



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE STAFF COUNCIL MEETING OF June 26, 2008

The tenth regular meeting of the Staff Council for the 2007-2008 academic year was held at the Student Rec Center, Texas Room, at the 1604 Campus at 8:30 a.m., with Sarah Gonzales, Chair, presiding.

Call to Order

Members present: Allegra Castro, Brad Chandler, Carolyn Cochran, Carlita Contreras, Sally Crouser, Sarah Gonzales, Carol Gonzalez, Pat Hedelius, Sherry Lindsey, Alegra Lozano, Cece Ortegon, Cindy Orth, Elba Ramos, Shirley Rowe, Susan Sandoval, Frank Segura, Anne Speights, Jennifer Storm, Lisa Talcott, Brenda Tamayo, Andrea Watts.

Members absent: Paula Castillo, Roy Garza, Brent League (excused), Mary McNair (excused), Sharron Pacheco (excused), Maria Roberts (excused), Dee Russell-Terrell, Corinne Sabo (excused), Melissa Tenberg (excused), Cissy Thorpe, Donna Ware (excused), Todd Wollenzier.

Introductory Remarks by the Chair

Overview of meeting agenda items. Introduction of guest speaker, Janet Parker, Associate Vice President, Financial Affairs Office, to speak on the tuition and fee proposal and 2009 fiscal year budget. Other representatives present were Mary Simon, Senior Director of Budget Planning and Development, Budget Planning and Development Office and Bruce Tingle, Compensation and Employment Manager, Human Resources Office. The Power Point presentation is available on the Staff Council website: <http://www.utsa.edu/sc/>.

- The UT Board of Regents asked all the UT campuses to submit a tuition and fee proposal, which was due in January 2008.
- The proposal would cover two fiscal years, starting with this academic year, Fall 2008.
- The proposal looks towards maximizing tuition revenue while limiting increases to both college and course designated fees.
- The proposal looks at campus life enhancements, including the expansion of the University Center, the approved increase in the athletics fee, and the new transportation fee.
- A large tuition and fees committee, consisting primarily of students, has met three times to discuss how the current tuition and fees are being used.
- Some items that are being looked at include:
 - Enrollment growth and the pressures it places on the budget and facilities.
 - Total academic costs.
 - Including:
 - Statutory costs: similar rate set for all components in the UT System.
 - Designated tuition: concept of tuition deregulation set forth by Governor Perry. It allows each campus to determine need and to help fund growth during fiscal crisis.
 - Mandatory and average course fees.
 - UTSA has requested to exceed the current 4.95% cap on tuition increase, to be able to increase the fees supported by student referenda (campus life enhancements).

- Critical Budget Issues:
 - Enrollment at UTSA is up by 60%, but the state funding UTSA receives, based on full-time student enrollment, is the lowest in the UT System.
 - State appropriations have declined, in comparison to total revenues.
 - Faculty/Staff resources are strained; UTSA has one of the highest student to faculty ratio in the state, and is relying on part-time faculty.
 - Facilities are strained; UTSA is at half the space where other UT campuses are (on average).
- The resources for the fiscal year budget for September 1, 2008 – August 31, 2009. UTSA is not only looking at tuition revenues, but at other resources available that are not being used. UTSA is looking into what can be considered for internal reallocations.
- A breakdown of the budget for the educational and general requirements, including the net expenditure increases, and the operating budget. A breakdown of the budget can be found on the Power Point presentation on the Staff Council website: www.utsa.edu/sc/.

Discussion questions after presentation:

- College fees, do they come into the budget?
 - Fees go directly to the colleges, and are capped. The State recently audited the use of fees, and we are waiting the report that is to come out in July.
- Any discussions on tuition breaks for students taking 15 hours vs 12 hours (i.e., is the tuition the same)?
 - This has not been mandated yet but it is being discussed. Part of the discussion includes looking into the flat rate with the next legislative session.
- What about the Texas Tomorrow Fund? How can we keep up with the rate increase in tuition?
 - This fund is for state schools only. All Texas higher education schools are averaged to determine the tuition rate. This fund was established before the tuition deregulation, and in 2003 was stopped due to tuition deregulation.
- When can employees expect more information on merit?
 - Once merit is approved by area Vice Presidents and sent to Human Resources, then area Supervisors can start notifying employees.
 - Human Resources have just started to receive templates from the areas, and something should be ready by mid July. The merit process timeline and general merit information is available online and can be linked through the HR compensation website: <http://www.utsa.edu/hr/compensation/index.cfm>.
- The old performance evaluation had a numeric value. How does the numeric value compare with the new measures, which are not numerical (Outstanding, Solid Performance, and Improvement Needed)?
 - Even though there are three standards, there is a range of performance.
 - Managers are offered broad guidance on the ratings, and it is recommended that essential job functions are given more weight.
- Is there new performance evaluation software?
 - Human Resources is still in the process of working with the new software, and hopes to start with a pilot group at the end of this year. The software will be implemented next fiscal year. The software will allow users to set weights for the measured values.

Motion made to change the structure of the Staff Council meeting notes to only include titles, and not member names. Motion was seconded and carried.

Motion made to accept April meeting minutes. Motion seconded and approved with changes. Motion made to accept May meeting minutes. Motion seconded and approved with changes. Motion made to accept June special meeting minutes. Motion seconded and approved with changes.

