

PRESIDENT'S CABINET MEETING

Monday, August 11, 2014

9 – 11 a.m.

President's Office –SSB 440A

Present: President Jordan, Cathy Lucas, Perla Gheiler, Joan Foster, Greg Watts, Sheila Rucki, Sandra Haynes, James Lyall, Luis Torres, Ann Murphy, Judi Diaz Bonacquisti, Myron Anderson, Percy Morehouse, Patricia Ordaz, Loretta Martinez, Braelin Pantel
Substitutions: Scott Groom for Joan McDermott, Metza Templeton for Catherine Reddy, Eriks Humeyumptewa for Cindy Anderson, George Middlemist for Steve Kreidler
Absent: Vicki Golich
Guests: Chuck Gross and Stacy Lewis of Sector Brands, Brooke Gerber, Leticia Duarte

AGENDA

1. Approval of minutes from June 30, 2014

Approval of the minutes of June 30, 2014 moved and seconded. Dr. Jordan asked if there were any changes or additions. There were none and the minutes were **approved** by Cabinet.

2. Commencement Audit, Sector Brands (Lucas, Stacy Lewis, Chuck Gross)

Sector Brands did an audit on commencement and will provide us with recommendations for the Spring ceremony. Chuck Gross stated that today is an input session. They have held some meetings, done research and met with Brooke. They also looked at what other institutions do at Commencement.

Goals:

- Shift from transactional to transformational experience for students.
- Improve volunteerism, faculty marshal participation

Chuck reviewed the characteristics of Spring Commencement. Feedback included that it was long and tedious, and large and impersonal. The weather was hot and people left early. Masters degree students left early which seemed to set the tone for the remainder of attendees.

Peer institutions:

- Nearly all limit number of tickets
- Some are indoors and some outdoors
- Most are exploring smaller, college-based ceremonies instead of one large one
- Some have a code of conduct for students & families to ensure they stay through to the end.
- Most ceremonies take two hours.

Formats others are using:

- A. Two ceremonies in one day – for example largest college in one, remainder in second.
- B. Each college holds a separate ceremony with names read and degrees handed out.
- C. Each College holds ceremony as in second scenario, but occurs the day prior to a second ceremony for the entire graduating class with a keynote.

Exploring Scenario A for feedback:

LAS could be in the morning, and everyone else in second ceremony; undergrads and masters together in each, limit number of tickets, names read out, graduates walk, possible keynote speaker, tassel turning at end.

Discussion:

If we break it down into two ceremonies, we may not need to limit tickets. Our current venue has no stadium seating, so it can be difficult for people to see. Myron expressed concern about limiting tickets due to accessibility and inclusion. Dr. Jordan noted that the current soccer field will go to CU who will add artificial turf for club sports; also the remainder will be a park. There will no longer be the capacity for 10,000 people on the field.

Chuck went on to go through **scenarios B & C** before more feedback.

Discussion:

Sandra Haynes asked if on scenario C, with a small, then a large ceremony, what would the attendance be like in the larger second one? Chuck stated U of Georgia does it that way and very successfully with a lot of attendance, but they are a different community. Ann Murphy noted the smaller ceremony does make it more personal. We don't have the venue capacity to do a large one first, then smaller ones. That is a logistical challenge. Luis Torres thought the worst part was that people left. He was surprised and disappointed. He is not in favor of breaking it up by Colleges. A large event then smaller celebratory events, perhaps by departments would make sense. He feels we are one institution. Loretta asked about the size of LAS. It is about half the graduates. Judi Diaz Bonacquisti said parents really want to hear their graduate's name read. They need to walk across the stage in one ceremony or another. Dividing them is the biggest issue to address. Stacy said the majority of peer institutions are not doing just one large ceremony anymore. The actual reading of the names takes two hours currently. Sandra said we actually read names, major and department; what if we just read names?

Dr. Jordan suggested that we consider going to College ceremonies. We could have faculty from that College be marshals for that ceremony. He thinks at least two, maybe three ceremonies. He used to feel as Dr. Torres does; but we have to be willing to make some sacrifices in order to achieve what we want for families and students.

Brooke asked about timing, logistics; spread over how many days? AHEC is dealing with CCD's on Friday.

Joan Foster gave an example from her daughter's CU Graduation where she went to the Department first, it was too small and faculty left. Then they skipped the large ceremony because it was too large and long. Loretta thinks a hybrid format may work best for us. She thinks breaking up into the Colleges where students are with their affinity group may work best. She also thinks there should be punch and cake, so people are incentivized to stay, take pictures. It does cost more. Judi Diaz Bonacquisti noted people leaving has only been happening in the last couple of years. But the ceremony will only get longer as we retain more students to graduation. Stacy noted that feedback from the faculty indicates they would also like to have food there to keep them engaged. It will take some investment to make it work well.

