**UFS Minutes**

**Meeting: October 13, 2021**

**Attendees:** Mike Kiel **(**Senate President), Aaron Wachhaus (Senate Vice President), Al Gourrier, Alan Weisman, Alicia Campbell-Wright, Antieris Johnson, Barbara Aughenbaugh, Beth Amyot, Bill Carter, Bill Schnirel, Bridget Blodgett, Candace Caraco, Catherine Andersen (Interim Provost), Christine Spencer, Claudette Booth, Constance Harris, Dan Mills, Dave, David Bobart, David Lingelbach, Lorenda Naylor, Eric White, Gabriela Wasileski, Jose Anderson, Ivan Sascha Sheehan, J.C. Weiss, Jane Delury, Jason Kunz, Jeffrey Hutson, Jeffrey Ian Ross, Jennifer Keohane, J.J. Chrystal, John Chapin, Julie Simon, Karen Karmiol, Karyn Schulz, Kathea Smith, Kristen Eyssell, Kristi Moore, Kurt Schmoke (President), Laura Wilson-Gentry, Magui Cardona, Marilyn Oblak, Mary Beth, Waak Mason Paris, Michael Frederick, Michael Hayes, Mortimer Sellers, Nico Gleeson, Nicole Marano, Nina L. Baxter, Paul Moniodis, Pavan Purswani, Ron Castanzo, Ron Weich, Roxie M. Shabazz, Sally Farley, Sally Reed, Sharon Glazer, Suzanne Tabor, Tara Mulligan, Terese Thonus, Theresa Silanskis, Tina DiFranco, Vineda Myers, Wabei Chitambala, Will Pesta, Wolf Pecher, Zach Luhman

The Meeting was called to order at noon

*Logistical Items*

The agenda and Minutes (Meeting on September 8) were approved.

**Information Items and Announcements**

***LMS Review Plan***

Constance Harris, Director of online learning (CELLT) reported on the progress of the Learning Management System (LMS) review.

* The review was long overdue. The last review was in 2011.
* The LMS review is not done with the aim to necessarily replace SAKAI, but to evaluate whether other LMS fit UBalt better. The goal is excellence.
* The timeline of the review is posted on sharepoint.
* A draft scope is due to the online advisory board. It has not yet been sent out to vendors
* October/November a LMS survey is planned to go out to faculty and students that will provide a baseline of LMS usage.
* Vendors will be invited to present their LMS. The hopes are that vendors respond to academic, technical, and student use cases.
* Stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide feedback.
* In December 2021 CELLT it is planned to make recommendations to the Executive Technology Committee and Deans Council.
* If it is decided to move away from SAKAI it will take 1.5 to 2 years to adopt and implement a new system.

***Other Information items***

* October is cyber awareness month, OTS will send out reminder emails etc.
* Governance Steering Council committees are focusing more on strategic planning, and not the budget.

**Action Items**

***Honors Council Student Learning Outcomes***

Sally Farley (Director, Helen P. Denit Honors Program) asked to endorse proposed changes to the course level SLOs for the Helen P. Denit Honors Program.

Discussion

* SLO-1 needs clarification, “connect high impact experiences” seems meaningless in this context
* Final suggestion was to change the learning outcome to “Reflect on the relationship bewteen a high-impact experience to course content in an essay or presentation.”

The changes to the SLOs (including appropriate changes to SLO-1) were approved (12 votes in favor, no abtentions)

**Discussion Items**

***Marketing***

Theresa Silanski (VP- Institutional Advancement, Office of Advancement and External Relations) presented an overview of the Office of Advancement and External Relations

* 4 Divisions: Communications and Public affairs, Marketing and Communications, Philanthropy, and Alumni Relations and Donor Services
* The office is in close collaboration with the Office of Enrollment Management and outside contractors (Ologie [up to 2017], currently: Fuseideas)
* Services of the outside contractor include paid media, web services and analytics
* FY22 budget for marketing is $1,522,506, of which Fuseideas is paid $800,000. In comparison, Towson spends 7 million, UMBC 4 million
* The marketing strategy moved away from low the low funnel approach to brand awareness: to position UBalt as the premier regional university for career advancement and as a leader in online education.
* 50% of the paid media budget ($515,000) is spent on brand impact and awareness, 30% targets graduate students (selected programs: MBA, M.S. in Health Administration; Design@UBalt; M.A. in Legal Studies), and the remaining 20% undergraduates with a focus on transfer students. Priorities were set by the Deans.
* Marketing strategies include Google ads, paid social media, ads on billboards, kiosks, and You Tube videos
* FY21 campaign resulted in more than 265,000 site visits, more than 2,400 requests for information (RFI) submissions, 499 apply button, and 1,515 event button clicks. The FY22 campaign (July 2021 – Oct. 7, 2021) already resulted in 115,000+ site visits and 373 RFI submissions.

