

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 December 13, 2005 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.

James McDonald, Secretary
The General Faculty

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY MEETING OF DECEMBER 13, 2005

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Rosalie Ambrosino, Patricia Dunn, Mansour El-Kikhia, James McDonald, Cynthia Orth, Ricardo Romo, Shirley Rowe, Dee Russell-Terrell, Rosalinda Stead, Lori Zerr.

II. Reports

A. President's Report – Dr. Ricardo Romo

Dr. Romo gave a presentation regarding the operating budget, space issues, faculty hires and workloads, graduation and retention rates, the position of Vice President in Research and Graduate Studies, energy conservation measures, the UTSA 1604 and Downtown campuses master plans, and facilities projects (attached to and made a part of these minutes). The following are important points from that presentation:

- The operating budget for UTSA during the 2005 fiscal year was \$269 million dollars. \$142.1 million of the operating budget constituted in tuition and fees; \$79.92 million constituted in general revenue, and \$50.32 million comprised of gifts, grants, and contracts.
- Current space deficiency at UTSA is 424,000 approximate square feet with 27,640 students enrolled.
- Between years 2001 and 2006, the School of Architecture has hired a total of ten faculty. The College of Business has hired a total of 45 faculty, the College of Education and Human Development has hired 64 faculty, the College of Engineering has hired 34 faculty, the College of Liberal and Fine Arts has hired 84 faculty, College of Public Policy hired 20 faculty, and the College of Sciences has hired a total of 74 faculty. The most faculty were hired in fiscal year 2005 with a total 74 faculty members.
- Student to faculty workloads at UTSA has decreased in 2005 with 23.1 students per faculty member. In 2003, there were 26.4 students per faculty member. Dr. Romo said that he hopes that the student to faculty ratio will reflect that of the University of Texas at Austin with 20.1 students per faculty member.
- Retention rates have increased by 6.7 points since the Fall of 1999. Graduation rates have increased by 13 percent in degrees awarded from 2003 to 2005, and 35 percent since 1999 to 2000. Graduation rates have also increased by 12 percent in six-year graduation rates over the last five years, and there have been slight increases in both four and five year graduation rates.
- Efforts to increase retention and graduation rates include a required two-day addition to Roadrunner Days for freshmen, expanded learning communities and supplemental instruction programs,

consolidating student academic support services in one building, graduation rate summit in the Spring of 2006, incentives for graduating on time, financial aid packages that promote students enrolling in an increased number of courses per semester, introduce degree audits at entry to UTSA regardless of level (new freshmen, transfers, etc.), three year scheduling of classes, and curriculum review for degree plans and educational objectives. UTSA will develop a multidisciplinary degree program that is flexible in the application of courses to complete the degree, deferred admission for students who need extensive developmental coursework, require multiple year degree plans for all students, add advisors and advising extended hours to lower the advisor to student ratio, and tuition deregulation committee (graduation incentive program).