Keynotes

Recently, we have had no keynote but have done a panel of speakers instead. Not all peer institutions pay for a keynote. Students want an inspiring keynote. Peer institutions also have a selection committee for the commencement speaker.

Discussion:

Joan Foster likes Dr. Jordan's speeches. He provides stories of student successes that are inspiring. He is like the keynote speaker. Dr. Jordan said a keynote takes us back to time. No one can be inspiring in 10-15 minutes. He has struggled with acquiring a good keynote then having to tell them they have 10-15 minutes.

Chuck noted that many don't remember the keynote. Stacy said other institutions are moving away from having a keynote.

Stacy asked if we assume two ceremonies, would we be inclined to have two keynotes, one at each? And if we went to College ceremonies, could they each have their own school-related speaker? Would each school be OK with finding their own keynotes? Ann Murphy said she would be fine with that. Sandra Haynes said if the keynote is relevant to students it is OK. Her alma mater did no keynote and it was bland. She felt it was less special.

Dr. Jordan said if we have Keynotes, it is important to have committees working on it. They need to generate excitement.

Venue

Greg Watts noted if the layout of campus is changing, we may not be able to use the fields. Dr. Jordan noted we could use the new Athletic fields. He reminded Cabinet that right now we share costs of set up with UCD. If we move away from that, we'd increase our costs significantly.

The problem with the convention center in the spring is size; Chuck and Stacy are exploring options for an indoor, more protected location. Chuck asked for preference as to outdoors or not. Cabinet seemed not to feel strongly for either option.

Date

Currently we are holding Commencement on Sunday, which conflicts with Mother's Day on some years. If we move to multiple ceremonies, they could be on different days. Move from Sunday to a different day? Dr. Jordan doesn't appreciate it on Sunday. Greg Watts noted the date also conflicts with the Colfax Marathon. Cathy asked about CU, why are they always on Saturday? Dr. Jordan noted that finals are on Friday at CU as well as at MSU Denver, yet CU manages to have ceremonies on Saturday. Sandra suggested we could hold it in the afternoon or evening instead of morning. Chuck noted that in the morning we avoid afternoon showers, but it can be cold in the morning, if we remain outdoors. Cabinet seems open to not having it on Sunday. Myron noted that having all of the ceremonies on one day brings people together on campus. Scott Groom said that if they are staggered it would allow students to go to their friends' ceremonies as well. Cabinet gravitated to multiple ceremonies, but all on one day.

Faculty Marshals

Some schools mandate faculty participation. Currently we have 70% participation by faculty. In fall we have about 70 and in spring about 90. Dr. Jordan asked if we know what percentage are affiliates. Brooke said she could find out. The all-day commitment has been a challenge for some faculty. Faculty want to connect with students, but the time and logistics are not incentivizing faculty. Logistical changes could make people want to attend. Eriks noted faculty can continue to grade through the following Thursday after graduation. Sheila Rucki said wrangling students into a line and then sitting in the sun is not meaningful contact with students. Sandra Haynes likened it to crowd control. Dr. Rucki said faculty roles are policing roles and are not attractive. How can we make it more meaningful? Judi Diaz Bonacquisti suggested using the ROTC in the line-up and crowd control instead of faculty. Dr. Jordan would like to see departmental faculty as a congratulating line after the students cross the stage. Faculty marshals at other institutions are wrangling other faculty not students. Leticia noted that some faculty like the assembly marshal role as they are with the students. Stacy noted that some schools are paying marshals and making one third of faculty participate. If we have smaller ceremonies they'd have more connection.

Dr. Jordan said a Friday would make it easier for everyone to participate. Luis said some families wouldn't be able to attend.

Trends

How to make it more meaningful:

Dr. Jordan said at EWU they assembled on the quad and the ringing of the school bell was the beginning of the march of the students. He valued the tradition. Many places have some tradition.

Moving forward:

Stacy said they are still doing an electronic survey of faculty and alumni, and they will return with results and recommendations to Cabinet. We have many choices. She asked for additional input to go to Brooke. They will return in October.

3. Regular Occurring Updates

A. President update (Dr. Jordan)

HB 1319 has begun its process in the CCHE. As expected, it will be a tough and difficult process. We have already found a threshold issue that we have not done well on. It is around the process of allocating the funds to the specialty schools such as medicine and veterinary medicine at CU. The bill creates fee-for-service for three areas. Per the bill, no less than 52.5% of general fund will go to COF. COF is what reduces student tuition, so is a benefit for students. Then the specialty schools get their base amounts, then the remainder is split. Some are arguing the specialty schools' base comes off first, but doing so reduces the COF. There was nothing in the legislative session indicating the legislature wants to increase tuition for students. However, the way this is being implemented, it will not give students the benefit we preferred. NCHEMS has received a contract and they will make an effort to reduce costs for students. Recommendations will come in November.

