo, Jerry Emison, Robert Coopert (for Kent Hoblet), Julia Hodges, George Hopper, Brandon Jolly (for Joan Lucas), Sharon Oswald, Mike Rackley, Sarah Rajala, Christopher Snyder, Jim West, Park Wynn.

Others Present: Teresa Gammill, Bill Kibler, Scott Roberts, Judy Spencer, Steve Taylor.

Minutes Taken By: Martha Thomas.

1. Upon a motion by Sarah Rajala and second by Lou D'Abramo, the minutes of the August 20, 2012, meeting were approved unanimously with no corrections.
2. Announcements:
  - a. Jerry Gilbert reminded the Deans Council that MSU would be hosting Vertistine Beaman Mbaya to speak about the Green Belt Movement on Thursday, September 20 at 7:00 PM.
  - b. Dr. Gilbert announced that there would be salary increases to some staff members to bring those individuals to the minimum of their salary classifications. These increases would be effective September 1 and will be funded by the division.
    - i. Elton Moore asked whether there would be any ongoing support for salary funding for those individuals on soft funding. There was discussion about options for accommodating the salary increases for staff positions on soft funding.
  - c. Dr. Gilbert stated that there is a small task force charged with examining faculty salaries and compression. Dr. Gilbert stated that he hopes to have a multi-year plan to address salary compression in place by January 1.
  - d. Dr. Gilbert stated that there is a small group looking at the Promotion & Tenure document. This group is chaired by Meghan Millea and includes Bill Herndon, Julia Hodges, and Ray Vaughn. Dr. Gilbert stated that this group is considering ways to create a process by which every faculty type would have a similar process and expectations associated with the promotion process. Dr. Gilbert stated that there will be discussions regarding the possibility of tenure for extension faculty.
  - e. Dr. Gilbert announced that the enrollment figures for the IHL system would be announced today. MSU's enrollment is 20,365 (59 students fewer than last year). Dr. Gilbert stated that he anticipates that the budget shortfall associated with this decrease in enrollment will be handled within the central administration.
3. Academic Operating Policy 12.07 – Student Honor Code Policy:
  - a. Scott Roberts stated that he chaired a committee to re-examine the honor code policy. The committee was comprised of 19 individuals with representatives from each college, MSU-Meridian, the Graduate School, Graduate Student Association, and others. The previous honor code

policy had been rescinded due to a conflict between the policy and procedures.

- b. Dr. Roberts pointed out substantive changes of the policy including changes to the removal of the XF grade and changes to sanctions for graduate student violation of the honor code.
- c. Regarding item II.g., Dr. Hodges asked whether the university would have the means to examine the honor code that was in place at the time that a student graduated in order to determine whether a degree could be revoked due to academic misconduct. There was discussion that the Provost would make that decision.
- d. Dr. Gilbert discussed an occurrence where his office was notified of plagiarism in a dissertation and that the degree was revoked without going through the process described in the AOP governing the honor code. There was discussion regarding what would happen should this occurrence happen in the future.
- e. George Hopper asked whether item II.f. was a new concept and asked what an example of a “rare extenuating circumstance” would be. Dr. D’Abramo stated that this is a new policy. Dr. Roberts gave an example of an unintentional, inadvertent mis-citation of a source. He stated that the Graduate School would be incorporating training on this subject.
- f. Greg Dunaway asked how many international graduate students were identified as having violated the honor code.
- g. Dr. Rajala stated that department heads in the Bagley College of Engineering feel strongly for allowing a one-time pass for international graduate students.
- h. Dr. Rajala asked why graduate students in the College of Veterinary Medicine were being treated as undergraduate students in this policy. She stated that she believes that any post-baccalaureate degree student should be held to the same standards as graduate students.
- i. Robert Cooper stated that the College of Veterinary Medicine has had its own honor code since 1981 but that it is moving under the purview of the MSU honor code. Dr. Cooper stated that he would prefer that the first violation of the honor code be handled internally to the college and suggested that the first violation be adjudicated at the college-level with the second (and any subsequent) violation being adjudicated at the university-level.
- j. There was discussion regarding having mandatory penalties versus having options for penalties.
- k. Jerry Emison stated that he had been at universities where the honor code mandated expulsion for the first (and any) violation. Dr. Emison stated that he believes it to be important to send a message that there are higher standards of conduct for graduate work. Dr. Emison suggested some latitude in terms of penalties.
- l. Dr. D’Abramo expressed concern that students could graduate with XF grades on their transcripts (should their GPAs be sufficiently high to do so).
- m. Dr. Rajala suggested mandatory training for students incurring their first violation and expulsion for students with a second violation.
- n. Bill Kibler stated that, when the honor code was first drafted, the policy applied to both undergraduate and graduate students with the default

sanction being XF and a mandatory intervention program. The second offense was suspension from the university. Objections were raised to this and the language was softened. Dr. Kibler stated that the most common sanction is to give the student a 0 on the assignment where academic misconduct took place and that the XF sanction is a distant second. Most of the cases are handled at the faculty level and reported to the honor code. Dr. Kibler stated that the university needs to be tougher on cheating. He suggested that the second offense be met with suspension from the university (with a possible chance to return) and that the third offense be met with expulsion.

- o. Dr. Emison motioned that the AOP be accepted with two edits – striking “and/or students in the College of Veterinary Medicine” from item II.a and editing II.f to read “Graduate students found responsible for violation of the Student Honor Code may be expelled on first offense from the university.” The motion failed for lack of a second.
  - p. Brandon Jolly stated that he believed there needed to be clarification as to which constituents the policy applied.
  - q. Dr. Roberts stated that faculty can assign up to a reduced and the Academic Integrity Intervention Program (reporting these sanctions to the Honor Code Office). The XF grade can only be assigned by the Honor Council.
  - r. Dr. Hopper suggested that the policy be tabled to allow the deans to speak with their faculty.
  - s. Dr. Dunaway stated that academic misconduct can also occur outside of the classroom (for example, falsification of lab data, misconduct with comprehensive exams). He stated that the moment there are exceptions, the policy doesn’t mean anything.
  - t. Dr. Rajala (along with Drs. D’Abramo, Dunaway, Hopper, Sharon Oswald, and Cooper or someone from the College of Veterinary Medicine) volunteered to look at the policy to make suggestions as to rewording portions of item II.
  - u. Dr. Gilbert stated that any changes to the policy would need to go back to the Associate Deans Council to obtain their thoughts and/or approval.
  - v. Dr. Gilbert expressed appreciation for everyone’s patience at this discussion – that the policy is of great importance to the university.
4. Other Items:
- a. Dr. Gilbert announced that he will be engaging with deans and department heads this fall to look at targeted recruitment for individual degree programs. Dr. Gilbert stated that Drs. Kibler and Phil Bonfanti would be working to identify programs to which we can add students without straining resources. Dr. Kibler stated that the university uses a “pull” rather than “push” approach (for example, having the departments contact the students expressing interest in having those students as a major).
  - b. There was discussion about enrollment figures and recruitment strategies. Dr. Gilbert stated that it is the goal of the university to have 22,000 students by 2015.