- The position of Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies will provide leadership in developing and expanding UTSA's research and graduate studies across the spectrum from individual faculty projects to large scale, multi-disciplinary initiatives in research and graduate programs, will represent UTSA throughout the state and nation with regard to research activities and graduate programs, develop and foster relationships with local, state, and federal agencies and assist faculty members in working with those agencies to develop research opportunities. This position will also require the Vice President to serve as the executive level liaison to UT System on research and graduate programs, strengthen cooperative research and instructional endeavors with public and private organizations, oversee various federally-mandated research compliance infrastructures, work closely with the Colleges to promote excellence in graduate education, provide leadership in integrating research into graduate education, develop and present short-term and specific long-term plans, program goals and recruiting strategies annually to the President for approval. Responsibilities also include promoting, enhancing, and commitment to an ethnically and culturally diverse community that ensures a tolerant and stimulating educational environment, be responsible for the design, execution, and effectiveness of a system of internal controls which provides reasonable assurance that unit operations are effective and efficient, unit assets are safeguarded, unit financial information is reliable, and unit compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Energy conservation measures at UTSA will include an implementation of a campus-wide energy awareness and participation program, adjustment of HVAC set points to 78 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and 72 degrees in the winter, implementation of set-back schedules for weekends for the HVAC systems at the UC Expansion and Main Building, upgrade thermal plant "primary" pumping system to variable speed drive operation, investigate natural gas procurement options, consolidate scheduling of weekend classes and events in order to shut down buildings for a 48-hour period (e.g., 11 p.m. Friday through 11 p.m. Sunday), shut off track and field pole lights, perform inspections, clean and repair heat exchanger equipment, charge capital new construction projects for utilities, place funds in a utility account, perform retro commissioning at the Bioscience Building, minimize laboratory energy use inefficiencies via lab energy audits, user training, and fume hood optimization. Retro commissioning opportunities within the HVAC systems have been identified at the Downtown Campus by Texas A&M Energy Systems Lab (TAMU ESL), designate night-hour parking lots to shut off lights in parking lots when empty, charge utility costs to outside organizations for extracurricular activities for reimbursement to the utility account, and implement engineering student "intern" program for retro commissioning. These changes will produce estimate annual savings of \$691,422 at UTSA.
- Dr. Romo discussed energy fees in order to help conserve energy at UTSA. These include increasing tuition on a temporary basis for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 by an additional amount necessary to pay for anticipated increases in utility costs over the base budget. Actual utility costs will exceed budgeted funding for utilities in FY 2006 by nearly three million dollars. Increased costs include a 76 percent increase in the cost of natural gas, a 32 percent increase in the costs of electricity, and a 25 percent increase in the costs of water and sewer; accounting for a 36 percent increase in the cost of utilities overall. A non-recurring designated tuition utility supplement of forty-five dollars per semester in fiscal year 2007 and thirty-five dollars per semester in fiscal year 2008 is proposed, with 20 percent set aside for need-based financial aid. The proposed fiscal year 2007 supplement will generate about \$2.3 million to apply to utility costs and will generate an additional \$577,000 for need-based financial aid. Proposed designated tuition increases for fiscal year 2008 may be reduced

if utility rates decline to budgeted growth.

- Facilities projects – completed or under construction include the Biotechnology, Sciences and Engineering Building (BSE), the Margaret Batts Tobin Laboratory which was completed in September 2005, Roadrunner Café (Dining Hall at Chaparral Village) completed in September 2005, and Parking Garage No. 3 (630 spaces) completed in September 2005. Facilities projects which fall under the Planning and Design Phase are the Engineering Building (Phase II), Recreation/Wellness Center (Phase II) Laurel Village at UTSA (student housing), Thermal Energy Plant/Parking Garage, and University Center Expansion (Phase III).
- Other projects in Athletics include an athletics complex, conference affiliation, possible football team addition, San Antonio host site for NCAA Final Four events, exploring partnerships with city and county for a soccer/track stadium, potential land acquisition for multi-use parks and sports fields, and funds of \$50,000 in private contributions, county, and city. Other projects in land acquisition include 40-60 acres to fully build the UTSA campus master plan, and the possibility of acquiring property adjoining the UTSA 1604 campus. The following were additions to the UTSA Downtown Campus: Monterey Building, Cattleman’s Square, and a twenty-year parking deal from TX DOT.

Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia asked about graduation and retention rates in five-year degree programs. Dr. Rosalie Ambrosino responded by reminding University Assembly members that by the Fall of 2008, every undergraduate degree program cannot exceed 120 hours. She added that since there are undergraduate degree programs that are five and six-year programs, such as Architecture and Engineering, UTSA will keep separate track of those, and will only count graduation and retention rates in four-year degree programs. Dr. Ambrosino also added that Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP) students count against graduation and retention rates at the federal level, but are not counted at the state level. This means that there is about an eight percent difference between the state and federal levels. She said that she would like to count CAP students in a special student status, but received different answers from the Coordinating Board.

