THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

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

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY MEETING OF
November 19, 2013

The regular meeting of the University Assembly for the academic year 2013-2014 was held
November 19, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. in the Regents’ Room, MB 3.106 with John Frederick, Provost
and Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University of Texas at San Antonio, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Sedef Doganer, Jurgen Engelberth, John Frederick, Dan Gelo, Rhonda Gonzales,
Samuel Gonzales, Susan Hough, Kort Jackson, Eugene John, Laurie Long, Krisellen
Maloney, Marian Martinello, Sarah Netterlund, Lindsay Ratcliffe, Misty Sailors, Rebekah
Smith, Steven Woodall

Absent: Ricardo Romo (excused), Mauli Agrawal (excused), Justin Bingham (excused),
Zack Dunn (excused), Josh Fierro, Charles Garcia, Cie Gee, Sarah Gibson, Rosalind
Horowitz (excused), Kerry Kennedy, Manuel Maldonado, Daniel McTyre, Goutham
Menon, Laura Murray, Emeka Nwaeze, Alejandro Ontiveros, Amanda Ramon, Camille
Ramos, Chris Stewart, Jude Valdez (excused), Venetta Williams (excused), Richard
Wollney, Jesse Zapata

Guests: Bernard Arulanandam (for Mauli Agrawal), Lorenzo Garcia, Sarah Leach, Raul
Perez (for Zack Dunn)

II. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were approved.

III. Reports

A. Provost – John Frederick (for President Ricardo Romo)

Dr. Frederick said that various GRIP initiatives are currently underway, including the
restructuring of advising centers. Advising will now be centralized under academic
advising, and advisors will specialize in approximately 6 primary majors, with
corresponding secondary majors. The goal of the restructuring process is to give students
the opportunity to have the same advisor throughout their studies. It is estimated that 80%
of students will be able to do so. Dr. Frederick said that implementation will begin in January.

He mentioned UTSA’s inquiry into purchasing a building off-campus. However, he said that since UTSA did not receive the necessary funding from the UT System, it has been determined that the building acquisition will not go forward.

Dr. Frederick addressed the recent decline in research expenditures. He said that there has been a 5% decrease in expenditures this past year. He said that the factors which likely influenced the decrease are: a decline in the amount of proposals submitted, faculty with significant funding leaving the university, and a federal sequester which has limited funding and affected the federal research expenditures budget. Dr. Frederick mentioned that last year and this year have been large faculty recruiting years, which will likely bring in additional programs that may lead to additional funding.

He said that the Sombrilla fountain is currently under construction and is expected to begin running again in January. Once operational, the fountain will run off of condensate from the library. Multiple groups (such as the Alumni Association and the Student Green Fund) have helped to provide funding for this project.

An update was given on the status of the recreation center pool. The pool’s reconstruction was approved by the Board of Regents with a maximum offering of $5.9 million. The pool is expected to have a different design, including more lap lanes. The reconstruction is expected to be completed by July 2015.

Dr. Frederick said that the President is leading faculty focus groups for online learning, and a taskforce has been formed to address how to promote online course delivery more effectively among faculty and students. A report on this topic is expected at tomorrow’s Provost’s Council meeting.

He said that student affairs’ recruiting scholarships will be available for next year’s freshman class. These are 4-year renewable scholarships for students with suitable academic qualifications. Students will be awarded the scholarship with the opportunity for renewal each year, as long as they maintain the applicable qualifications. Dr. Frederick said that this is the first year for UTSA to provide this program, and that the program’s effectiveness will be assessed along the way.

B. Secretary of the General Faculty – Misty Sailors

Dr. Sailors said that the last SYSFAC meeting was held in September. The topic of employee relationships with students was discussed, and a taskforce has been formed to further address this issue. A formal report will be addressed in the Board of Regents’ November meeting.

