

## **PRESIDENT'S CABINET MEETING**

**Monday, December 1, 2014**  
**9 – 11 a.m.**  
**President's Office –SSB 440A**

### **AGENDA**

#### **President Jordan's Announcements:**

President Jordan congratulated Judi Diaz Bonacquisti on her new position as a Vice President at CCD. He thanked her for all she has done for MSU Denver. She will be here through the 19<sup>th</sup>, and start at CCD after the first of the year.

#### **1. Approval of minutes from November 3, 2014**

President Jordan asked for a motion to approve the minutes. It was moved and seconded and the minutes were **approved** without changes or additions.

#### **2. Commencement Assessment Findings from Sector Brands (Lucas)**

After their focus groups, Sector Brands is presenting findings and recommendations to Cabinet. Any changes would begin in 2015. They have both short-term and long-term recommendations.

Chuck Gross presented the findings. They looked at both Spring and Fall Commencement and received significant responses from their surveys and discussions with departments, chairs, peer institutions, AHEC.

#### Summary of Current Commencement

The outdoor ceremony in Spring was three hours long, which is significant, and numbers are increasing. Fall at the Convention Center is a bit smaller. Neither ceremony has any restrictions on ticket numbers for family. Feedback says our commencement ceremonies are average. People like the traditional elements of graduation. Challenges are: length of ceremony, disruption of students leaving early, 16,000 in audience makes it more impersonal, harder to see and hear.

#### Components

Nearly all peer institutions are moving to multiple ceremonies with most lasting two hours. LAS could be done on one day, the other schools the second day, or each College or School could conduct its own ceremony. With a smaller event, students will experience more meaning, camaraderie, and interaction with faculty. However, it does mean more logistics and additional costs. A strong majority favor moving to multiple ceremonies. Three to four ceremonies this year may be too costly. Right now, smaller changes may be more beneficial. We could return to College-hosted receptions, but not on the day of ceremonies. Those are recommended for the days leading up to commencement, but not on Friday.

Reasons include a connection with the Colleges and departments, food gathers people, and includes families to attend and get pictures. Presenting awards will increase attendance.

In the future, we should consider doing four ceremonies over two days. Sunday and Monday would work best according to AHEC. (if on campus) LAS and SPS outdoors, Business, Education in PE Center.

Faculty and students were close to 50-50 on doing a large event. There's not enough value there for the immediate future.

Indoors vs. outdoors: students favor moving it indoors, faculty favor stronger at 77%. The outdoor venue may be changed into a park by AHEC, so we need to find another location for Spring ceremonies. Denver Coliseum may be an option. Recommendation; one at 8 am and one at 4 pm – AHEC needs 6 hours to re-set. Renting bleachers – not realistic, weight of them could damage sprinkler systems. CU Denver holds theirs on Saturday, so our costs are shared. Two ceremonies over two days would double the cost.

Recommendation: hold one outdoors in the morning and one in the afternoon at the PE Event Center. Capacity at PE is 3,000, so would need to reduce tickets. There are extra AV costs. There would be no weather worries for the afternoon. AHEC favors this option. Recommendation: Look at the Denver Coliseum – ceremonies were held there in the past. Faculty and students would be on the floor, families above. Logistics concerns include flow, parking, cost. It would still be an urban location. People prefer an indoor venue.

Date: traditionally Sunday, sometimes it conflicts with Mother's Day. Saturday is CU Denver's day. Students are split on a date change; a majority of faculty would like a change from Sunday, and if held on a week-day they'd be more likely to attend. Students prefer Saturday, faculty do as well.

If we hold two ceremonies in one day, we would need to open dialogue with CU Denver. We may have to remain with Sunday. Families prefer Sunday to a work day. Sunday and Monday would be preferred. If off campus, Friday and Saturday would work best. AHEC and Faculty Senate would have to be involved.

Tickets

The trend is for limiting ticket numbers. Only 50% of our graduates invite 10 or more people. The majority in the survey said to not limit tickets.

Recommendation is to find a way to not limit tickets. Given our size and mission, this makes sense. Could limit tickets and then use a ticket pool for those who need more seats for family.