B. Secretary – Dr. James McDonald

Dr. McDonald reported on the most recent UT System Faculty Advisory Council meeting held in Austin. He said that Dan Stewart, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Employee Services, and his team gave a presentation on attempts to revise and upgrade part of the UT Retirement Program. This would be a revision to the Tax Shelter Annuity (voluntary 403b) portion of faculty retirement savings options. Dr. McDonald explained that the voluntary 403b is served by 140 different vendors, a pool constituted in 1998. This essentially set a minimum bar for participation and a vast number of companies joined in. The UT System felt that there were too many vendors and their myriad of offerings were too confusing. Since 18 percent of all system faculty and staff participate in the voluntary 403b, UT System will put out a Request for Proposals for companies to offer more competitive packages for UT employees through a greatly reduced number of vendors, which will lower fees, increase service, and reduce confusion over options.

Dr. McDonald also reported that Davis Hillis and Paul Woodruff, UT Austin Faculty, discussed proposed changes to the UT Austin core curriculum. Because the core is now largely set to ensure transferability across campuses in Texas, the sub-committee on Curriculum Reform came up with a system to “extend” the core curriculum using a “flagging” system for upper division courses in writing, quantitative reasoning, global culture, diversity, ethics and leadership, research, and independent inquiry. These would dovetail with majors through “strands” or, preplanned links across the curriculum that would be created by a given major or from within a major. It was also recommended that the curriculum include two required signature courses with one exploring interdisciplinary science themes and another focusing on cultural themes.

The committee also recommended the creation of a new entity which would include a University College with a Dean and Vice Provost in order to oversee the core curriculum and the flag system. It was further

suggested that all incoming freshmen would be members of the university college and only after their first year could they declare a major. Dr. McDonald explained that the creation of this new entity would delay a choice of major, which would reduce the frequency of students changing their majors. He also added that a number of criticisms had been aimed at the Curriculum Reform Committee report including cost, new structures may create barriers and impediments where none previously existed, shifts responsibilities for core curriculum away from colleges that offer the courses, freshmen may feel lost in a large university college as opposed to an academic department, and tightly choreographed programs of study, such as Engineering, may fit poorly with the University College concept. Student members in the committee were strongly opposed to the University College concept, as they felt this new entity would stigmatize students with undeclared majors.

Terri Sullivan, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, provided a number of updates including UT System discussion with the Department of Education concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The Board of Regents is pressing for improvements in graduation rates, and the UT System is working on a revised Administrative Leave Policy.

Dr. McDonald added that the Faculty Governance web pages have been updated, and the Faculty Governance Newsletter is available by link for review. He concluded that the Provost search is moving forward, and UTSA is currently accepting applications. Review of these applications should begin shortly.

C. Other

1. Report from the Chair of the Faculty Senate – Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia

Dr. El-Kikhia reported that the Faculty Senate has been reviewing many program proposals for the 2006-2008 Undergraduate Catalog. He added that this process is quite cumbersome given the fact that UTSA colleges and schools are expanding their curricula and requirements. Dr. Rosalie Ambrosino suggested that the Faculty Senate should find a way to streamline the approval processes so that proposals will not be rejected based on minute details. Dr. El-Kikhia concluded that he will check into streamlining program proposals and policy methods in order to ease approval processes.

2. Report from the Chair of the Staff Council – Ms. Cynthia Orth

Ms. Orth reported that Staff Council's membership has increased, and a number of committees had been formed. These committees are discussing issues such as communication between staff, retirement processes, and scholarship opportunities for UTSA staff members. Ms. Orth concluded that she will report back to the University Assembly regarding statuses and updates from these committees.

3. Report from the President of Student Government – Mr. Jason Palasota

None

III. Unfinished Business

None

IV. New Business

None

V. Questions to the President

None

VI. Adjournment