



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE STAFF COUNCIL MEETING OF August 10, 2005

The twelfth regular meeting of the Staff Council for the academic year 2004-2005 was held in the Campus Recreation Center Studio Blue at 8:30 a.m. with Venetta Williams presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance.

Members present: Lisa Blancas-Olivares, Kim Brandt, Chris Chipps, Lachelle Dixon, Patti Dunn, Maria Espericueta, Suzy Gray, Fred Hample, Elnora Kennedy, Carolyn Motley, Carmen Ortegon, Cindy Orth, Ann Roberts, Trish Roberts, Sonia Saenz, Anne Speights, Mary Lou Spillers, Rosalinda Stead, Velma Tristan, Steve Wagner, Venetta Williams.

Members absent: Rebecca Alvarez, Minnie Martinez, Dee Russell-Terrell, Don Swinson, Roger Terry.

II. Minutes of the July 28, 2005, meeting were reviewed and approved.

III. Opening Remarks

Venetta Williams welcomed all newly elected Council members, who were guests at this meeting. She introduced the Executive Board members and asked all Council members to introduce themselves.

IV. Staff Council Committees

A. Communications Committee: Patti Dunn was introduced as the committee chair. The committee is responsible for dispensing news (web page, e-mails, etc.) and for seeing how Council representatives interact with each other and their constituents.

B. Employee Benefits/Compensation Committee: Trish Roberts was introduced as the committee chair. The committee is working on a list of discounts available to UTSA employees from various vendors. The committee also follows up on questions regarding the employee education benefit and fields questions to HR regarding HR issues and/or policy.

C. Elections Committee: Lisa Blancas-Olivares was introduced as committee chair. The committee works year-round on the election process. This year they will work on streamlining the process and look at the possibility of going to an online process.

- D. By-Laws Committee: Cindy Orth was introduced as committee chair. All members were provided with a copy of the current by-laws. The by-laws will be updated in September implementing changes that were submitted by the committee. The committee is waiting for Dr. Romo's approval on the proposed changes. Changes include contacting members after 3 absences and a process for replacing members who leave the Council for any reason. Based on election results, alternates will be asked to replace departing members.
- E. Fundraising Committee: This committee was proposed in the by-laws process to allow Staff Council an avenue to raise money to use for potential scholarships or to do community service for the university.
- V. Old Business: Council members were reminded of their commitment to attend monthly meetings and to serve and participate on standing committees. Cindy will e-mail a list of the committees and their responsibilities to all returning and new members so they can sign up for a committee at the September meeting. Members will also be asked to sign a letter acknowledging their commitment to attend meetings and to help on committees.
- VI. New Business
 - A. Venetta reviewed the materials provided to the new members. This included information on the Employee Advisory Council, of which Venetta is a member. EAC's membership term has been extended to three years. Venetta asked the Council members to allow her to continue serving on the EAC although she is no longer on Staff Council. The packet also included samples of Best Practice Documents, which all institutions are required to submit.
 - B. Returning and new members agreed to keep the monthly meetings at 8:30 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month, except for November and December when the meetings will be held on the third Thursday due to the holidays. The September, October, January, March, April, June, and August meetings will be held at the 1604 Campus (Rec Center Studio Blue). Meetings in December, February, May, and July will be held at the Downtown Campus (location to be determined).
 - C. One of the goals of Staff Council this past year was to improve communications. To this end, the Staff Council had various speakers this year to provide information on different issues of interest to the staff. Among issues covered were clarification on bus passes for staff; the academic "state of the union"; HR information regarding benefits, FMLA, STARS, and future vacation dates; and information on the smoke-free task force. The Council also worked for several months on revising the by-laws. Proposed changes to the by-laws include attendance stipulations and a process for replacing departing members.
 - D. Executive Board members will be elected at the September meeting. Cindy encouraged members to review Article IV in the by-laws to find out what is

expected of each position. Staff Council also needs to name a representative who will represent the Staff Council on the University Assembly.

- E. A request was made to provide Vice Presidents a copy of the letter sent to newly elected members so they will be aware of their commitment to the Council. Patti Dunn reminded members that the member list is available on the Staff Council web page. The Communications Committee will create a “web development” subcommittee to look at ideas and suggestions on revamping the Council’s web page.
 - F. Fred Hample asked the Council to revisit the possibility of increasing the Employee Educational Benefit to 6 credit hours per long semester. Venetta notified the Council that this issue is before the Board of Regents. They want to ensure consistency of this benefit across all institutions. Fred also mentioned the certificate training programs offered by HR whereby staff take a certain series of classes and are given a certificate of completion. He mentioned that UT Telecampus is looking for opportunities to expand and the possibility of them offering courses designated for employees at the university. One issue that was previously stopped by UT System was the conversion of sick leave accumulation to vacation or payable time. We should follow up with other institutions and bring this and other issues before the Employee Advisory Council.
 - G. The Election Committee will look at a better way of conducting the election process. They will also look at the way Staff Council members are elected and see about developing districts instead of going by VP areas. They will look into an electronic balloting system.
- VII. Venetta Williams thanked the Council members for their support this past year. Cindy Orth presented her with a farewell gift from the Council.
- VIII. Next meeting: September 22, 2005, at the Recreation Center (Studio Blue), at 8:30 a.m.
- IX. Meeting adjourned.