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**UMES Senate Minutes**

November 21, 2023

Frederick Douglas Library Auditorium

1. **Welcome and Call to Order**
* Meeting started at 11:05 am
* Meeting was called to order by Dr. Thomas-Banks
* 16 people in-person; 93 people online
1. **Approval of October 17, 2023** – Motion to approve minutes
* Dr. Stephen Tubene moved to approve minutes; seconded by Lily Tsai
* All in favor of approving minutes – None Opposed, No abstention
1. **Today’s Business**
2. **Updates from the Office of the President (Dr. Heidi Anderson)**
	1. **Acknowledgements.** Recognition and thanks given to successful registration during recent registration drive. Fall 2023 Homecoming was also a great success.
	2. **Commencement:** Reminder: The Board of Regents will be having a meeting on Friday, December 15, 2023 that all USM Presidents must attend, therefore, commencement will be held Saturday December 16, 2023.
	3. **Legislative Support.** Congressman Andy Harris visited our campus on Monday, November 20, 2023 for the second time this year. Congressman was here specifically to discuss our needs related to the Veterinarian Program. Legislators on the state as well as the federal level continue to be supportive of the university endeavors.
	4. **Campus Parking.**

Question: What is happening with parking?

Answer: Parking is Vice President Rodriguez area. She is currently away at the collective bargaining meeting in Baltimore. She will provide an update on parking at the meeting in December.

* 1. **Flood Mitigation.**

Question: What is the status of the flood mitigation plan?

Answer: Work has been done around campus in various zones to address flooding. There have been some findings when work began; however, the flood mitigation strategies are working and on track. VP Rodriguez will provide an update at the December meeting with more specifics.

1. **Updates from the Office of the Provost/Registrar (Dr. Rondall Allen)**
	1. **Registration:** Recognition and thanks given to Dr. Garcon, VP Jenkins, faculty, and their registration team for registration efforts. Over 200 students were registered. The goal is to have 90% of our students registered before they go home for the Christmas break. Students are encouraged to reach out to retention specialists and advisors to get registered. Also, anyone who won one of the gift cards doing the drawing or professional development funds should have received an email to pick up gift cards from the Provost office.
	2. **Acknowledgements**: Thank you to EMSE Taskforce, a cross divisional effort, to work towards a retention plan. The taskforce worked on draft goals and strategies for the retention plan. Information will be sent out to the body and faculty for feedback. In January, reporting of the on-going plan will be shared.
2. **Updates from Hawk Athletics (Deputy Athletic Director, Alisha Tucker)**
3. **Acknowledgements:** Congratulations to the Men’s and Women’s Team at homecoming games. Also, congratulations to the Volleyball Team for the best season since 2017. The team made it to the semifinal round of the MEAC tournament.
4. **Academics:** The student athletes are not only excelling on the courts but also in the classroom. 14 Sports have GPAs above a 3.0 that is due in large part to the work that our academic faculty does when working with our student athletes to help keep them on task.
5. **Sports’ Tiers:**
* **Tier 1: Men’s and Women’s Basketball-** Fully funded and have the ability to generate funds. Between ticket sales tournament appearances, and guarantee games, they have the ability to bring revenue in back to the university.
* **Tier 2:** Volleyball and Bowling. They are also both fully funded and they are also nationally recognized. Our bowling team consistently is in the top 25. Our volleyball team has been very successful in the past and we're trying to get back to that level with them. And again, they are also both fully funded meaning their student athletes can receive full scholarships.
* **Tier 3:** Cross-country, Golf, Softball, and Baseball are considered tier 3. They are enrollment-driven sports. Baseball, softball, and track carry large roster numbers, which means that they carry large numbers for the institution. Between those three sports are approximately 100 student athletes, many of them are not on scholarships. That means that they're paying their way to attend the university. When we recruit we're also looking for students who can be successful at UMES regardless of whether they're receiving a scholarship or not.
1. **Recreation:** VP Owens is over Recreation.
* **Recreation and Aquatics:** Renovations occurring with pool and information will be shared with body once more information is available.
* **Renovations to Tawes Gym:** A rendering for the proposed renovations to Tawes was shared. Renovations will be completed soon. This is going to increase space for students and faculty to be able to work out. This is going to be a great addition for the University and also a good selling point for future perspective Hawks.
* **EA Sports-** In conjunction with renovation for Tawes is a space for EA Sports which provides a space for students to participate in gaming on a competitive level. EA Sports team is also highly competitive in the MEAC. There are also uniforms for competitions.
1. **Partnerships:** Partnership with Pohanka. Pohanka provided us with two Expeditions and three Mustang vehicles. Vehicles gives the ability for student athlete transportation needs (e.g. picking up from airport, coach recruiting) without having to manage schedules with other departments. The vehicles are wrapped in Hawk Logo. We've had people stop and take pictures pull up next to us to stop lights and they're like, my gosh, that is so nice.
2. **Grants and funding Sources**:
	* Supplemental funding come from student fees, but we're also working to be self-sufficient and part of that means seeking funds from outside sources. The NCAA is one of our greatest funders as well. They provide us with an academic enhancement fund and we use that to support student athlete’s academic success, but the other part is we also use grants. We received a grant for $100,000. We also received a $250,000 grant from a volleyball association to start men's volleyball. We are the first HBCU to have men's volleyball. We are making history here at University of Maryland Eastern Shore.
3. **Renovations**: The renderings for the baseball and softball fields were shared. We have received funding to have those both turfed out. We will be able to host games at campus. Our student athletes will have a space that they can be proud where we can host NCAAs. We can do a lot of things and we can also use this space to bring in revenue by hosting high school or other tournaments right here in Princess Anne on the campus of University, Maryland Eastern Shore.
4. **New Staff:**
	* Men's volleyball is slated to begin 2025 so we'll begin to search for a head coach and let that person do their recruiting get a class in before games start.
	* Vanessa Faircloth - Volleyball coach
	* Daniel Acosta- Baseball coach
	* Aaron Robinson - Softball coach
	* Penny Foland- Head Athletic Trainer
	* Lamar Waul-Branson – Head Cheerleading coach, but he's also serving as a Chief of Staff.
	* Khadijah Harris -Business Manager. Managing business processes and working with people across campus to ensure our fiscal responsibility and stewardship for our funds.
	* Nick Novey -Associate Director of External Affairs. All of the things that you all are seeing on our social media and all of the things that you've seen in our marketing of our game day operations.
	* Charlene Mill Woodley- Track and Field Coach- 1 year.
5. **Track and Field Question**:

