The regular meeting of the University Assembly for the academic year 2014-2015 was held April 8, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room, JPL 4.04.22 with Ricardo Romo, President of the University of Texas at San Antonio, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Ricardo Romo, Ashton Alarcon, Elizabeth Ayala, Saadet Beeson, Felicia Castro-Villarreal, Elisabeth Cuadros, Jurgen Engelberth, Kirsten Gardner, Bethany Garza, Conor Harvey, Jill Hernandez, Michael Klein, Krisellen Maloney, Todd Wright

Absent: Mauli Agrawal (excused), Karen Daas (excused), Zack Dunn, John Frederick (excused), Daniel Gelo (excused), Sam Gonzales, Adrian Guajardo, Alandra Lawrence, Manuel Maldonado, Marian Martinello (excused), Jaime Martinez, Elyas Mercado, Laura Murray, Sarah Netterlund (excused), Emeka Nwaeze, Patrick O'Donnell, Alejandro Perez, Christina Phamvu, Lloyd Potter, Shannon Rios (excused), Jude Valdez (excused), Shuo Wang, Savin Weeranghe, Venetta Williams (excused), Jesse Zapata

Guests: Sherry Lindsey (for Laura Murray), Sonia Martinez, Rebekah Smith, Sarah Soulek, Mickey Stevenson (for Mauli Agrawal), Sandy Welch (for John Frederick)

II. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from October 15, 2014 were unanimously approved.

III. Topics of Discussion

**Legislative Update**

President Romo gave an update on some current legislative matters:

**Budget**

- House. HB -1 introduced version on Jan, 26, 2015 cut UTSA's GR Appropriations for 2016-17 biennium by $16.5M.
- HB-1 revised, on March 24th UTSA shows increase of $23.529.
- Senate, SB-2 introduced version of SB 2 on Jan, 27, 2015 cut UTSA's GR Appropriations for 2016-17 biennium by $5.3M.
Once Conference Committee is assigned, Committee will address the total investment in Formula Funding for higher education. House is investing less in Formula Funding and more in Research, Senate is doing the opposite. In addition Conference Committee will address a $5.3M hold harmless request for UTSA.

**Hazlewood Tuition Exemption**
- House - in HB 1 provides $30M in Article I (pool for all universities) + $23M from Hazelwood endowment in Article III.
- Senate - in SB 2 proposal to match the House, $30M in Article I (pool for all universities) + $23M from Hazelwood endowment in Article III.

FY2014, total impact at UTSA is $9.9M, with Legacy portion being $8M. Impact at UTSA over next biennium to be approximately $25M.

Conversations in both House and Senate are ongoing. Universities need immediate funding relief for the Legacy portion $169M, and Veteran groups continue to be vocal in keeping status quo. Discussions at Capitol center around: defining residency fix for veterans; exemption brought on by state's defeat in trial court in Houston; tightening up Legacy exemption; aligning exemption to reflect federal military benefits; and funding language which would be acceptable politically to electeds. Attorney General's Office has been consulted because of the residency litigation.

**Texas Research Incentive Program**
- House - in HB 1 provides an increase to TRIP from $35M to $70M in Article III for 8 emerging research universities.
- Senate - in SB 2 proposal to decrease TRIP by $8.9M, from $35M to $26.1M. This is still being worked out in Senate.

Article XI of HB 1 includes an additional $67.5M to address TRIP backlog. UTSA has a backlog of some $6.1M in private eligible gifts awaiting a TRIP match.

**University Research**
- HB 1000 by John Zerwas - with the collapse of the previous Governor's Emerging Technology Fund, the Legislature proposes to use the balance of $101M to support university research. House Higher Education Committee, April 8, left pending. The bill revises the structure for research funds for universities into a tiered structure which includes:

  **Tier 1** - Texas Research University Fund (TRUF) (previously the Texas Competitive Knowledge Fund (TCKF)) supports UT and A&M.
  **Tier 2** - Core Research Support Fund (CRSF) is for 8 emerging research universities (UTSA) - focuses on research expenditures over a 3-year average.
  **Tier 3** - Texas Comprehensive Research Fund (TCRF) (previously the Research Development Fund (RDF)) for all other universities.
Texas Grants

- House - in HB 1 Texas Grants - provides increase of $41M.
- Senate - in SB 2 Texas Grants - proposed increase of $83.4M, at $5K award per student, for an estimated 70,700 students in 2016 and 74,200 students in 2017.

UTSA has provided an average Texas Grant award of $4,378 per student per academic year, previous cuts of $6M in since 2011 have not been restored. Approximately 70% of UTSA students rely on grants.

TRB's/Capitol Projects

- SB 150-by Seliger-Senate TRB bill includes UTSA at $70M, passed out of Senate Higher Education Committee April 1.
- HB 100-by Zerwas-House TRB bill includes UTSA at $70M, passed out of House Higher Education Committee April 1, and passed to second reading on the House floor April 8. The bill will be heard on the third reading on April 9.

UTSA's Instructional Science & Engineering Building has a project cost of $115M. Building is for instructional laboratories and classrooms, STEM education and research, and will support programs that enhance teaching skills of students preparing for careers in science instruction.

Performance Based Tuition

- SB 778-by Seliger-Performance based tuition limitations for institutions of higher education. Passed out of Senate Higher Ed. on April 8th.

Bill provides Board of Regents with authority to approve tuition increases if universities attain certain performance measures/metrics (including 7 from THECB outcomes based funding metric), 4-year graduation rate, 6-year graduation rate, and administrative costs. Board of Regents would be responsible for setting targets for the various metrics.

Handguns on Campus

- SB 11-Birdwell/ Bettencourt/Burton/Campbell/Creighton/et al. (Pl): Relating to the carrying of concealed handguns on the campuses of and certain other locations associated with institutions of higher education. Passed on Senate Floor 20-11.
- HB 937-Fletcher-Relating to the carrying of concealed handguns on the campuses of and certain other locations associated with institutions of higher education. Voted out of House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety, not yet scheduled for House floor.

Partnerships

- HB 1088-Marquez-Relating to the establishment of the Texas Technical Center for Innovative Desalination at The University of Texas at El Paso in
partnership with The University of Texas at San Antonio. - Voted Favorably from Committee on House Natural Resources Committee on March 25th.

Other
- SB 1205-Relating to an environmental service fee (green fee) at public institutions of higher education. Left pending in Senate Higher Education April 8th. Allows UTSA, UTEP, and UT-Austin the opportunity to reauthorize the student "green fee", which has 5-year expiration in its current form. The bill adds the exception that the environmental services fee may be charged ($5 per student per semester) beyond the 5th academic year in which the fee was charged as long as the continuation of fee is approved by a majority vote of enrolled students. (Through a student referendum UTSA initiated this fee in 2009/2010).

Strategic Plan
President Romo gave an update on the strategic plan. He said that all meetings have been going well and the input has been very constructive. He mentioned that there has been approval for a new parking garage to be located by the Art building. President Romo said that the new Vice President for Business Affairs will start on April 27th. In relation to the strategic plan, he is encouraging everyone to think about the best use for the downtown campus. The downtown campus currently houses the colleges of Architecture and Public Policy, but there may be other uses for it as well.

IV. Open Discussion

V. Adjournment
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.