

# **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 December 2, 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 DECEMBER 2, 2003**

#### **I. Call to order and taking of attendance**

Present: Rosalie Ambrosino, Felecia Briscoe, Blandina Cardenas, Aaron Cassill, Mansour El-Kikhia, Damon Garcia, Roger Garza, Jorge Gonzalez, Eugene John, Misty Kelley, Michael Kelly, Elnora Kennedy, Daniel Kiley, Minnie Martinez, Ken Masden, Angela McNair, Carolyn Motley, Bill Mullen, Cindy Orth, Ricardo Romo, Charles Russell, III, Rudy Sandoval, Jude Valdez

#### **II. Minutes of October 14, 2003 meeting approved.**

#### **III. Reports**

##### **A. President's Report – Dr. Ricardo Romo**

Dr. Romo reported the Tuition and Fees Deregulation Committee membership included 22 voting and five ex officio members. Students comprised the majority of voting members and provided crucial input to the entire process. The committee met more than 37 times from mid-summer through November. An online survey was conducted to expand student input. The committee proposed a \$15 per semester credit hour increase for Spring 2004 and an additional \$15 for Fall 2004. Compared to other UT System components, this was a modest proposal. Students could have proposed no increase in tuition, but realized that action would stunt the growth of the university by not providing for additional faculty or facilities. That is not the direction they wanted to go. Students understand the quality of education is more important and wanted to continue to bring the university to a higher level. Dr. Romo expressed his pride in the outstanding ability of the students to discuss the issues and develop innovative ideas. He noted the tuition deregulation law requires twenty percent of any increase be set aside for financial aid. In UTSA's proposal, five percent of this amount will be allocated for middle-income students. Another initiative developed by the committee is a drop-out, stop-out recovery program that offers rebates for students to return and finish their education after having been out for awhile. There are also proposals for a rebate to seniors during the last semester before graduation and a zero interest loan program for education majors. Dr. Romo again expressed his pride in the committee and particularly noted the work of Roger Garza, Student Body President, who gave an excellent presentation to the Board of Regents.

Dr. Romo reported the Board of Regents approved a record amount of funding for UTSA construction projects. Approvals included authority to issue bonds in the amount of \$108 million; \$75 million for science laboratories; \$20 million for additional parking garages and lots; and \$75 million for phase two of the Biotechnology Building. It is estimated there will be 1600 new parking spaces by Summer 2004 with a

total of 4000 spaces added over the next two to three years. The Board of Regents recognized the strain on the university caused by the tremendous growth and provided significant funding for new construction at UTSA. The good work being done by everyone in order to educate a large number of students in a quality fashion has also been recognized.

Dr. Romo noted the Regents had also approved UTSA's proposal for a Ph.D. in Counseling. The university will be recruiting at least 13 endowed chairs during the next year. He said he fully realized how fortunate UTSA is to have such tremendous talent on the campus. A good example of the excellent work being done is the 50-page proposal prepared by the tuition committee, under the leadership of Dr. Rosalie Ambrosino, Dr. Richard Lewis, and Mr. Roger Garza. UTSA's report was very inclusive, with input from students, faculty, and staff. He reiterated this is an exciting time for UTSA that also bring big obligations such as hiring 60 to 70 new faculty per year, adding more staff positions in laboratories, and hiring additional work study students.

Dr. Bambi Cardenas commented that things currently being accomplished provide a true transformation for the university. Although Dr. Romo had come to UTSA with a focus on becoming a top tier research university, enhancing student learning and engaging the community, a fourth item has now been added – engaging the students. She suggested this engagement be formalized in some way, possibly in terms of the vision and mission statements. Dr. Romo agreed this should be done, along with thanking the staff for their hard work and accomplishments.

B. Secretary – Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia

Dr. El-Kikhia said he has been truly fascinated by the tremendous change at the university. During the past four to five years, UTSA has become an institution recognized on a global scale. Faculty are contacted by countries around the world because of their expertise in various areas. He noted UTSA is doing much better in many instances than other UT System components.

C. Committees

D. Other

1. Report from the Chair of the Faculty Senate – Dr. Aaron Cassill

Dr. Cassill outlined major issues being addressed by the Faculty Senate:

- Grievance Policy – working to streamline the process so that grievances are heard in a timely fashion and the burden of faculty participation is relieved;
  - Faculty Diversity – a committee is being appointed to work on this issue;
  - Evaluation of Administrators – continued study of the process;
  - IDEA Survey – continued evaluation of the survey;
  - Receivership of Departments – development of a policy;
  - Tenure Procedure – working review as the university moves to Research I status;
  - Faculty Hiring Process – work to ensure appropriate faculty input as new faculty are hired; and,
  - Budget Committee – providing faculty input regarding budgetary priorities.
2. Report from the Chair of the Staff Council – Mr. Daniel Kiley

Mr. Kiley reported on recent Staff Council activities:

- Election of new Council and standing committee members for 2003–2004.
- Recommendation for a Roadrunner statute in front of the new Main Building.
- Presentations from several campus areas, such as the Tuition and Fees Deregulation Committee and the Office of Institutional Diversity.
- Compilation of a list of off-campus businesses that provide benefits or discounts to UTSA employees and/or students.
- Ongoing discussion of the parking situation.

Mr. Kiley thanked the President and the Vice President for Business Affairs for their continued support of the Staff Council.

Dr. Romo acknowledged the difficulty of dealing with the parking issue and asked for input from everyone. A transportation committee will be appointed soon, with representation from faculty, staff, and students.

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

Mr. Garza pointed out the Tuition and Fees Deregulation Committee was one of the two committees in the UT System with a student majority membership. UTSA was also the institution that went beyond an increase that would just cover costs. The recommendation covered the deficit for the biennium and then went above that in order to provide the infrastructure needed for new construction. The students recognized that new facilities, such as thermal plants, are necessary for new buildings.

Student Government has strongly recommended democratic elections for all student organizations that receive money from the student body. Currently the only organization that holds student-wide elections is student government. Members in every other organization are appointed by their advisor. This does not provide accountability to the students that pay for student organizations.

Student Government is working with the Dean of Libraries to establish a schedule to have the library open 24 hours from Sunday through Friday. It has also requested the computers labs follow the same schedule.

Other initiatives include changes to the free speech areas and splitting out the student service fee and the athletic fee. Students would also like to see a tile mural of Rowdy at the bottom of the Sombrilla fountain. Mr. Garza thanked President Romo for engaging students in a way that has never been done before.

Dr. Romo noted that in order to become a great university, everyone has to work together and get the feel of ownership in the institution. But in order to have ownership, students must first have access – to the campus, library, recreation center, swimming pools, and soccer fields, etc.

IV. Unfinished Business

None

V. New Business

None

VI. Questions to the President

Bill Mullen asked about the expected impact to the campus when the Shops at La Cantera are opened. Dr. Romo said anticipated employment is 2000 people and many of those would be students working part-time. The university looks forward to having a good relationship with the mall and feels it will have a very positive impact on the campus.

Dr. Romo noted the parking garage would be built close to the Business Building and the John Peace Library Building and that UTSA currently has a space deficit of 500,000 square feet. Even when new buildings are completed, this deficit is not expected to change because of continued growth. Dr. Cardenas said that externally funded grants need to be factored into any space deficit calculation. In order to shift to a more intense research university, substantial space is needed to house faculty and staff working on grants. Dr. Romo agreed this must be taken into consideration.

## VII. Adjournment

Comments or questions to [spottorff@utsa.edu](mailto:spottorff@utsa.edu)

Last updated: February 2, 2005