Dr. Sailors said that the following resolutions were passed by SYSFAC:

- FAC Core Curriculum Statement supporting academic freedom and increased faculty involvement
- Creation of a System-wide Task Force for Environmental Sustainability Practices on Academic and Medical Campuses
- Resolution in Support of the Liberal Arts
C. Chair of the Faculty Senate – Rebekah Smith
Dr. Smith said that the process of creating a Conflict of Commitment/Conflict of Interest (COC/COI) policy began last January when a notice was received by UTSA requiring the implementation of a COC policy to be in place by February 1st. Concerns were raised by all campuses regarding the original COC policy. Efforts were made by faculty and administrators at all campuses to address these issues and a revised model policy was presented to SYSFAC in the fall. UTSA’s version of the policy has been undergoing stakeholder review for the past two weeks, with today being the deadline for feedback. Dr. Smith said that any remaining feedback should be sent to Jesse Zapata today.
Dr. Smith attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates’ October meeting, where pending changes from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board were presented. These changes include a time limit for decisions on new programs, THECB will no longer make decisions about closure for low-producing programs, and there are additional pending changes to the process of applying for graduate programs.
Dr. Smith said that the Faculty Senate recently elected Robert Hard as their new Vice Chair, to finish a previous member’s one-year term. The senate also approved the proposal for a MA in Geography. Dr. Smith said that the senate provided feedback and approval of various enrollment policy recommendations and approved the competency exam policy proposal.

D. Chair of the Staff Council – Sarah Netterlund (for Justin Bingham)
Ms. Netterlund said that Staff Council recently disbanded the smoking committee and formed a health and wellness committee. This new committee is currently working to provide more nutritious food options on campus and will be partnering with the recreation center to look at reducing staff members’ facility use fees. Staff Council is also partnering with the “Rowdy New U” program to further promote it among staff members.
She said that the annual “Strikes for Scholarships” fundraiser will be held in March.
Ms. Netterlund gave an update on the new Staff Appreciation Committee, which is now fully functioning and accepting nominations for employees to highlight each month.

E. President of Student Government – Raul Perez (for Zack Dunn)
Mr. Perez said that the Board of Regents is considering a potential shift in the process of student-led referendums. The current process begins with the student’s idea being presented to and voted on by the students, then a proposal is sent to the administration, followed by the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents is considering modifying the process by requiring students to present their ideas to the Board first, and if approved, the ideas would be presented back to the student body, followed by the administration, and ending back with the Board. The UT Student Advisory Council is concerned about the potential implications with regards to censorship of the student’s voices and a shift in the ownership of the decision-making process that the Board would have. Mr. Perez said that the Board will be discussing this issue in December, and a resolution from the UT Student Advisory Council is currently underway.
IV. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

V. New Business

- SECC results – David Rodriguez and Georgina Anguiano-Elliott
  Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Anguiano-Elliott thanked the assembly for the opportunity to share the results of UTSA’s 2013 State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC). The SECC leadership consists of 3 Tri-Chairs, 33 members in the President’s Advisory Committee, and 163 Area Champions. There are 3,698 benefits eligible employees at UTSA that are the focus of the giving campaign. UTSA’s 2013 goal for the campaign was $245,000, and as of yesterday UTSA has contributed $230,684. Although the exact dollar goal wasn’t reached this year, UTSA has increased its contribution from last year, which was $229,774. Various events were held to encourage contributions and raise additional funds for the campaign such as the annual step-a-thon (in April), the SECC book sale, the silent auction (in September), and the west campus breakfast/luncheon. Each of these events raised more funds than the previous year. In addition, these events were moved to different months so that a focus could be directed on individual pledges in the month of October. They said that the SECC campaign ended on October 31\textsuperscript{st}, but paper pledge forms are still being accepted and processed. The deadline to turn in a paper pledge form is November 29\textsuperscript{th}. So far, UTSA has a participation rate of 52.5\% which is short of the 65\% goal originally set at the beginning of the campaign. Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Anguiano-Elliott encouraged anyone who is intent on improving these numbers to volunteer to serve as an area champion for next year’s campaign.

- Proposal for amendment to the University Assembly bylaws
  o Article III, Section 1: Members
    The following proposal was presented to the assembly for consideration: Elimination of the “Chair of the Non-tenure Track Faculty Committee” from the list of ex officio members. The reasoning to eliminate this position is because it no longer exists. An official vote will be held at the assembly’s next meeting in February of 2014.

VI. Questions to the President

There were no questions.

VII. Adjournment

The next Assembly meeting will be held on February 18, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. in the Regents’ Room (MB 3.106).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.