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Student Affairs minutes 09/19/2006

Student Affairs Committee

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**UMM Student Services Committee
Minutes – September 19, 2006**

Present: Dave Roberts, Michael Eble, Adam Yust, Joe Alia, Sara Haugen, Corey Phelps, LeAnn Hedquist, Brittany Jablonsky, Dave Swenson, Carla Riley, Gail Hockert, Mary Zosel

Absent: Ronnie White Mountain,

Guests: Andy Lopez, Dan Moore, Pareena Lawrence, Bryan Herrmann (SPTF representatives) Lori Koshork, Henry Fulda, Jon Anderson, Judy Riley (SSC subcommittee chairs) Sandy Olson-Loy

I. Strategic Positioning Task Force

Representatives of the Strategic Positioning Task Force requested this special meeting to discuss the SPTF report and seek input prior to completing a modified version. SSC subcommittee chairs were also invited to attend and share their input with the SPTF.

Andy Lopez, SPTF Chair, delivered a handout identifying the timeline and tasks before the task force; challenges faced by UMM; strategies to build a successful future for UMM; UMM's vision for a public honors college; and additional strategies to move UMM to the next level. Lopez shared background on the task force's work to this point, mentioning that the group met with and sought input from over 60 focus groups encompassing over 1,000 people from the campus and community. The final recommendation of the system task force was submitted to Senior Vice President Robert Jones and Chancellor Schuman in March of 2006.

In August of 2006, the campus received a message from Senior Vice President Robert Jones requesting more elaboration and clarification on the March report, with the additional information to be submitted by September 15, 2006, and a revised report submitted to the Regents by November 1, 2006. The September 15 deadline was met; Lopez expected the report would be made public shortly. [The report is now public and can be viewed at <http://www.morris.umn.edu/strategic/>]

The committee discussed the strategies needed to build a successful future for UMM as outlined on page two of the handout. The handout notes the need to position UMM for the future by offering our students a distinctive "Public Honors College" experience for all, centered on our longstanding liberal arts tradition. Lopez clarified this by noting this is not a new direction for UMM, but there are areas that need improvement. Points of discussion:

- UMM needs to communicate why a UMM education is superior to other competitor institutions.
- It is important to note that UMM is not planning to become an exclusive institution. Instead, the goal is to be a more comprehensive, better experience for students.
- Becoming known as a Public Honors college distinguishes UMM from some "new" competitors that use the phrase public liberal arts college.

- Students and families may understand the honors college concept more than they do the concept of a liberal arts college.

Joe Alia suggested that the term liberal arts may be outdated. Historically, a liberal arts education was available for the ruling class, or the aristocracy. The world of higher education has changed considerably, and the term is not as well defined as it once was.

Brittany Jablonsky liked the concept of UMM becoming known as a public honors college, noting that the term would perhaps draw more high achieving high school students. She related her experience of not being drawn to UMM until she was told of the academic reputation of the school and UMM's national rankings.

Carla Riley said it would be important to communicate that by virtue of becoming a UMM grad, one joins an established successful alumni group. She stated that it would be great to have a list of successful alums and their current positions to show to prospective students, letting them know that these are careers they, as UMM grads, could aspire to. Sandy Olson-Loy added that many UMM grads live lives of remarkable leadership and service, which should also be viewed as something to aspire to. This comment inspired Joe Alia to share his suggestion for a new motto for UMM: UMM- a leading college for tomorrow's leaders.

The committee proceeded to give feedback to the task force representatives regarding UMM's vision for a public honors college:

- Brittany Jablonsky believes student employment should be included as an important factor. Student employment is very important to students both for the financial gain and for the sense of belonging students get when involved in the campus at this level.
- Judy Riley would like to see the task force add a comment about UMM's exceptional staff, not just the exceptional faculty.
- Mary Zosel feels there is a need to improve the Career Counseling Center on this campus.
- Lopez remarked about the culture of graduation, noting this was a goal everyone on campus has to work towards. There should be an expectation of all faculty, staff and students that students at UMM typically graduate in four years.
- Dave Roberts suggested that the statement that 95% of classes have less than 50 students should be expanded to note what percentage of classes have fewer than 20 students. Another option would be to list the median size of UMM classes.

Pareena Lawrence thanked people for their suggestions and noted that this is a living document, constantly changing with the feedback from meetings such as this one.

Michael Eble wondered if the Twin Cities campus would acknowledge UMM as an honors college. Andy believes they would recognize us as a public honors college, but certainly not as the public honors college.

Sandy Olson-Loy noted that this committee should look closely at the original report, especially where it concerns issues of student life and student services. Joe Alia recalled conversations SSC had in the past about the ever-increasing number of student organizations on this campus,

and the declining enrollment and hence, lower participation rates. He wondered if the current structure was really working. Was this issue being addressed in the document?

Bullets two through four on page 14 were identified as dealing with this topic. Olson-Loy mentioned that individuals on campus were considering the possibility of offering student development portfolios, which may be linked to academic transcripts. The portfolios would identify student participation, leadership and service experiences while at UMM.

Adam Yust related the conference opportunity presented to members of MPIRG last year. Students went to the conference on their own time and at their own expense. Over 10% of the participants at the conference were from UMM. UMM should look at conferences and other similar opportunities, both for the valuable experiences they provide for students and also to increase UMM's visibility.

Lopez invited additional comments, suggesting that committee members should send ideas or comments to him via e-mail.

Roberts noted that the SSC will continue discussion of the SPTF report at the next meeting.

II. Subcommittees

Dave Roberts recognized the subcommittee chairs that had joined the meeting. He asked them to introduce themselves and to tell the SSC about any plans for their respective subcommittees for the year.

Henry Fulda reported that Dining Services had already begun doing a number of things that were mentioned in the task force report. He noted there have been significant changes in food service and TMC in the past three years, both in the food offered and in the physical structures. More changes were expected in the future.

Lori Koshork introduced herself as co-chair of the Queer Issues Committee. She discussed the safe zone training planned for this year, and the committee's hope that the Resource Center for Gender and Sexuality will be up and running this year.

III. Minutes

MOTION: (Joe, Carla) To approve the September 15, 2006 minutes as written..

VOTE: Approved (9-0-0)

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 A.M.
Submitted Melody Veenendaal