Election of Vice Chair: confirmation of quorum met, Staff Council Chair reviewed Vice Chair's qualifications and duties. Shirley Rowe was nominated and accepted the nomination. A second Staff Council member was nominated and declined the nomination. A speech was given by Shirley Rowe, and a vote was held. Shirley Rowe nominated as Vice Chair by majority vote.

New Business

Fall Convocation is August 25th, in the 1604 Student Recreation Center. Staff Council was asked to provide two Staff Marshals to participate.

Motion made to have the By-Laws Committee come up with a by-laws amendment to address the structure of recall meetings. Motion was seconded, and carried.

Old Business

Committee Reports:

Fundraising Committee: the committee has received a contract from Entertainment Books, but it has to be brought through Gary Lott's office (Financial Services) first. The committee is on course for the final implementation of selling the books. The committee brought forth some questions to Staff Council regarding the selling of the books; what would the goal be? What is the commitment? What is the willingness to commit? The company will only send 40 books at one time. Some suggestions presented included advertising on UTSA Today, getting a booth at Best Fest, and Staff Council buying a book as an example and incentive. Another question posed inquired if pre-sale or early orders can be done. The books will be available as soon as early August. The committee will have more pre-sale information for the next Staff Council meeting.

Elections Committee: the committee plans to meet soon and is looking for Staff Council volunteers to join the committee. The committee is working on the process for distributing the Staff Council elections ballots. By next week, they plan to meet with Steve Wilkerson for follow-up. All the forms are done and are being placed on Survey Monkey. The voting turn around is expected to be shorter due to the new electronic format. The committee is working on a paper format for those who do not have access to a computer.

By-Laws Committee: Elba Ramos is the only member eligible to serve as Chair of the committee, and was appointed Committee Chair by Staff Council Chair. The council is working on the by-laws updates, and has set the goal of having them completed by August. Volunteers are needed to serve on the committee.

Issues Committee: Committee Chair presented updates on new and current issues.

- A question was brought forth regarding who handles conflict resolution. The Employee Relations office assists with mediation and conflict resolution. More information can be found on their website at <http://www.utsa.edu/hr/EmployeeRelations/index.cfm>.
- A concern was posed regarding the content of office emails being sent out to notify department staff if an employee calls out sick. Two questions were raised; the first one was

regarding the violation of HIPPA. The second question was regarding the concern that the same email is not sent out for other department staff who call in sick. Per David Diaz, Associate Director of Employee Relations:

- If an email does not disclose confidential information, it is not in violation of HIPPA. David suggested that emails sent out to notify employees of an absence should be generic. For example, “David will not be in today.” A second example given, “David will not be in today. If you have any questions regarding a certain project, please work with (name).”
- If the practice of an office is to send an email to notify employees of an absence, then the practice should be applied consistently for all employees. If an employee feels that this is not the practice, then the employee should speak with his/or her supervisor or to the Employee Relations office for options to address their concern.
- A question was posed regarding Employee Relations, if it a resource specifically for staff or for management. Per David Diaz, the Employees Relations office is a resource for all employees.
- A question was posed about the concern of rising fuel costs and the possibility of VIA offering a discount pass. Per Jane Wilcox, Director of Business Auxiliary Services, anyone may purchase a pass, but UTSA does not have an agreement with VIA for discounted passes. Individuals can utilize one of the VIA Park and Ride locations, which offers the convenience of parking without a permit and accessing both campuses using VIA routes 93 and 94 for free. Per Issues Committee Chair, more information regarding AlterNet rides and van pooling are available on the Parking and Transportation website: www.utsa.edu/parking
- A question was posed about where to address concerns and suggestions for improvement of the employee educational benefit. More information regarding the new INT 149 – Tuition Assistance policy can be found at www.utsystem.edu/policy/policies/int149.html . Currently, the benefit is under review by Human Resources, and any concerns can be shared through Staff Council.
- Previous concerns including the DVD check-out policy and disabled parking spaces at the HSS are still being reviewed.
- During the Staff Council meeting, a concern was brought forth about comparing UTSA’s employee educational benefit to UT Austin’s. UT Austin employees get three hours free each semester or six hours per fiscal year that are fully covered, where as UTSA does not cover 100% of tuition and fees. More information can be found at www.utsa.edu/sc/msc/employeebene.cfm . The issue will be sent to the Issues Committee Chair for further research.
- Other issues brought forth in the Staff Council meeting:
 - Employees are receiving postcards about Doctors who are no longer being listed on the PPO list. Every Doctor has to submit paperwork to Blue Cross Blue Shield to be listed, so it’s an individual Doctor’s decision to be a part of the PPO list.
 - Several questions were posed regarding the Staff Council scholarship; have there been repeat winners? What is the information that goes out? How the winners are identified? How many staff apply for the scholarship? How to advertise the scholarship more? One suggestion included finding out if there is a way to pull a list of those who applied for the educational benefit and sending those employees more information about the scholarship. Some other suggestions were to send out the scholarship information through the Staff Council email, put the information on the Staff Council Website, and to present the scholarship to the winners at the annual staff awards ceremony.

Communications Committee: the Committee is working on updates to the website. The committee needs a replacement for the Chair position, and volunteers to participate on the committee. Those

who are interested can contact the current committee members. The replacement for the Committee Chair position has been tabled until the next meeting.

Treasurer: no report.

Other items:

- If any member of Staff Council is wanting to serve on a committee, please contact the Chair of the committee and copy the Staff Council Chair and Secretary.

Next Meeting

July 24, 8:30am-10:30am, in the University Center, Willow Room, at the 1604 Campus.

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes prepared by Alegra Lozano, Secretary/Historian.