Dr. Jordan received an invitation from the White House to put a team together to improve student persistence in high school through college and into the workforce. The team is very excited about working as a community-wide effort. Plans will be reviewed in January in DC.

Dr. Jordan reminded everyone the Welcome Back is September the 10th at the King Center, at 7:30 a.m. Annual awards for faculty and staff will be given out.

The Vice Presidents had a retreat around the strategic plan and laying out an agenda for the year.

Dr. Jordan stated that we are 4% down in enrollment and budgeted for being down 2%. It is concerning. We have brought a consultant on board to look at adding out-of-state and international students. Steve Kreidler is working with the budget task force on potential reductions. Dr. Jordan thanked the Deans and the areas of student services that have put in extra work and effort to call students, to recruit and retain students. There was a survey of students who dropped out, and it had some very interesting findings that would surprise Cabinet. He hopes Steve will bring it to Cabinet.

B. Theme I – Student and Academic Success

i. Education Quality(Golich) (no report)

1. HSI Update (Torres and Diaz Bonacquisti)

We are sponsoring a national group called the Alliance for HSI educators; they will be here just before the HACU Conference. They are sponsoring a grants writing workshop for HSIs. We are partnering with CCD to co-sponsor this.

Luis just returned from San Antonio where he met with Excelencia in Education. He is on their Board. Luis described the national level discussion; they are looking at assessing how institutions spend HSI funds. HSIs are certified not just on headcount, but on FTE. They discussed equity funding. Luis brought up our situation in Colorado. It is a national problem that more funding goes to where minorities are not.

C. Theme II – Urban Land Grant University

i. MSU Denver Neighborhood update (Kreidler)

The new Athletic fields are getting close; vehicles are slowing on Colfax from people looking over there.

The architect has been selected for the new AES building. In about a month we will know about the release of funds and sign with the architect and get going on the design.

D. Theme III – University Culture

i. Campus Climate (Anderson)

Dr. Jordan noted a STEM related effort around the delegation going to UMBC to speak with Dr. Hrabowski. The delegation is going on August 25th and includes Myron Anderson, Dr. Flemon, Dr. Hsiu-Ping Liu, Nate Easley from Denver Scholarship Foundation, someone from DPS, an administrator from CCD and two community members, Larry Borom and Sharon Bailey. They will look at STEM fields for students of color. They will meet with Dr. Hrabowski and then others, as UMBC has national credibility with regard to their STEM programs.

E. Theme IV – University Resources

i. Budget Update (Kreidler)

George Middlemist said the task force meets August 26th.

ii. Advancement/Fundraising (Wollard)

We brought in two candidates for the VP position, decided neither were the one, and are looking at three more.

F. Telling the MSU Denver Story

i. Strategic Communications and Branding (Lucas)

Cathy's team has been working with Judy's team on getting more students. They are also working on better communications to the students we already have here.

Today Auraria sent out an accidental RAVE Alert on the emergency management system. It was promptly followed up.

UPDATES

Sandra Haynes- Engineering Technology is welcoming two new visiting faculty members this week for University of Pecs in Hungary. Dr. Jordan noted this is a great benefit of international partnership. The faculty developed our curriculum for an architecture minor and graduates will automatically be granted admission into the master's program at Pecs. The brewery contract was signed last week. Faculty and staff from various departments across campus will visit with faculty and then go to see UC Davis' brewing program. Brewing curriculum will be available this year. There is tremendous opportunity for majors, continuing students, and workforce training for current brewers. Faculty met with the industry members, and they were excited and helpful with curriculum.

James Lyall – IT migrated student emails yesterday. They did registered students first. Everything seems to be working well. All students got a free copy of MS Office as well. If a student drops out, they no longer have MS Office.

Scott Groom for Joan McDermott- they had a night game with lights, which is exciting. Some concrete will be poured for a new building and baseball dugouts.

Braelin Pantel – Health Center is working with CDC on questions related to Ebola.

Patricia Ordaz – SGA is working on a program to replace the RoadRunner Program. It will have some of the same aspects; announcements in classes, and will be targeted to students with 30 credits or more in order to get more sophomores involved. There are 3 pillars; volunteerism, social events and professional development. Students will earn points that earn them prizes from SGA.

Judi Diaz Bonacquisti – reminder that we are close to fall semester; two late orientation sessions have been scheduled. They are waiving the late registration fee. Students with Financial Aid disbursements received email notification.

Cabinet adjourned at 10:48 a.m.