Question: Are there plans for an outdoor Track Meet?

Answer: Plans for hosting future track meets are being discussed but there are some things to consider such as seating and proper markings for the field.

1. **Discussion on FAFSA Changes (Ms. Danena Livingston)**
	1. **FAFSA Simplification**
* Largest overhaul in 40 years. A new law was put in place about a year-two years ago and being implemented by the Department of Education. They started implementing FAFSA simplification last year by the removal of a few questions.
* Changes include:
	+ Replacing the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) with the Student Aid Index (SAI)-
	+ Modifications to Family Definitions in FAFSA Formulas- The Department of Education has removed that eligibility of multiple students in college at the same time. This may impact some of the students.
	+ Expanding Access to Federal Pell Grants- FAFSA simplification expands the access of Pell Grants to many students.
	+ Streamlining the FAFSA Form- 108 Questions reduced to 46 questions- the federal government took away all the questions that have no impact on a student's eligibility.
	+ Date of the 204-2025 FAFSA release: (Instead of October 1, Just Announced: December 31)
	+ Schools will begin receiving Institutional Student Information Records (ISIRs) by the end of January 2024
	1. **FAFSA Application Process Changes**
* Previously, when students started a FAFSA they put in their parent’s income information, submitted it to the federal government and got some feedback from the federal government. That whole process has changed. For the 2024-2025 year, a student will start the FAFSA. They would then have to invite their parents or “contributors to fill out their portion.
* New Process- Federal Tax Information (FTI)There is a new mandatory consent to share the IRS data with FAFSA. If 45 days go by and the parent does not respond. The FAFSA will be deleted. And the student will have to start over.
* Student’s Housing Status Changes -One question that has been eliminated is a housing question. The appropriate cost of attendance to our students because whether they live on campus off campus or with their relative normally will not impact their Pell eligibility or their loan eligibility, which is what the primary focus of the new FAFSA.
* Financial Aid has partnered with Administrative Computing and Admissions with these changes. There are some new options regarding gender, race, or ethnicity questions that have been added to the FAFSA.
	1. **FAFSA Parent and Dependency Status**
* Revised Definition of “**FAFSA Parent**” for divorced/separated parents
* Must use the parent who contributed the most financial support in the last 12 months.
* New parent wizard tool will help students choose the correct parent.
* **Students can provisionally (tentatively) claim independent status** on their FAFSA based on abuse, neglect, or estrangement, etc. but they must submit a Dependency Appeal to our office. If we deny their appeal, they must correct their FAFSA to provide parent data.
* Approved Dependency Appeals can rollover to the following aid year.
* If married students are separated, they must submit their FAFSA as dependent students unless they qualify for independent status based on other FAFSA criteria.
* Veterans could always submit their FAFSAs as independent students, but “veteran” status has been redefined to exclude former military academy cadets who never served on active duty.
	1. **SAI Formula Changes**
* Financial Aid is studying the impact of changes this year SAI may have on Pell Grant eligibility. Financial Aid is working with Blue Icon which is a subsidiary of NASFAA Consulting or National Association to help run some data to find out which students that we can pinpoint that have been negatively impacted and then what can we do to make sure that they don't have a short fall because most people who are used to receiving Pell Grants.
* Formula **will also consider several new factors** including federal poverty guideline thresholds for each state, and if the family received any **means-tested federal benefits** (school lunch, food stamps (SNAP), welfare benefits, health benefits, or Supplemental Security income)