Keynote

Currently, no keynote is being used. Time and cost are prohibitors. Peer institutions do not have a keynote either. If there is a keynote, the survey respondents want an inspiring one, one that is special, with a "wow" factor. There is an opportunity to bring back a keynote, but limit cost. They suggested that we bring in a speaker who aligns with our brand story to inspire students. A

committee should decide who the keynote should be. If we do multiple ceremonies, we could have different keynotes for different schools/colleges. We could tape greetings from prominent speakers who come to speak at other events on campus and then show those clips at commencement. They recommend auditioning student speakers.

Special ceremonies do not currently have good visibility, but they are rated higher. The African American one has been running 50 years, which is special. They recommend retaining them, filming them, and showing clips from those ceremonies as part of a short video. It is important to broaden awareness of the special ceremonies as it would reinforce the MSU Denver brand. They also suggested that we find ways to cut the time on the reading of names. They suggest that we do two ceremonies in fall, to follow the same structure. Faculty Marshalls – feeling among faculty is that the time it takes is not worth the effort. At smaller colleges, all faculty participate. Training takes too long. 82% indicate that smaller ceremonies will increase faculty involvement. Change the emphasis from crowd control to interaction with students. Give them the opportunity to spend some time with the students they know in order to congratulate them. Faculty would value that. Other volunteers can manage the crowds. Church bells could indicate the start of the ceremony. They also think incorporating social media would help. Preventing early exits just needs more attention and reminders to graduates that they are expected to stay.

Their **recommendation** short term is to hold two ceremonies in spring, then to move to four in the future.

#### Discussion

Despite the master's students leaving early and that snowballing to graduates leaving last year, the master's ceremony is important to showcase that MSU Denver offers master's degrees, and it inspires students. Sector Brands thinks the trade-off on exposure is worth the time for the master's hoodings. Joan Foster likes the video clips ideas. Judi Diaz Bonacquisti noted that students in Teacher Education, who may be a history major but are going for licensure may need direction as to what ceremony to attend. Do they go with their major or with School of Education? We would have to connect with them in advance. Dr. Golich said the Social Work ceremony was very well done. President Jordan asked about having two ceremonies in Denver Coliseum in Spring instead of waiting. We reached out to them in early October with tentative dates. We need to check back in with them. The venue is part of the City and County of Denver. Issues were cost, about \$24K, and parking. Students and families would have to pay for parking, or a part of parking. Vendor contracts may be already in place for spring, (on the fields) which could be an issue. The Coliseum will undergo renovations in the next few years. Loretta Martinez asked about the venue at the National Western Complex. It is not available in spring, but it could be in the future, and it would hold our ceremony. Luis remembers graduations at this location, and he recalls that families could be closer to the stage. We were smaller then though. It holds a little over 7000. If we split ceremonies up it

would work. Vicki Golich said a previous workplace of hers did two in one day and it was a long day. Cathy Lucas noted the bigger question is if everyone is ok with starting out using two ceremonies. Sandra Haynes said she'd put Business and SPS together and Education and LAS together. Some would walk with their major, and some with Education. That would make it convenient for them. The PE Event Center may be too small for that combination. President Jordan noted mixed messages from the faculty. Faculty Marshalling is seen as crowd control. To make them feel more valued, add food and photo opportunities, and more volunteers to do the crowd control in their place. Showcase the faculty and they may respond well. Faculty lines welcoming students to the ceremony may be a good idea. Floor Marshalls are the Marshalls doing crowd control. They are asked if they want the floor or multiple assignments. They help with assembly and getting to the stage. There are also "catching" Marshalls who are there to actually catch someone who trips up on their regalia, stairs, etc. ROTC can help with the crowd control if only ten Marshalls are currently doing that. Receptions will provide photo ops with faculty. President Jordan asked if other institutions have faculty sit with students and go onstage while receiving their degrees; Stacy said there are some faculty on stage at some schools. Currently faculty are sitting separate from the students and play a passive role. Dr. Jordan would like to see them interact and engage with the students more. Faculty should be more a part of the celebration. Dr. Golich noted at one school, there was a student marshall selected, who then selected a faculty marshall to lead the students onto the stage alongside. It was a huge honor for the faculty member selected. The key moving forward is to give everything more meaning to make it truly a transformational experience. Little meaningful things make a big difference.

