The regular meeting of the University Assembly for the academic year 2016-2017 was held November 8, 2016 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, Mauli Agrawal, Emily Bonner, Sony Bruno, Carolyn Campa, Victor DeOliveira, Kate Falconer, Kirsten Gardner, Sam Gonzales, Dean Hendrix, Andrew Hubbard, Eugene John, Carla Juarez, Mike Klein, Annie Maynes, Julieta Nelson, Chris Packham, Bhumi Patel, Lloyd Potter, Mariela Rodriguez, Joshua Thurow, Jude Valdez, Jason Vasquez, Forrest Wilson, Todd Wright

Absent: John Alexander, Bernard Arulanandam, Tomas Bello, Jeremy Cash, Jessica Eskander, Marjie French, Kathy Funk-Baxter, Daniel Garcia, Daniel Gelo (excused), KC Gonzalez, Matthew Jackson, Linda Martinez, Jesse Zapata

Guests: Henry Aruiza (SGA), Rhonda Gonzales, Cody Kieber (SGA), Sonia Martinez, Sarah Soulek

II. Approval of the Minutes
The minutes from March 3, 2016 were unanimously approved.

III. Election of Parliamentarian for 2016-2017
Jason Vasquez volunteered to serve as Parliamentarian. As there were no other nominations, Mr. Vasquez was elected to serve as Parliamentarian by acclamation.

IV. Meeting topics

- Blueprint update – President Ricardo Romo
  President Romo discussed the updated framework for UTSA’s Blueprint plan. He emphasized that students are the university’s #1 priority and explained the importance of research in achieving the university’s goals. The five major goals outlined in the Blueprint plan are:
  1. “We will transform students into successful scholars, global citizens and leaders.”
  2. “We will create scholarly work and research that significantly impacts society.”
  3. “We will enrich the quality of life and economic prosperity of the communities we serve.”
4. “We will deliver world-class resources, support and infrastructure commensurate with a Tier One institution.”
5. “We will achieve recognition and esteem as a premier research university.”

A question was asked about why the name of the plan changed from “Blueprint 2020” to “Blueprint”. President Romo said that this allows for additional changes or modifications to the plan as needed in the future.

- **Student Success** – Dr. Mauli Agrawal
  Dr. Agrawal said that there are a few things that UTSA should focus on improving, as student success is the #1 goal in the strategic plan. Among these are both 4-year and 6-year graduation rates. 4-year graduation rates of UTSA students are about 15-16% and 6-year graduation rates are about 30-35%. The national average for 6-year graduation rates is approximately 60%. In looking at the one year retention rate (fall 2010 to fall 2014 cohorts) 73% remain at UTSA, and by their third year (fall 2008 to fall 2012 cohorts) only 50% remain. Dr. Agrawal stressed the importance of moving together to solve this problem. He said that the university has looked at good practices elsewhere, including Georgia State who has a similar profile to UTSA. They focused on 5-6 larger issues and used data analytics to help students succeed. Dr. Agrawal identified the 5 large issues that UTSA needs to focus on:
  1. **Onboarding** – pre-freshman programs, summer academy with preset curriculum
  2. **First Year Experience** – advising, meta majors (freshmen blocks), AIS, major selection and career advice, new model for common math
  3. **Focused Academic Support** – supplemental instruction (SI), tutoring
  4. **Financial Aid** – proactive approach
  5. **Leadership and Professional Preparation** – general career skills, major-specific skills, marketable skills, mentoring (peers, faculty, college)

These 5 objectives have been grouped into taskforces led by different Deans. Dr. Agrawal said that the environment at UTSA should focus on family and helping students before a problem arises. All of these things together make up a Coordinated and Linked Approach for Student Success (CLASS).

- **PIVOT** – Dr. Rhonda Gonzales
  Dr. Gonzales discussed the federally funded 5-year grant which has enabled UTSA to conduct this campus-wide project. The goal is to determine how to get students to the finish line. She said that unlike some grants, all of these programs are available to all students on campus. There are 4 programs that have been launched and will be assessed over the next few years, to determine which ones to institutionalize. The programs are:
  1. **First to go and graduate** – This program employs 1st generation students as peer mentors and also includes 1st generation faculty. So far, 89% of students were retained with 6% graduating.
  2. **Roadrunner transition experience** – Peer mentors focusing on sophomore and transfer students. This program has over 200 participants so far.
  3. **Math matters** – This program looks at larger classes that are often more challenging for students. A spring class was piloted that utilized a lab environment for math courses. 75% of students in the course earned an A/B. This program is expected to scale up to 400 students.
4. Alamo Runners – This program is a partnership between the Alamo Colleges and UTSA to get students who are accepted to UTSA into classes early, focusing on dual enrollment.

V. Reports

- Chair of the Faculty Senate – Dr. Emily Bonner
  Dr. Bonner said that UT System is working on a shared governance initiative to see how different universities within the system enact shared governance on their campuses. She also said that the system is working on dual credit initiatives and the Chancellor is promoting his quantum leaps, looking at metrics to measure student success.

- Secretary of the General Faculty – Dr. Joshua Thurow
  Dr. Thurow said that he recently attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates where a report was given regarding Title IX. The report identified threats to academic freedom and encouraged colleges to have stronger measures protecting academic freedom in place. In addition, a documentary was shown which gave a more in-depth view of higher education.

- Chair of Staff Council – Forrest Wilson
  Mr. Wilson said that there were two recent staff appreciation award winners highlighted in the last newsletter. Staff Council is also working on various service projects to encourage and strengthen community involvement, including volunteering at Haven for Hope. Other upcoming events include the Diploma Dash, MLK March, and Habitat for Humanity. Staff Council has also recently adopted a code of conduct, posted on the Staff Council webpage. Mr. Wilson said that a donation will be made to the Roadrunner Memorial Garden, on behalf of Staff Council.

- Alumni Association President – Mike Klein
  Mr. Klein said that the Alumni Association is working on updating their strategic plan to better integrate it with the university’s Blueprint plan. The Alumni Association is working with its stakeholders across the university on this project.

- SGA President – Andrew Hubbard
  Mr. Hubbard thanked the Staff Council for their contribution to the Roadrunner Memorial Garden and said that there are 4 days left of the campaign. He said that SGA is working on various initiatives relating to student health and environmental sustainability. He said that SGA is growing, and has even more representatives this year than last year. Mr. Hubbard said that SGA strives to foster an inclusive and encouraging environment for all students at UTSA.

VI. Questions/Comments

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.