

The University of Texas at San Antonio

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

The minutes of the University Assembly meeting of March 9, 2004 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 MARCH 9, 2004

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Rosalie Ambrosino, Guy Bailey, Ricardo Blazquez, Blandina Cardenas, Aaron Cassill, Cody Coeckelenbergh, Eddy Dawson, Mansour El-Kikhia, Eugene John, Misty Kelley, Michael Kelly, Daniel Kiley, Ross Langham, Minnie Martinez, Cindy Orth, Ricardo Romo, Rudy Sandoval, Rosalinda Stead, Jude Valdez

II. Minutes of December 2, 2003 meeting approved.

III. Reports

A. President's Report – Dr. Ricardo Romo

Dr. Romo reported on the work being done to plan for the UTSA campus of the future. The UTSA Development Board is providing ideas for the mission statement. The entire campus community is discussing things in terms of strategic areas. There is general agreement there will be some additional flagship institutions in the State of Texas and that UTSA is a prime candidate for moving into that status. But to get there, the University must go through certain steps. One of those steps is to have faculty that are among the best in the country. Currently the colleges have had some outstanding recruits interview on campus. More than 100 faculty searches are in progress at this time. An example of recruiting and hiring faculty in the top level is the appointment of Dr. Steve Murdock, State Demographer. Not only will Dr. Murdock be an asset to the faculty, he will also bring the State Data Center to UTSA. This type of appointment gets the attention of potential faculty everywhere. UTSA is also very fortunate to have numerous endowed professorships that will enable it to bring in some of the outstanding faculty from across the country. This, in turn, will attract graduate students for the doctoral programs as well as additional research funding.

Dr. Rosalie Ambrosino has been leading the charge in terms of the student experience. Parking continues to be a major concern to students and Dr. Ambrosino has met with various committees to address that issue. These committees are also studying what the campus will look like in five to 10 years. Everyone agrees it is going to be crowded. UTSA will have large numbers of outstanding faculty and outstanding students. New dormitories are being built and students will be encouraged to spend more time on campus. Efforts are being made continually to evaluate what is currently available for students and to improve the campus environment each year. Initiatives such as extended library hours, coffee houses, and expanded recreational facilities will enhance the overall campus experience. An additional 1200 parking spaces will be added to the east side of the campus to relieve the shortage of parking. UTSA is also becoming a model

program in the state in terms of partnerships with high schools. These partnerships provide the ability to impact the type of education students will have at all levels. Many UTSA faculty and administrators are leaders in this area, including Drs. Bambi Cardenas, Richard Diem, and Jude Valdez. There is concern that students in the area high schools do not have all the necessary information they need in order to go to college. Things that may seem simple to faculty, such as what high school courses to take or how to prepare for the SAT, are complicated and confusing to a student in the 10th grade. The K–16 partnerships help these students in many areas.

Dr. Romo then asked Dr. Ambrosino to discuss the campus initiative referendum. Before discussing the referendum, she informed the group that Student Affairs, in collaboration with the Vice President for Business Affairs, has established a committee to review parking, shuttle, and related transportation issues. This committee is co-chaired by a student and a representative from the University Police Department. Dr. Ambrosino then asked Ross Langham, SGA President, to update the Assembly on the student-driven initiative to improve student life on campus by expanding the recreation center and enhancing the athletics program.

Mr. Langham said students are really excited about the possibility of increasing athletic programming and expanding recreational facilities. They are learning that current facilities are completely undersized for the number of students at UTSA. Other universities with far fewer students have considerably larger recreational facilities. There are needs for additional aerobic and racquetball rooms, intramural fields, and an auditorium. Currently all students are utilizing a single intramural field which causes intramural events to be scheduled late into the night. Even though \$1.5 million was recently allocated to the University to build a soccer and track complex, another \$4 to 6 million is needed to complete the project. Passing the campus initiative will provide that funding and allow the university to host track and soccer events. Now the track team must go to a local high school complex in order to host competitive events. Students are eager for a more traditional athletics environment, not unlike the University of Texas in Austin. UTSA has the academic standpoint going strongly and now needs to add the campus life aspect. Students will then leave the campus with lifelong memories, as well as an enhanced education. Dr. Ambrosino said that Student Government had set the referendum election for April 14-15. Students will vote on changes to the athletics and recreation fees. Dr. El-Kikhia asked why the campus is not more friendly to cycling and walking. Having more bicycle parking available might also relieve the vehicle parking situation. Dr. Ambrosino replied the transportation committee is reviewing this issue. She noted part of the issue is changing the campus culture and part is providing facilities to encourage cycling and walking.

