

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDING OF THE GENERAL FACULTY AND DOCUMENTS and PROCEEDINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY

The minutes of the University Assembly meeting of October 14, 2003 published below have been prepared for the immediate use of the members of the University Assembly and are included in its Documents and Proceedings. They are also included in the Documents and Minutes of the General Faculty for the information of the members.

Mansour El-Kikhia, Secretary
The General Faculty

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY MEETING OF OCTOBER 14, 2003

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Rosalie Ambrosino, Guy Bailey (by David Johnson), Patricia Dunn, Mansour El-Kikhia, Roger Garza, Jorge Gonzalez, Eugene John, Michel Kelly, Angela McNair, Cindy Orth, Charles Russell, III, Rosalinda Stead

II. Minutes of May 6, 2003 meeting approved.

III. Reports

A. President's Report – Dr. Ricardo Romo

Dr. Romo said that the university is at a crossroads facing difficult challenges. It needs to be recognized that San Antonio is the only city in the top 25 cities in this country without a top tier research institution. One of the advantages of having a top tier institution is that income in the city goes up as the university goes up in stature. San Antonio is growing in population so it would be expected the university would also grow. In addition, San Antonio is a community driven by knowledge, no longer a city dependent on the tourist industry. The biggest industry is now the biomedical industry. UTSA needs to make a statement that it plans to do everything possible to secure flagship status. The entire state of Texas is also at a crossroads, with 123,000 new college students in the last two years. Not surprisingly, UTSA added over 4000 students during that same time. UTSA enrollment is currently 24,600, more than the Coordinating Board predicted for the year 2010. Enrollment is expected to reach 30,000 in two years, unlike the Coordinating Board's prediction of 2015.

Dr. Romo reported that first-year retention rates have increased dramatically over the last four years. The goal is to reach 80%, which would place the university at the same level of institutions such as the University of Virginia, University of Michigan, and University of Nebraska. Another campus goal is to improve graduation retention rates for all students. Dr. Romo applauded the work of the Learning Communities program that has done an excellent job of bringing tutorial services to students. Programs, such as Learning Communities and Freshman Initiatives, contribute to the success of first-year students, but ultimately also contribute to success with graduation.

Dr. Romo reported on several areas that will continue to be enhanced and that will improve the campus experience. These include increasing dormitory space, student access to advisors, scholarship funding, and additional internships. Student learning enhancements and learning experiences will continue to be the number one goal. The second goal has to do with being a research institution. Advantages to being a top

tier university include being able to attract better faculty, improvements for the library, and additional research funding. Funding for research for next year is expected to be \$40 million; it needs to be \$100 million. At least 350 new faculty need to be hired during the next four to five years. Another measure of a top tier institution is having a \$1 million chair. Dr. Romo announced UTSA will begin recruiting for 10 \$1 million chairs next year.

Dr. Romo provided an update on some of the university's community partnerships. Southwest Research Institute receives \$350 million in funding each year. They are a very large operation that hires interns from across America. UTSA is working toward being a part of their research and providing summer internships for students. Southwest Biological Foundation has the world's largest chimpanzee and baboon colony. They conduct extensive medical research and are willing to have UTSA student works in that area.

It is estimated that UTSA makes an economic contribution to the city of approximately \$500 million. The university should be able to triple that amount and be a very important, highly valued organization in the community. This would be accomplished, in part, by partnerships with the Health Science Center, Brooks Air Force Base, Kelly Air Force Base, and Toyota. The University's Center for Infrastructure and Assurance has been extraordinarily successful. Many UTSA students can have great summer intern experiences at all of these facilities.

Space shortages continue to be a major challenge. UTSA is currently 500,000 square feet short of needed space. Even with the addition of two new buildings, that shortage will remain the same. The university will request an additional \$150 million from the UT System for construction of classrooms. A plan is in place to add parking spaces at a cost of \$10 million. This would be the most parking ever added at any one time. There are currently 6000 students downtown and two additional buildings are planned for that campus within the next two years. The administration will continue to work on improvements to transportation services and to technology.

B. Secretary – Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia

Dr. El-Kikhia thanked the students for participating, noting that the Assembly was a very important forum for students, in particular. He encouraged them to bring forward any issues they might have. He stated that UTSA has grown at a phenomenal rate and everyone should be proud of what has been accomplished. In order to continue to make these advances, everyone must continue to participate in the process. Dr. El-Kikhia stated that student participation on university committees makes the decision making process a collective effort.

C. Committees

1. Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaws Revision – Dr. Michael Kelly

Dr. Kelly reported the University Assembly bylaws were reviewed during the Spring 2003 semester. Recommendations for modifications were made but the bylaws were not presented to the Assembly for approval. Dr. Kelly distributed copies of the draft revisions and made a motion the bylaws be accepted as revised.

Charles Russell, III noted the membership states one student representative from each college but the College of Sciences has two representatives to Student Government. Dr. Kelly explained that the Assembly decided not to base representation on the size of the college, but to have one member from each college or school. It is expected that this representative will communicate with other students in the college and bring issues forward to the Assembly. The representation is the same for faculty, one from each college or school.