### **3. House Bill 1319 Update (Jordan, Kreidler)**

Steve Kreidler has been representing MSU Denver while working with the other CFOs of higher education. The model is online. Steve K. noted the varying sizes and missions of the schools involved. Trying to find a model that supports state mandates and the Master Plan was a real challenge. The bottom line is that the approved model is to be voted on by the CCHE on the 4<sup>th</sup>. The recommendation right now would have MSU Denver receiving the biggest percentage increase of all the institutions. In this model, instead of getting 10%, we could get 16.4%. No school can get more than 5% more than the total amount going to higher education. These are called "bumpers". Most schools are around the 10% mark. UNC is not getting as much in the model. Their headcount is less. They were getting the same percentage increase as others while their headcount was going down. For at least ten years leaders here have been telling the MSU story and pushing for change in the funding model. All the various models run distributed more to MSU due to prior years of underfunding. This is a significant increase, more than \$2M better. President Jordan believes this is significant. There was a Denver Post article on Sunday regarding the funding formula.

COF will remain at \$75 per credit hour. We argued for a higher percentage. Role and mission and performance are the other categories. Through this category, we will get another \$7.50 per credit hour taught to a Pell-eligible student. Underserved students receive the same. Weighted credit hours is how they are accounting for large and small schools and their missions. Credit hours for higher cost programs are weighted. We had about 28% of our courses fall into this category. Steve noted that growth of MSU Denver and upper-division credit hours give MSU Denver more in the model. To maximize returns, transfer students are more important. There may be discussion by the JBC regarding emphasis in the model for underserved and Pell-Eligible students. Joan Foster noted that the model hurts Community Colleges more, and they are important to us as they are the source of most of our transfer students. In the overall model, Steve K. says the Community Colleges did ok. Completion and retention are treated the same in the model. We confer a little more than 3,000 degrees per year. Retention is not as important in the model as graduation. There is a bonus for STEM and Health degrees, as those are priorities of the state. Number of students in a ratio with graduates was another category in the model designed to ensure small schools did not get hammered by the model. The model recognizes the size of MSU Denver.

The governor asked for \$15M in additional funding to smooth the transition for the first five years. Of that \$4.8M will go to those who didn't get 10% increases. About \$1M would go to the Community Colleges. Out of the \$15M that leaves \$10M. Despite the gains for MSU Denver, we are still about \$530 away from being tied for last place in per student funding. Steve said we will continue to make our case about that. Carol Svendsen asked about COF vs Fee for Service compared to the old model. Enrollment going up would increase our COF funds. Fee for Service was a way to keep the funding the same as before COF. Now it's on a competitive basis. Thursday, the CCHE has to sign off on the model. It seems likely they will pass it after some conversation. The JBC has many new members this year, about 3 of 6. The JBC has until March to make changes. Graduate programs give us more weight in that part of the model.

#### **4. Publication Schedule of Changes to the Handbook for Professional Personnel (Tefft)**

Nicole Tefft directed Cabinet to their packet, page 4. The proposal was brought forth by Sheila Rucki. She requests a wording change, saying that publication of Handbook changes shall happen once per year between June first and July first. No other revisions will be published during the academic year unless otherwise noted and approved by the Board of Trustees. President Jordan discussed it with Dr. Rucki, as it is an important item to the faculty. He is fine with it.

##### **Discussion**

Dr. Golich supports it for the same reasons. Dr. Jordan asked for a motion to approve the Handbook change. Dr. Golich moved for approval, there were multiple seconds. Loretta asked about timing. It could be approved by the Board

in February, as part of their small business meeting. Dr. Jordan called a voice vote, and the item was **approved** by Cabinet.

**5. Regular Occurring Updates (no reports)**

**A. President update (Dr. Jordan)**

**B. Theme I – Student and Academic Success**

**i. Education Quality(Golich)**

**1. HSI Update (Torres and Diaz Bonacquisti)**

**C. Theme II – Urban Land Grant University**

**i. MSU Denver Neighborhood update (Kreidler)**

**D. Theme III – University Culture**

**i. Campus Climate (Anderson)**

**E. Theme IV – University Resources**

**i. Budget Update (Kreidler)**

**ii. Advancement/Fundraising (Burtness)**

**F. Telling the MSU Denver Story**

**i. Strategic Communications and Branding (Lucas)**

**UPDATES**

Dr. Jordan asked if we know how many have signed up for commencement. Cathy Lucas is waiting to hear from Ellen Boswell with that information. Holiday Card to the City is Friday and Saturday.

Cabinet adjourned.