Dr. Rudy Sandoval expressed his concern about freshman and sophomore students registering for one of his upper-division classes. These students are not prepared for the coursework and do not perform well in the class. Options to avoid this problem were provided and it was suggested the Provost's Office send a message to all faculty reminding them that a course can be set up in Banner to restrict registration to upper-level students. Not being able to check prerequisites is another concern to faculty. There is a project currently underway to ensure prerequisite checking can be turned on. The project is expected to be completed within the next year.

Dr. Cardenas noted there are many talented faculty with particular expertise in health and kinesiology and in architecture. She asked why these people are not being involved in the master planning process to develop sustainable space oriented to optimal health and wellness. Dr. Romo said some of that type of planning was underway. Dr. Cardenas also suggested the athletic fee could be joined to some type of cultural activities fee. Having events such as student theater or student-run speaker series would create a better balance and benefit all students.

B. Secretary – Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia

Dr. El-Kikhia reported the UT System Faculty Advisory Council recently decided to send a letter to Chancellor Mark Yudof praising him for the way the fiscal crisis has been handled. Through his leadership, UT System components have done very well in difficult circumstances.

Faculty should be aware of accountability issues being initiated by UT System and provide feedback to System administration.

Health costs will increase next year. Currently the cost of health insurance for university retirees is paid by the state, but that may not be the case in the future.

C. Committees

D. Other

1. Report from the Chair of the Staff Council – Mr. Daniel Kiley

Recent Staff Council activities include:

- Charles Lampe, Facilities Services, gave a presentation on current and future building projects.
- Human Resources was asked to present information on the staff compression study but had not done so yet.
- There is continued discussion about the parking situation. The new parking garage is expected to alleviate some of the problem and staff are looking forward to its completion.
- Staff have been informed they can be held responsible for university equipment assigned to them if they are determined to be negligent when a loss occurs.
- On behalf of the Staff Council, Mr. Kiley congratulated Ross Langham on his election as Student Government President.

2. Report from the President of Student Government – Mr. Ross Langham

Mr. Langham said the parking problem is being given too much light and is not as bad as many other universities. The addition of new campus housing will alleviate a lot the problem.

He then presented the following report:

- Student Government is looking forward to having the library open 24 hours a day, 5 days a week by next Fall. It should be open until 2 a.m. by this April in time for Finals week. Not only will this allow for students to have a central location to study and work from 24 hours a day, they will have access to a computer lab 24 hours a day as well.
- We understand that there will be significant difficulties with the new mandatory meal plans for the Chaparral Village residents. Therefore, we are very active with food services in investigating the benefits of bringing Blimpie's on to campus to better serve the campus' residents food needs. Blimpie's will offer more locations and variety to the students and will alleviate the long lines currently found with Subway.
- All of our College Representatives are working diligently to either work with an existing college council or create one if one does not yet exist. We have made great strides in getting closer to the students in order to address the campus concerns. College Councils allow us to seek out those concerns at a college specific level rather than the central location of the Student Government office. This spreads our presence across campus.
- Student Government is very interested in the organizational changes that will occur when the Main (Academic 3) Building opens. We are excited to see the opportunities that will present themselves as several colleges will be able to spread out and offer more space for classroom and after-class studying, as well as the new library space that will be available when the administrative offices leave the 4th floor of the JPL to the 4th floor of the Main Building. We hope to be involved in realizing how these new spaces can be best utilized.

Dr. Romo asked Dr. Michael Kelly if the library would be open for extended hours during the week of final examinations. Dr. Kelly responded the library plans to have extended hours well before the examination period begins and also plans to have a 24 hour/5 day schedule by next fall.

IV. Unfinished Business

None

V. New Business

Dr. Romo reported each component has been required to submit an accountability compact to UT System administration. This document will be shared with the campus and input will be requested. Hiring of new faculty and assessment of current faculty will be included as items of accountability. Currently the university is recruiting 100 new faculty this year. Dr. Cardenas said it is important for the students to understand the faculty recruitment process, which is extremely demanding. The University has been on a steep learning curve over the past few years. Changes to recruiting procedures, such as earlier posting of hiring ads, have resulted in incredible pools of candidates. Faculty from universities such as Stanford, UC Berkley, and Columbia are being attracted to UTSA. The process of hiring a faculty member takes at least seven to nine months and involves everyone in the department and many in the college. As the dean, she has interviewed approximately 68 individuals from mid-January through the end of March. The entire process must be very meticulous and stressful since faculty recruitment determines the ultimate quality of the institution. Dr. Guy Bailey added that even faculty holding endowed chairs at other universities are coming to UTSA. Current faculty, department chairs, and deans who are doing the recruiting are responsible for a very positive change in the quality of applicants. Mr. Langham thanked Dr. Cardenas for explaining the process. Students are pleased that the university is taking advantage of the need for growth and is learning from other universities that have been in existence for much longer.

VI. Questions to the President

VII. Adjournment

Comments or questions to spottorff@utsa.edu

Last updated: February 2, 2005