

Discussion Notes of a Meeting of the
Leadership Council
Wednesday, September 12, 2007
Timme Center for Student Services

Call to Order

President David L. Eisler called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

In Attendance

Tom Adams, Dan Burcham, Rick Duffett, Dave Eisler, Don Green, Rick Griffin, Diana Hepler, Karen Obermier, Tom Oldfield, David Pilgrim, Miles Postema, Jim Rumpf, Melissa Sprague, and Tom Weaver.

Birkam Health Center update – Melissa Sprague reported that the health center is getting very busy. Representatives will be attending the MACHA (Mid America College Health Association) conference at Southern Illinois University. There is not expected to be a shortage of flu vaccines this year.

Administration and Finance update – Rick Duffett extended his appreciation to the student volunteers and AFSCME employees for the excellent move-in this fall. The IRC Renovation is complete. More classroom renovations have been completed. They have closed up the Banner implementation on June 30, with all facets operational, on time and on budget. He extended his appreciation to the leadership and others for their assistance in the Banner project and noted that a process review will be performed to streamline the processes.

University Advancement and Marketing update – Rick Duffett reported that the University participated in the Cherry Parade this year in Traverse City. He noted that the University's investment returns hit a near record of 19.9%. He encouraged the Council to attend the Foundation for Excellence Benefit, with keynoter Dick Vitale. The goal this year is to net \$100,000 with ticket sales of 600.

General Counsel Update – Miles Postema reported in the success of Founders Day and the Ice Cream Social, serving more than 1,300 community members, staff and students. He extended his appreciation to all who helped. They have good candidates for the Equal Opportunity position. The Friends of Ferris Dinner/Dance/Auction is February 29, and the Legislative Luncheon is tentatively scheduled for March 26.

Academic Senate update – Rick Griffin reported that the annual retreat of the Academic Senate was held at the Holiday Inn. They had a full agenda and it was well received. They had their first meeting, and he encouraged all to attend any future meetings. He requested that the faculty

be kept informed of the strategic planning activities. The next meeting of the Academic Senate is the first Tuesday of October.

Academic Affairs update – Tom Oldfield noted that he has met with the Deans and is working on building strong partnerships. They are working on increased communication and coordination for cross divisional resource sharing. A Chairs Council has been formed, where they meet once a month to talk about issues at colleges. They are working on a better process for online learning and are putting together the committees for preparation for the Higher Learning Commission.

Student Affairs update – Dan Burcham noted that the students are busy, and a well-attended memorial was held last night for the 9/11 tragedy. There are lots of activities on campus, but efforts are being made to move college students downtown. The increased enrollment is a great start to fall. The students appear happier. The data is still being analyzed, but it appears that significant progress has been made in many categories. He reported that Dawg Days is filling up already; visitation days did not fill up last year and they are already filled this year. For admissions/recruitment – they are developing new markets and have a game plan with Academic Affairs. They are working to recreate the International Affairs office. Bulldog Bonanza starts at 4:00 p.m.

Ferris Faculty Association update – Jim Rumpf inquired if the enrollment numbers for the University include an increase for the Big Rapids campus housing. Rick Duffett reported that the dorms are down about 100 from the previous year. In response to his inquiry, Dan Burcham reported that online students are counted as Big Rapids students. Jim indicated he had a question from emeriti regarding auditing courses, as our Human Resources policy indicates that tuition refunds cannot be used for auditing courses. Dave Eisler responded that a reduced tuition was developed for those over 60. He will forward this information to Jim

AFSCME update – In response to an inquiry from Tom Weaver, Rick Duffett reported that the apartments are full, but outside competition is still an issue. Tom extended his appreciation to Rick Duffett and Dave Eisler for funding for summer help. He provided an update on negotiations, noting that one of the goals was to retain and recruit quality employees. He indicated he was pleased with Steve Stratton and his manner in conducting business. He suggested someone go Michigan State and see how they are saving money in the areas of health and wellness.

POLC I update – Tom Adams introduced himself and noted he has been in this area for 22 years.

Diversity Office update – David Pilgrim noted that he has sent the general plan to the University and has received a lot of response. He indicated he has worked with Student Affairs and Academic Affairs and has put together the first TIPS office of any university. Leroy Wright and Todd Stanislov will be accepting an award regarding Diversity on behalf of the University. An online diversity survey has been developed by EBI. They will provide a good analysis package when it is completed. He requested the assistance of everyone in marketing the survey, convincing students to complete it. David noted he is Chair of the Governing Ideas Task Force of SPARC, and their first charge is to look at the University's core values. There are upcoming

stakeholder conferences, and he encouraged anyone who has a group of people to give insight into this task force to please consider doing that. He indicated that there lacks a large number of faculty at the stakeholders meetings and encouraged their participation.

FSU-Grand Rapids update – Don Green reported that over the summer the University has been working at integrating FSU-GR and UCEL together. He noted that there has been 12% growth across all of our 20 different sites. Their intent is to improve student life and services for all those students and various sites.

President's update – Dave Eisler reported that as we begin the new school year, extra effort is being made to get our facilities in shape. He was impressed by the Bulldogs in Action and Meijer Madness (sold 101,000 items in one day). The University will not have an opening convocation, but we will continue to promote Founders Day. He would like feedback on Founders Day. He noted that the ice cream social is a remarkable event. The October 19 schedule is very busy. We have board meetings, lunch, the IRC Dedication at 1:30 pm. He encouraged all to spend some time in the evenings on campus. He noted that the college faculty cooked for the students; there was a game show, Deal or No Deal, the 9-11 piece on the quad – it's a great gathering place. Strategic Planning Consultant David McFarland will be here on October 16-17. The intent is to approve the Diversity Plan by the end of this year. The Provost Search has begun. Ellen Haneline and Bob Loesch will be sending out information. Garry Owens from Academic Search is on campus doing a survey piece. The candidates will be on campus in January. Regarding the Higher Learning Commission – we are going to be accredited; we will exceed their expectations; and we can use this process to improve ourselves. Regarding the Legislature – there is a lot of work to be done, with a real absence of leadership. Citizens need to get involved. If anyone wants a copy of the budget, let Dave know.

In closing, Dave asked the Council if they would consider meeting every other month, with Dave meeting with Union leaders in the months between. The Council responded favorably.

At 9:40 a.m. the Council adjourned.

Submitted by: Karen K. Obermier