

**Mississippi University for Women
Naming Committee
Friday, September 5, 2008
1:00-3:00 p.m.
Cochran 303**

Minutes

Members in attendance: Kristen Barnes, Allegra Brigham, Marty Brock, Michael Burger, Roger Burlingame, Phillip Cockrell, Lynne Curtis, Melanie Freeman, Robert Gibson, Rodney Godfrey, Marty Hatton, Andrea Holcombe, Alisa Hoken, Joyce Hunt, Sue Jolly, Angela Jones, Carla Lowery, Richard Millikin, Erich Ogle, Tom Richardson, Steve Rogers, Lynne Schneider, Amy Swingle, Amy Tate, Joy Townsend, Tom Velek, and James Ward.

Absent: Cindy Dunbar, Eric Frost, and Andrea Overby.

Support staff in attendance: Gary Bouse, Nora Miller, Jill O'Bryant, Anika Perkins, Perry Sansing, and Bucky Wesley.

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Sue Jolly, chair of the Naming Committee, called the meeting to order and welcomed Dr. Claudia Limbert, president, to the podium to give the charge to the committee.

Charge from Dr. Claudia Limbert

Dr. Limbert noted that the Naming Committee was made up of people who were recommended, volunteered or were appointed. A large number of people volunteered to serve on the committee, but the membership was cut off at 30 due to size. The media was invited to attend to encourage an open process.

She reminded the group that their duty is not to decide whether or not the name should be changed because that decision has already been made. Instead, the responsibility of the Naming Committee is to help decide a name for MUW's future success. The group should include input from all constituents. Criteria should include: reflective of who we are, consideration that we are a public institution with a public mission, honor the past, and be marketable. The group should come up with three unranked names with pros and cons for each. The names will be tested by a marketing firm. Then a smaller committee, which will include the president of Faculty Senate, the president of Staff Council, the president of the Student Government Association, the president of the Alumni Association, the president of the Alumnae Association, and the chair of the MUW Foundation Board of Directors, will recommend one of the names to Dr. Limbert for a decision and recommendation to the IHL Board and the Mississippi Legislature. The time line for the Naming Committee's work will be determined by the committee. The

committee will have support from the President's Cabinet; Anika Perkins, Director of Public Affairs; and Jill O'Bryant from the President's Office who will be taking the minutes. The minutes will be posted on the website.

Questions and Answers, Discussion of the Charge with Dr. Limbert

No one had any questions for Dr. Limbert, so she departed from the meeting so the committee could begin its work.

Dr. Jolly said she appreciated the charge from Dr. Limbert and that the committee would take its responsibilities very seriously. Subcommittees probably will be formed, and the process will be open and transparent from beginning to end. She said she was pleased to know that the committee will not have to consider whether or not the name should be changed, that the committee was expected to recommend three names in unranked order, and that a wide array of people make up the committee.

Member Introductions & Get Acquainted

Each committee member and support staff person gave a short introduction.

Establishment of Group Norms and Operating Rules/Guidelines

The group jointly agreed on the following:

- No names will be tied to comments for the minutes.
- Communication must remain open and transparent.
- Members should be open-minded.
- The minutes will be approved at the next meeting.
- The minutes will be sent by email and then posted on the website.
- Members should remember that they represent others.
- The Committee should keep to the task.
- The Committee should move as expediently as possible but not at the cost of what needs to be done.
- Members should act professionally and with courtesy.
- Members should remember to not take criticism of name ideas personally.
- Members should stay neutral to all ideas up front.

Identification of Constituencies and Ways to Reach for Input

The committee jointly agreed on the following:

- Students: current/prospective/potential, those who choose not to come because of the name/not interested/interested enough to look/serious but did not enroll, those who know what MUW is/those who don't know what MUW is, traditional/non-traditional, degree/non-degree, online, undergraduate/graduate, male/female, part-time/full-time, community college transfer, first generation college students
- Parents: current/prospective
- Alumni
- Stakeholders
- Community leaders
- Faculty: current/prospective, long tenure/short tenure, retired
- Staff: current/prospective, long tenure/short tenure, retired

- Business community and employers
- Donors: current and potential
- Elected officials: local, regional, and state
- Community college faculty and staff
- High School faculty and staff
- Mississippi taxpayer

Consideration and Identification of Criteria

In addition to the criteria noted by Dr. Limbert in her charge to the group (reflective of who we are, remember MUW is a public institution with a public mission, honor the past, and marketable), the committee jointly agreed on the following:

- Best for future success
- Reflective of who we can become
- Leadership development as university brand/mission
- Who or what we are not
- Gender neutral
- Must have university (not college) in the name due to programs offered now and in the future
- Memorable, catchy, distinguishes us from other schools
- Easy to say
- Avoid negative connotations
- Long-term staying power, longevity
- Bridges between past and future, bridges legacy and innovation
- Not the same as others so as not to be confused with others
- Internet domain availability
- Palatable to largest number of constituents

Identification of Next Steps and Time line; and Review of the Charge

The following were issues discussed by the committee:

- Potential names for the university can come from individuals on the committee in addition to giving consideration to all constituent groups.
- A list of potential names already tossed around in the media should be compiled and distributed to the committee members.
- In addition to asking constituents for name suggestions, they should also be asked for the rationale.
- Committee members have been and will continue to receive name suggestions from the public. A process needs to be developed to compile these suggestions.
- A place on the MUW 20/20 website should be available for people to suggest names. The criteria should be available for people to read prior to suggesting a name. Possibly a questionnaire should be required so demographics will be known about the people suggesting names. Possibly people should be required to identify themselves when making a name suggestion because this might deter those wanting to make prank suggestions.
- A time line should be determined for the committee's work. When considering the time line, the committee should consider that recruitment materials are printed many months in advance, that the Mississippi Legislature which makes the final decision meets

for 90 days beginning each January, and that some feel the name affects enrollment which is tied to the new IHL funding formula or rebalancing. Some constituents may not be convinced that a name change is necessary so moving too quickly might alienate these groups.

- Based on the discussion from the meeting, Dr. Jolly will form a list of subcommittees. They will be emailed to the committee to allow for volunteers on the subcommittees. She will make final assignments. Some of the subcommittees she considers necessary are: web site for the public to make name suggestions, questions other than what name, vehicles for reaching people, how the committee will make its decisions, and a time line.
- The committee will hold its next meeting on Friday, October 3, 2008, from 1-3 p.m. in Cochran 303. This should give enough time for the subcommittees to begin working and make reports at the October 3 meeting.