Question and Comments

* The position of the Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications is vacant. Is UBalt hiring?

Theresa Silanski: Yes, we are in the final stages of hiring.

* Towson’s budget is 7 million, etc. Percentage wise, how does UBalt compare to these institutions? Are we off?
Theresa Silanski: We will have to come back to you. Dan Mills can look into that.
* The metrics that were presented (number of clicks and site visits etc.) are they good?

Theresa Silanski: Yes, they are good yields, but not amazing and excellent. There are issues with the web site, it is clunky etc.

* Regardless of the budget and whether we might spend less than our peers, can the department related to fund raising find money earmarked towards marketing?

Theresa Silanski: We are not successful. It is a tough sell. People want to support tangible items, not marketing.

* Having a limited budget, wouldn’t a strategy that includes more Practical Solutions Announcements (PSAs) be reasonable? This could help to increase the visibility with little and to now costs.

Theresa Silanski: We are in initial stages of our strategy. Indeed with PSA should be part of a plan. Chris Hart is developing ideas of stories etc. However nonpaid media hard to come by.

* The information presented was helpful. It is interesting to see what is working and what is not working. This information should be more out there, including what programs are promoted etc.
* When did we become a premier online university?

Theresa Silanski: UBalt is a leader in online education. For example, UBalt was the first school with an online MBA degree. Certainly, not the entire university is online, but signature programs will be.

President Schmoke: The focus remains on UBalt being a premier school for carrier advancement.

* A problem is not to make a plan, stick to it, and not evaluate the plan. For example, UBalt did not seem to be very committed to the “You know us” campaign. How committed are you to the current strategy?

Theresa Silanski: Full marketing a different beast, and not a real effort on rebranding. EAB brand awareness is the way to go. Changes are made, but they are thoughtful, with lots of analytics.

Roxie Shabazz: We are collaborating closely with the Office of Advancement and External Relations. With the limited funds, we need a broader approach, and name recognition is important. Direct program support is limeted, focus is on indirect marketing and recruitment.

* Some faculty of UBalt are constantly in the media. How can we as faculty do something like this, and it is helpful for UBalt?

Theresa Silanski: It is helpful, and we are developing an expert list. However, the expert list needs to be with experts that want to do the work.

* Since analytics is done, what data is available? Is it known how prospective students select UBalt? At MSB students know what they want.

Theresa Silanski: Our system only can identity how many people are interested and how many applied and became students. It does not allow us to identify how the students selected UBalt.

* Theresa Silanski: The group is a creative services team. The group produced almost 400 products in FY2021.

Senate President Kiel: It would be helpful if you would provide us with a document on what you did.

* Roxie Shabbaz: We are engaged in idirect marketing. What are prospective students interested, what are they researching? And we are trying to identify students that research the university. If students are found that are interested, we target the students. We are also gathering information on faculty and sending this information to students.
* Question: how many of these students matriculated?

Theresa Silanski: Our system does not know how many of these students matriculate.

* Individual colleges have marketing positions (communication positions). How does that fit into the goal of marketing?

Theresa Silanski: These individuals do not report to the Office of Advancement and External Relations, but they are included in the loop. We work hand in hand with everyone.

President Schnoke reiterated that fundraising for advertising dollar is not very successful. We might have more success closer to the centennial. There are prospects for the future. In regard to the web design, President Schmoke encouraged the faculty to give suggestions to Theresa. Support and resources are available.

Questions to faculty

* We are in the process of putting out an RFP for 2023. What firm to suggest? If facluty know people in industry, let us know. Also, reach out to Dan or me and ask questions. There is too much miscommunication.
* Information as to why do students come and what stories do faculty hear would be helpful for the marketing team

Comments:

* Career students with a goal in mind seem to go to UBalt.
* Personal word to mouth, and personal connections such a “my ant got degree here.”
Comment (Theresa Salinsky): These family stories could be highlighted in alumni magazine
* Students appreciate rigor, we hold them to high standards.

***New Enrollment Census***

Paul Moniodis (Assistant Provost, Institutional Research) presented an overview of Fall enrollments (2013 to 2021). Overview is more detailed than what was presented in the past. The data is useful for tracking the University's performance over time, and for diagnostic and goal-setting purposes, and to optimize future enrollment.

