

Deans Council
January 3, 2011
1:30 PM
Allen 611

Members Present: Jerry Gilbert (chair), Patricia Brock (for Mark Binkley), Elton Moore (for Richard Blackbourn), Timothy Chamblee, Frances Coleman, Lou D'Abramo, Louis Dawkins, Rhett Hobart, Robert Cooper (for Kent Hoblet), Walter Taylor (for George Hopper), Joan Lucas, Meghan Millea, Gary Myers, Mike Rackley, Sarah Rajala, Lynn Reinschmiedt, Peter Ryan, Butch Stokes, Jack Tucci, Jim West.

Others Present: Phil Bonfanti, Dennis Mitchell, David Shaw.

Minutes taken by: Martha Thomas.

1. Upon a motion by Frances Coleman and second by Sarah Rajala, the minutes of the December 13, 2010, meeting were approved with no corrections.
2. Announcements:
 - a. Jerry Gilbert wished the Deans Council a happy new year and stated that he hopes everyone had a great holiday and are prepared for the spring semester.
 - b. Dr. Gilbert welcomed Lynn Reinschmiedt who is serving as the Interim Associate Vice President for Administrative Services for the next two or three months, Louis Dawkins who is serving as the Interim Dean of the College of Business for the next six months, and Dennis Mitchell who will begin serving as the Interim Dean and Executive Director of the MSU-Meridian campus on January 16. Dr. Gilbert thanked Jack Tucci for all he has done for the Meridian campus and wished him the best of luck in his future endeavors.
 - c. Dr. Gilbert announced the following upcoming deadlines:
 - i. January 10 – sabbatical applications due for sabbaticals taken in the 2011-12 academic year.
 - ii. January 14 – honorary degree nominations due.
 - iii. January 15 (end of business day on January 14) – promotion & tenure applications due.
 - iv. February 15 – Giles Distinguished Professor nominations due.
 - d. Dr. Gilbert discussed the proposed Academic Operating Policy (AOP) concerning the annual faculty review process and form. This AOP was discussed at Deans Council on November 29. The suggested revisions will be made and distributed to the deans so that they can share this with their department heads to solicit feedback.
 - e. Dr. Gilbert announced that he plans to have a Deans & Department Heads meeting on Friday, January 21 in the afternoon. Details will be announced as they are finalized.
 - f. Dr. Gilbert pointed out an e-mail that Peter Ryan sent concerning the final exam policy for classes that meet once a week. Classes that meet once a week should hold their final exams during the last class meeting of the semester.
3. Brief Enrollment Update:
 - a. Phil Bonfanti distributed information concerning enrollment information and scholarship information.
 - b. Enrollment Information:

- i. Dr. Bonfanti explained that the information concerning enrollment compares data for the fall 2011 and fall 2010 semesters as of December 17 of 2010 and 2009, respectively. There is an increase in 636 freshman applications (10% increase) and 463 freshman admits (12% increase). The yield rate (which indicates the percentage of students who applied that are admitted) is 59%, compared to 57% in the previous year. Some of the applications included in the number of applications are not complete. The Office of Admissions & Scholarships pursues students at high schools with a low percentage yield.
 - ii. Dr. Bonfanti stated that another yield to be considered relates to the percentage of those who were admitted that registered for Orientation.
 - iii. There was discussion about the increase in the number of students who apply to multiple colleges/universities.
 - iv. Dr. Bonfanti stated that his office has put Admissions Counselors in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee. The number of non-resident applications has increased 8%.
 - v. There was discussion about the 10% rule in Texas where Texas universities must take the top 10% of students in each high school. Students in the 11-12% ranking are unable to be admitted to Texas universities
 - vi. Dr. Bonfanti stated that if we maintain this lead and yield, we will have a freshman class 200 students larger than the class of fall 2010.
- c. Scholarship Information:
- i. Preliminary scholarship offers were mailed out on December 17. In this group, students from 31 different states were offered scholarships. Tennessee and Alabama have the largest percentage of the whole of nonresident tuition scholarship offers.
 - ii. Dr. Bonfanti stated that one of the challenges faced in growing a student population is that we have to recruit a “larger piece of the pie” in Mississippi. MSU has been aggressive in trying to maintain numbers for in-state students. In order to grow the student population, we need to recruit more non-resident students.
 - iii. There was discussion about non-resident tuition waivers/scholarships which previously had been given to students with a 24 ACT score (100% of non-resident tuition). A group met towards the end of the semester to develop a way to contain the amount of money paid towards these scholarships. The solution created is:
 1. Students with 24 ACT score – 50% non-resident tuition waiver; not eligible for freshman scholarships.
 2. 25 ACT score – 100% non-resident tuition waiver; not eligible for freshman scholarships.
 3. 26 or higher ACT score – eligible for freshman scholarships.
 - iv. If this rule had been in place for freshmen entering in the fall 2010 semester, MSU would have paid out approximately \$1 million less in scholarships. Dr. Gilbert stated that if this rule does not negatively impact enrollment significantly, the rule will become

more stringent next year (decreasing non-resident tuition waivers for 24 or 25 ACT scores).

- v. On December 17, 2,126 preliminary scholarship letters were sent, with 1,167 going to non-resident admitted freshmen. Dr. Bonfanti stated that non-resident students accept their scholarships at a rate of approximately 40%, while resident students accept at a rate of approximately 60%.
- vi. There was discussion about the demographics of the freshman class and that it is important to consider the potential for impacting MSU's diversity. There was a question about whether minority students were more likely to come from the state of Mississippi or from other states.
- vii. Dr. Bonfanti discussed the difficulties the Office of Admissions & Scholarships has encountered in recruiting Hispanic students from Texas.
- viii. Gary Myers asked about the low number of international freshman applicants. Dr. Bonfanti explained that MSU has worked to improve the service that it offers to international students who contact MSU; however, MSU is not doing a lot of active recruitment of international undergraduate students due to the cost, low number of interested applicants, and low number of applicants who become students. Dr. Gilbert stated that MSU does offer non-resident tuition scholarships to international students, which is a service unique to MSU compared to other universities in the southeastern conference.
- ix. Dr. Bonfanti stated that Orientation will be January 4, 2011, and 160 students are registered to attend with 75 guests.

4. Other Items:

- a. Butch Stokes stated that of the students attending Orientation on January 4, thirty-seven have already registered for classes. The Command Center will open at 10:30 AM on January 4. Mr. Stokes stated that approximately 1,000 more students will register for classes between now and the tenth day of class.
- b. Lou D'Abramo announced that the Graduate Teaching Assistant Workshop will be January 3 & 4, 2011. Graduate Student Orientation will be January 4, 2011.
- c. Dr. Rajala asked about spring commencement. Mr. Stokes stated that there has not been a decision yet, but that President Keenum has requested one commencement ceremony in the spring semester.
- d. Dr. Gilbert stated that MSU has a tentative deal with the Baptist Student Union to exchange land. MSU would take possession of the existing Baptist Student Union building and land in exchange for comparable land of MSU's on which a new Baptist Student Union would be built in 2-3 years. Dr. Gilbert stated that the Cotton Mill project agreements would be finalized towards the end of January 2011.