



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE STAFF COUNCIL MEETING OF January 26, 2006

The fifth regular meeting of the Staff Council for the 2005-2006 academic year was held in the Main Building Regents' Room at 8:30 a.m., with Cindy Orth presiding.

I. Call to order.

Members present: Stephanie Barlow, Kim Brandt, Chris Chipps, Veronica Cortez, Sharon Cropper, Edna Dominguez, Patti Dunn, Nancy Ekstrom, Maria Espericueta, Janie Garcia, Amie Guerrero, Belinda Munoz, Carmen Ortegón, Cindy Orth, Derrick Ozuna, Rachel Pullen, Trish Roberts, Shirley Rowe, Dee Russell-Terrell, Corinne Sabo, Nina Sosa, Anne Speights, Rosalinda Stead, Melissa Tenberg, Maria Villarreal, Velma Tristan, Steve Wagner, Lori Zerr.

Members absent: Laurie Gay (excused), Sabina Kapoor, Minnie Martinez, Blanca Muniz (excused), Billy Simmons (excused).

II. Breakfast hosted by the Office of the President.

III. Forum with President Ricardo Romo.

A. Cindy Orth introduced the function of Staff Council to Dr. Romo.

B. Dr. Romo gave a State of the University address, where he discussed two major challenges the University is facing:

- i. As UTSA is growing, there are capacity conflicts; we have not been able to measure our capacity. Strategic planning is essential, and various Staff Council members will be asked to join a planning committee that will discuss UTSA's future in terms of enrollment and its implications. It is important for us to assess our direction and intent, particularly for any new buildings. Additionally, we are seeking ways of acquiring new land.
- ii. Graduation and retention rates are a major concern. As many San Antonio students have financial need and family duties, retention is difficult at UTSA. We all – faculty, staff and students – are charged to pitch in to make UTSA successful with graduation and retention.

C. Dr. Romo updated us on the status of the Rowdy art structure. Though still in development, Dr. Romo has high hopes for this statue's success, based on the work he has seen of the commissioned artist.

D. Dr. Romo invited us to the February 10 dedication of the new Bioscience-Engineering Building.

E. Dr. Romo asked Staff Council to share various concerns:

- i. Maria Villarreal asked about plans for increasing student housing. Dr. Romo's response was that this is a tough problem we are facing now. At the Downtown Campus, expenses and purchasing difficulties are obstacles. Traffic and housing are ongoing problems that UTSA is actively working to solve.
- ii. Melisa Tenberg expressed concern as to what advances UTSA was making. Dr. Romo said that, among other advances, our institution is a leader in the high amount of nighttime courses offered.
- iii. Corinne Sabo posed the question of how UTSA may be impacted by the pending possibility of bringing a Texas A&M branch to San Antonio. Dr. Romo assured us that UTSA has a strong case for obtaining funds from the legislature; in this sense, a Texas A&M branch possibly may not impact us negatively.
- iv. Rachel Pullen asked about the status of UTSA acquiring a football program. Dr. Romo said that although such a program would be expensive, he is seeking assistance from various consultants to explore possibilities for us to host football events.
- v. Shirley Rowe inquired as to whether or not tuition rates would be increasing. According to Dr. Romo, the rates would continue to increase, but we should take pride in the fact that we still provide a good bargain in our tuition rates.
- vi. Derrick Ozuna discussed a nighttime safety issue that may concern various UTSA individuals. Dr. Romo said he would look into possibly extending the shuttle service to support those who have late-night classes.
- vii. Belinda Munoz posed a question about a national statistic relating to the fact that Hispanics are expected to be the largest minority group yet their education levels are not expected to follow. She expressed that she could not relate to these statistics, being a part-time graduate student in San Antonio and sitting in classrooms with high Hispanic student enrollments. Dr. Romo agreed with this point and discussed how statistics are at times manipulated.
- viii. Patti Dunn spoke of the need on all staff members' parts to give back to UTSA, and Dr. Romo supported her idea, adding that UTSA should also give back to the community.

IV. Minutes of the December 15, 2005, meeting were reviewed and approved.

V. Opening remarks.

A. Cindy Orth introduced new Staff Council members who have filled recent vacancies:

- i. Corinne Sabo, with the Office of Disbursements
- ii. Nina Sosa, with the Office of Institutional Diversity
- iii. Maria Villarreal, with the Office of Advising

B. Cindy Orth informed us that the various other UTSA vice presidents were unfortunately unable to attend today's meeting.

VI. New business.

A. Per our vote in December, the Director of Parking & Transportation, David Kapalko, will visit with us during our February meeting. We may at that time present Mr. Kapalko with various issues related to parking and transportation.

VII. Staff Council Committee Reports

A. Employee Benefits/Compensation Committee, with Veronica Cortez as Chair:

- i. This committee has researched how FMLA is administered at other UT components, and they have found conflicting answers. Some answers point to the idea that our FMLA is similar to other institutions, and other answers point to the idea that ours is different. This committee is awaiting further information.
- ii. Cindy Orth requested to see if the FMLA information may be gathered to be presented to the Advisory Board in hopes of creating a unification process.
- iii. Employee benefits issues raised the question of why there seems to be no unification as to job reclassification procedures; Cindy Orth said we may be able to create a proposal to respond to these issues, based on a study.

B. Communications Committee, with Rosalinda Stead as Chair

- i. A test version of the revamped Staff Council website is online, and this will be brought to us for our review.
- ii. Our logo has been slightly altered.
- iii. The Staff Council weblink has been added to the QuickLinks section of the UTSA and *UTSAToday* websites.

- C. Elections/Membership Committee, with Dee Russell-Terrell as Chair: This group will meet soon to discuss timelines for elections.

- D. Fund Raising Committee, with Melissa Tenberg as Chair:
 - i. This group is working to finalize information and requirements related to staff scholarships.
 - ii. Due to time commitments, our scholarships will be turned over to be managed by the Scholarship office.
 - iii. One organization will be donating \$1,000 to this scholarship.
 - iv. This committee is seeking volunteers to assist during Homecoming activities.
 - v. An ice cream social is being considered, to raise funds for the scholarship.
 - vi. We were asked if we could email Melissa to create a database of UTSA alumni who currently work at UTSA.

- E. Bylaws Committee, with Steve Wagner as Chair: This group plans to meet soon, as recommendations are needed and necessary.

- VIII. Next meeting: February 23, 2006, in the Durango Building Southwest Room (DB 1.124) at the Downtown Campus at 8:30 a.m.

- IX. Meeting adjourned.