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Main trends:

* Fall 13, UBalt was at peak enrollment. Fall 16, enrollment started to drop. The loss is shared across all colleges.
* The retention rate follows the same trend and overall is down to 54% compared to 61% in Fall 13.
* Graduation rate increased overall from 19% to 25%.
* The success rate (graduation rate + retention rate) was remarkably stable (around 80%).
* While UBalt’s enrollment numbers are getting low, we do not seem to lose students. 94.5% of the low enrollment can be attributed to low enrollment of new students.

Questions and Comments

* The reported retention rate used in the report shows the overall rate of returning students. It is not adjusted for students who graduated (i.e., students who graduated are included in the number of students who do not return).
* The annual report shows percentage ratios. Wouldn’t a percentage change be more informative? Is the raw data in the report and percentage change available?

Paul Moniodis: percentage change is not in the report but can be added.

* As a note of caution, the term graduation rate implies the numbers of students that graduate compared to the number of all students. Thus, the numbers presented appear not to be the graduation rate.
* Last paragraph in the overview: "We are expecting a leveling-off to an equilibrium enrollment within the next three (3) years." Do you have a theory on what drives enrollment? What is underlying the prediction? What is the leveling number?

Paul Moniodis: The decline in enrollment is levelling out. The number of new enrollments is stabilizing. We can expect stable enrollment in 2- or 3-years.

* Do we understand the mechanism behind the leveling? If we do not know the mechanisms, we cannot change.

 Paul Moniodis: This is not a causal model. Our model just shows where we are going.

President Schmoke: We recognize a target of 4,000 students. The student mix is important. We had a terrible disfunction in the recruitment process. An improved process should help us to reach our target.

Interim Provost Anderson: We will level out if nothing changes. Using diagnostics, we will make progress.

Paul Moniodis: It will take 2 or 3 years to get the numbers up. We should not expect 4,000 students next year.

* Can we use timeline data? Is there a pattern between each school and programs? What is the suggested mix? Can we identify a pattern that is predictable to help with the budgeting?

Paul Moniodis: Enrollment losses are greater among undergraduates than in graduates. Do we grow our graduate programs and focus less on undergraduate programs? Possibly. To answer questions like that the data is invaluable.

* UBalt has seen a decrease in retention. Is the decrease significant?

Paul Moniodis: It is likely, but keep in mind that the graduation is stable if not slightly increasing.

Safety at campus

***Surveillance testing for COVID 19?***

President Schmoke: We looked into the issue of testing. We are working with the University of Maryland Baltimore. Currently UMB is running a testing center at the Convention Center. However, in December/Januar, the testing site is moved to the Midtown Campus on Preston Street. The testing is free of charge, and, once the move is completed UBalt might be able to change the testing requirement for exempt students and personnel to once a week. But right now, we cannot ask students to do that. At this point we will not change our current strategy.

Nicole Marano (Associate Vice President, Student Success & Support Services): This is a game changer. We can send exempt students and personnel to the Convention Center. Test results should be received within 24 to 48 hrs.

In regard to corona virus infections, up to date UBalt has 4 positive cases. All 4 cases are break through infections. So far, no other infections or community spread have been reported.

***Campus Safety***

The merger of UBalt Police with the UMB police will not affect campus safety, Color of the

So far only a Letter of intent is drafted. The merger is cleared with the unions. UBalt police officers are encouraged to apply to the vacant positions at UMB, which would be welcomed by UMB as it does not want to recruit new officers. Jason Kunz will be a permanent liaison between UBalt and UMB

Questions:

* How much money is saved?

President Schmoke: Savings what not a primary concern.

* How was the decision made? Was UBalt approached by UMB?

President Schmoke: Beth Amyot and the Vice president of UMB constantly look to increase the efficiency of our institution through collaborations. UMB mentioned that they are having problems filling vacancies in their police department. That discussion started the collaboration started.

* The move came as a surprise. How was this communicated to the people affected?

President Schmoke: Our officers were informed, but not long before the overall public was informed.

Beth Amyot: Before any discussion we wanted to make sure that a merger is feasible. Once we determined the feasibility, Police officers were informed first. The whole campus was informed shortly thereafter to avoid unnecessary rumors.

President Schmoke ask that if there are there any matters that need to be included in the OMU and for questions or issues, to talk to administrations or to the UFS president.

The meeting was adjourned at 2 PM.