Dr. Kelly further recommended the bylaws be approved as presented because there are provisions for further amendments if needed. Motion approved to accept the bylaws as presented.

D. Other

1. Report from the President of Student Government – Mr. Roger Garza

Mr. Garza reported Student Government had four student representatives on the Tuition and Fees Deregulation Committee. All represented the student body well and utmost priority was given to the work of the committee.

Other items from the area of Student Government include:

- A proposed resolution regarding the introduction of fair trade certified coffee, which is essentially a cooperative of farmers who are guaranteed a price of \$1.25 per pound. Fair trade coffee is sold in over 10,000 retail outlets and in more than 200 universities in the United States.
- In early September, Student Government passed a motion to donate \$100 to the Richard Wenzlaff Scholarship Fund to acknowledge Dr. Wenzlaff's immense contribution to UTSA. Student Government wanted to recognize Dr. Wenzlaff for his life and work on this campus.
- Student Government is taking an interest in the new Freshman Initiatives program and has raised general procedural questions, such as student representation from this area. They will continue their research and hope to have answers for the student body by the end of the semester.
- A Student Government committee is researching the Chartwell's issue. The committee realizes complaints should provide specific attainable goals. Further, it should be recognized that Chartwell's has only been on campus since August and adjustments in the food service area take time.
- Student Government passed a resolution to support the city bond initiative coming up for a vote. With one week's notice, they registered over 180 students and are researching the feasibility of transporting students to a voting location during early voting period.
- Student Government is working toward bringing a legal aid to the campus to assist students having problems with leases, roommates, child support and various other problems they face outside the university community.
- Student Government is working with administration to lengthen the hours of the library, since there is still a need for a late-night study area.
- Student Government does not advocate a complete ban on smoking but would like to see the existing smoking regulations enforced.

IV. Unfinished Business

Dr. El-Kikhia asked Dr. Romo for input regarding changes made recently to standard teaching times. Dr. Romo explained the goal was to move five to 10 percent of existing classes to non-peak hours. This type of change should not have a radical effect on any department.

Dr. El-Kikhia asked the students for their opinion about having the class schedule Web published instead of printed. Students responded very favorably to the online schedule.

In response to a question about the new computer laboratory printing policy, it was decided to include a presentation on this issue at the next Assembly meeting.

V. New Business

1. Tuition and Fees Deregulation Committee – Daniel Escobar

Mr. Escobar noted that almost everyone in attendance had already seen the committee's presentation at various other meetings. Instead of going over it again, he would present his views on the proposal. When UTSA was first discussed, no one could have envisioned how fast it would grow and how great an institution it would become in 34 years. UTSA is now a major player, not only in San Antonio but also in the State of Texas. During the previous 13-year period, UTSA has grown very, very quickly and it has been difficult to keep up in many areas. The tuition increase is not being requested in an attempt to achieve flagship status tomorrow; it is needed to be able keep up with the demand. In the future, UTSA

will be considered a major institution in the country and will become a leader in higher education. Unfortunately, trends in higher education funding have started going in a negative direction. If the state was experiencing good economic growth, universities would not be asking for tuition increases. UTSA has done everything it can to make the most of limited resources. It uses available space more effectively than any other institution in the state and faculty teach the largest number of students. In addition to the need for more space and faculty, the entire infrastructure of the university must be maintained. If funds are not spent on maintenance up front, the costs will be much greater in the future. The tuition increase is being requested in order to hire more faculty, provide more classrooms, and maintain the institution at the quality deserved by all involved. UTSA continues to do everything possible to keep costs down. The committee is determined to find a response to what is needed in terms of finance in order to maintain the university as a top notch quality institution moving forward in order to make the educational experience better and, ultimately, to help the city, state, and national economy.

The university is at a crossroads where it can go one direction or the other, "I think the direction that you would want us to go is the direction of a higher and a better quality education that we can help provide in the end." The university can no longer look to state or federal government for funding. It is anticipated they will continue to cut funding for higher education; secondary and elementary schools are facing the same problem.

Mr. Escobar concluded with a request for ideas and suggestions. The committee values student input and realizes current students will be one of the groups to bear the burden. He stated, "If we are going to do this, let's do it together and let's do it right and move UTSA forward."

Dr. Rosalie Ambrosino added there is a survey on the Tuition and Fees Deregulation Committee Web site that asks for student input on items, such as how the 20% required financial aid set aside should be spent. She urged student to complete the survey. She also said the original proposal for a \$12 per semester credit hour increase in the Spring and again in Fall 2004, was only a breakeven amount; the final proposal of \$15 per credit hour was made on student recommendations who were very mindful of what students can pay and who take their education very seriously.

Angela McNair asked if there were any plans for scholarships for middle-income students. Mr. Escobar said it had been noted there is 20 percent set aside for students on financial aid, but there are also a lot of middle-income students who are barely managing. The committee recognizes the need to provide assistance to these students and also to international students.

Dr. Romo expressed his appreciation for the hard work of the committee and for the good job done during the process.

2. Election of Parliamentarian

Dr. Michael Kelly was nominated as parliamentarian. Motion approved.

VI. Questions to the President

VII. Adjournment

Comments or questions to spottorff@utsa.edu

Last updated: Aug 30, 2005