

Deans Council Minutes
August 19, 2013
1:30 PM
611 Allen

Members Present: Jerry Gilbert (chair), Richard Blackbourn, Steve Brown, Lori Bruce, Frances Coleman, John Dickerson, Greg Dunaway, Randy Follett, Julia Hodges, George Hopper, Joan Lucas, Achille Messac, Sharon Oswald, Peter Ryan, Shelby Sims, Chris Snyder, Jim West.

Others Present: Teresa Gammill, Judy Spencer, Steve Taylor

Minutes Taken By: Martha Thomas.

1. Upon a motion by Jim West and second by Frances Coleman, the minutes of the August 5, 2013, meeting were approved unanimously with no corrections.
2. Announcements:
 - a. Jerry Gilbert announced that the fall 2013 enrollment was currently 19,918 students, down 107 from previous years. He encouraged deans to ask their department heads to ensure continuing graduate students were enrolled in classes.
 - b. Dr. Gilbert discussed the Committee on Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery which is co-chaired by Julia Hodges and Peter Ryan and has members from each college as well as other units. Dr. Gilbert stated that he hoped that this committee will help to facilitate the means for students to connect to opportunities for research and creative discovery.
 - c. Dr. Gilbert briefly discussed the three-year review process and annual presentations.
 - d. Dr. Gilbert asked the deans to begin aligning the college and department P&T documents with the university P&T document that will go into effect in May of 2014.
 - e. Dr. Gilbert stated that he is not in favor of any faculty salary enhancement plans of any college unless the plan had been approved by all of the deans and the Faculty Senate. Dr. Gilbert stated that he believed there should be a plan in place for every college to be able to participate in with a source of funds when there are not research funds available to incentivize productivity. Dr. Gilbert expressed concern at the potential for lack of fairness when research funds are not available to enhance faculty salaries and potential morale issues attributed to lack of fairness. Dr. Gilbert stated that he would discuss this further with Greg Bohach and David Shaw later in the week.
 - i. Achille Messac asked whether the faculty salary enhancement plans would be separate from any awards process. Dr. Gilbert stated that it would.
 - ii. Greg Dunaway asked whether the colleges were still being asked to develop faculty salary enhancement programs. Dr. Gilbert stated that he was asking the colleges to do this but that there needed to be some oversight from the central administration.
 - f. Shelby Sims reminded the Deans Council of The Drill at 5:30 on August 19. She asked that participants meet Eddie Mac Huddleston at the right stage of the stage.

- g. Ms. Sims asked the deans to encourage interested students to look into Student Association Senate elections. She indicated that the Student Association would be pleased to speak with honor societies or other student groups to share information about the elections.
3. Supreme Court Decision in *Fisher v. University of Texas*:
- a. Joan Lucas gave a brief overview as to the Supreme Court Decision in *Fisher v. University of Texas*. She stated that, at this time, universities can still consider race in admission if there is a compelling reason to do so. Ms. Lucas stated that it is widely speculated that the next time the Supreme Court examines an admissions case, it will determine that race can no longer be a factor in the admissions process.
 - b. Ms. Lucas asked that the Deans Council inform her office if race is being utilized in any admissions process. Her office will work with the dean to ensure that there is sufficient documentation to support the reason for using race.
 - c. There was discussion as to the number of lawsuits filed against the university.
 - d. There was discussion about specific situations at the university. Ms. Lucas stated that if it was a goal to increase diversity among the student population, race could be used as a criteria for admissions.
 - e. There was discussion about how this ruling impacts assistantships, tuition waivers, and scholarships.
 - f. There was discussion about domestic versus international students and how this ruling may impact these groups. Ms. Lucas stated that she would look into this topic further.
 - g. Lori Bruce asked whether the university would be more susceptible to litigation because there is not a specific deadline for admission application review. She stated that she might ask for Ms. Lucas's help in preparing an e-mail to graduate coordinators.
 - h. There was discussion regarding the importance of examining multiple factors when considering graduate admission as opposed to just test scores.
4. Other Items:
- a. Dr. Gilbert welcomed members of the Deans Council to discuss issues occurring in their units:
 - i. Sharon Oswald stated that the College of Business Executive Advisory Board would be meeting on September 19.
 - ii. Dr. Dunaway discussed a last-minute hiring issue.
 - iii. Richard Blackburn announced that MSU had received a \$1.9 million grant to establish an after-school program with the Louisville School District.
 - iv. George Hopper discussed various back-to-school functions.
 - v. Achille Messac announced that the Bagley College of Engineering was on track to have all of its students as members of national societies. The college is also working on one-time rewards to incentivize increased scholarly performance.
 - vi. Dean West announced that MSU's Gulf Coast Community Design Studio is participating in a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Rebuild by Design competition to promote resilience for the Hurricane Sandy-affected region. Aside from

Duke University, MSU is the only university in the south to have participants on a team in the competition.

- vii. Dr. Bruce announced that 275 graduate students had completed TA training with approximately 60 faculty assisting with the training sessions.
- viii. Steve Brown discussed renovation underway at the MSU-Meridian campus.
- ix. Chris Snyder announced that there are 470 new Honors students residing in two Honors residence halls. He stated that the Shackouls Honors College is in the process of finishing its wall of fame honoring all national prestigious scholarship winners from MSU over the last 20 years.
- x. Peter Ryan thanked the deans, Registrar's Office, and other offices for their support for New Faculty Orientation. He stated that this year had one of the largest groups of new faculty over the past few years.
- xi. John Dickerson announced that changes had been made to the process of online withdrawal for students and that his office hosted demos of the new process.
- xii. Frances Coleman expressed appreciation for Dr. Brown and the faculty/staff at MSU-Meridian for assisting with the new Library facility at MSU-Meridian.
- xiii. Steve Taylor discussed his office's efforts towards assisting graduate distance students.
- xiv. Judy Spencer discussed potential changes to the university system's health insurance plans and recommendations that the system is putting forward regarding these potential changes. Dr. Gilbert discussed the need to look at additional benefits in terms of healthcare at the system-level. Ms. Lucas discussed efforts of the Work-Life Balance Committee towards adding benefits for adoptive parents. There was discussion regarding the potential for partner benefits.