* **New process ignores** several types of untaxed income including, state taxes, and child support paid.
* **Child support received** will now be reported as an asset.
* New questions will require families to report the **net worth of small businesses and family farms**, and these assets could reduce their financial need.
	1. **Preparing Our Campus Community**
		+ Financial Aid has done some activities to inform our campus of changes:
* Traditional flyers, emailing, posted messages on canvas, digital bulletin board as you drive on and off campus, we also communicated with our faculty, and students via town hall meetings. We are planning to have workshops and we will have them both virtually and in person to try to accommodate all of our students.
* FAFSA Tip Tuesdays which has been going out probably for the last five or six weeks and we've given tips and again the missions share that with the new parents so that way that they are aware what's happening with FAFSA
	1. **UMES Implications**
* Financial Aid (processes and awarding delays)-
	+ Financial Aid is working with Blue Icon to try to get some data so we can prepare the university financially. We need to know how much money we have available to spend and we will need to know that we have the appropriate amount of money to spend and so it helps that we have our endowment funds but a lot of our funding has will come from our University Grant and so we just want to make sure that we have the right amount of funds.
	+ Financial Aid Office is working with NASFAA Consulting for SAI modeling to assist with this year's data. Financial Aid also continues to partner with R&L to help with our strategy not only with our freshman but to move into that retention space and to keep our students here.
* Administrative Computing (Changes will change/break many Financial Aid related PeopleSoft aid processes and Existing Queries.)- If you use any query with federal tax information that will no longer be permissible. We cannot use tax information whether it's aggregated or de-aggregated that's against the law
* Information Technology: (securing FTI data and labeling of servers)
* Admissions & Recruitment: Messaging
* Public Relations: Messaging
	1. Question regarding the verification process and how it will affect our students. Answer: Verification is a process where students are randomly selected by the federal government that requires the financial aid office to request tax documents and certain things. We honestly don't know what verification is going to look like for 2024-2025 year only because they're getting the information directly from the IRS. The hope is that we will have less students selected because again, they're getting the information directly from the IRS and the information is not going to be altered when students use the data retrieval tool. Whereas now they can retrieve their information themselves, they can have the opportunity to alter it.
1. **Library Standing Committee (Mr. Joseph Bree)**
	* National Library week in April was very successful in large part due to the library standing committee. Dr. Cravens is interested in participating on that committee, but cannot continue to chair. There is a search for a new committee chair. The body was asked for any volunteers or nominations. None were noted at the time. If there are any interest, please contact Dr. Thomas-Banks and she will get you in touch with Mr. Bree to discuss next steps.
	* Introduction of New Staff: Kathleen Griffin, Special Collections and Archivists. Working on surveying the collections, looking at systems to better organize archive space so that these can be available online.
2. **Announcements – All Members of Senate**
* Joint Meeting with the Senate and the Faculty Assembly, December 12, 2023 at 11 AM.
	+ Dr. Leesa Thomas Banks- Tuesday, December, 5, 2023- interest meeting for anyone interested in studying abroad and considering France as an option. The Department of Business Management and Accounting has a MOU with France University of Loraine and there will be an interest meeting at 11 o'clock.
	+ HAWK Pack Selection due by Thanksgiving.
1. **Adjournment**
* Motion to Adjourn by Mr. Joseph Bree, seconded by President Anderson
* Meeting Adjourned around 12:08 pm