

## MINUTES

### LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

#### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

July 14, 2011

The Long-Range Planning Committee of the University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees met on Thursday, July 14, 2011, at the New Harmony Inn and Conference Center in New Harmony, Indiana. Present were Trustees John M. Dunn; Susan Ellsperman '13; Amy MacDonell; and Ronald D. Romain '73. Committee Chair W. Harold Calloway was absent. Also in attendance were President Linda L. M. Bennett and Provost Ronald S. Rochon.

Mr. Romain called the meeting to order (in the absence of Mr. Calloway) at 1 p.m.

#### 1. REPORT ON THE USI THEATRE PROGRAM

Mr. Romain introduced Provost Rochon and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Michael Aakhus, who introduced Elliot Wasserman, director of the USI Theatre and chair of the Department of Performing Arts, and Angela Torres, managing and marketing director of University Theatres, for a report on the USI Theatre program.

Mr. Wasserman shared design plans and a video tour of the teaching theatre to be constructed on the USI campus beginning in summer 2012. He compared a teaching theatre to a teaching hospital in its training objective and noted the USI theatre will augment a faculty and program that focuses on professional practice.

He told the Committee about the USI Repertory Project, about to begin its fifth season, and how it benefits USI students. The project operates under a contract with Actors' Equity Association, which allows student performers and stage management trainees the option to begin to qualify for membership in this professional union. Mr. Wasserman noted that membership in Actors' Equity Association sets actors apart and designates their level of professionalism in the theatre business. The USI model is unique in bringing a professional producing organization inside the normal operation of an undergraduate university season.

He also discussed the opportunities for USI students to work in the New Harmony Theatre, which provides additional professional experiences during their undergraduate studies.

Mr. Wasserman reviewed the work of the USI Theatre, the third partner in the trio of theatres in the department of performing arts. The USI Theatre is associated with the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF). USI entered its first production for consideration by the Festival in 2009 which resulted in an invitation to attend the regional festival in January 2010. Mr. Wasserman expects even greater success when the new teaching theatre enriches the production of future plays. The department has been successful in recent years in bringing greater diversity to productions at USI, both in content and in actors. In 2011-2012, USI will receive a grant to produce a touring production of a contemporary African-American play that will visit high schools around the state. Women's themes also have been represented in featured plays.

Mr. Wasserman concluded by sharing stories of USI theatre graduates and their successes in theatre on-and off-stage.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.