The University of Texas at San Antonio  
Summary Minutes of the Staff Council Meeting  
April 28, 2011

The eighth regular meeting of the Staff Council for the 2010-2011 academic year was held at the UTSA Main Campus in the Recreation Center Texas Room, and was called to order at 8:35 a.m. with Chair Cié Gee presiding.

Members present:
Alegra Lozano, Amy Ramirez, Anne Macintosh Speights, Anne Jackson, Annie Maynes, Bradley Jones, Burt Reynolds, Carey Eagan, Christi Fish, Christopher Goldsberry, Cié Gee, Cynthia Orth, Gloria Harris, Gregory Frieden, Joleen Reynolds, Juan Noval, Ninette Roberson (UT Health Science Center San Antonio), Rebecca Pendell Garza, Ruby Rodriguez, Ruth Coates, Shannon Rios, Shirley Rowe, Tammy Fernandez and Venetta Williams

Members absent (excused):
Clay Haverland, Diane Cordova, Elba Ramos, Eric Cooper, Laurie Long and Mark Mungua

Members absent (unexcused):
Alfonzo Villarreal, Belinda Dovalina, Blanch Torres, Henrietta Vasquez, Michael Witzel and Ray Gonzales

Minutes from previous meeting:
Minutes were approved from the previous meeting.

Old Business

Employee Educational Benefit, Chris Goldsberry
Employees now need a signature on all Employee Educational Benefit forms, regardless of the class they are taking or the reason for taking it. UTSA pays to process the form, so it needs to verify that the person making the request is staff.

Staff Council Scholarship, Chris Goldsberry
Last year, we had three applicants. This year, we had 167 applications. Twenty-two essays were eligible to go to committee. We will pick four recipients.

We pushed the scholarship hard this year. Next year, we need to push the scholarship essay.

Most of the general scholarships like ours are awarded in May or June. The Scholarship Office receives 9,000 general scholarship applications, up from 1,500 before the form went online.
Smoking Committee Update, Cié Gee & Joleen Reynolds
Cié had a phone meeting with Kerry Kennedy about the initiative to make UTSA smoke-free. He has discussed it with President Romo. President Romo is undecided. He wants us to administer a survey to get a general sense of the campus’ opinion. He is likely to go with the survey results.

The survey should include faculty, staff and students. Cié sent our survey to Mr. Kennedy. He reviewed it. Cié and Chris Goldsberry went to a Faculty Senate meeting with the UTSA Student Government Association (SGA). Cié mentioned it to President Romo. He was again undecided on the issue. The Faculty Senate and SGA both voiced their “for and against” concerns. President Romo wants to hear the input. Mr. Kennedy let Cié know that he had spoken with Dr. Paine. To conduct a survey correctly, we need to have Linda Mahoney and Gerry Dizinno send it to students and faculty/staff, respectively.

We need to properly plan the administration of the surveys so the results are validated. We might also want to try administering a paper/pencil survey.

University Excellence Awards, Cié Gee
President Romo told Cié that he appreciated the Staff Council’s hard work and that the event was lovely. The Laboratory Animal Resource Center (LARC) swept the Excellence Awards.

Staff Council Appreciation Award
Amy Ramirez nominated Graduation Coordination, which includes Cié Gee, Monica Bowden and their supervisor, Donna Edmondson. Cié suggested that it be given to Monica alone. Amy works with Monica, but Cié’s office awards the degree for all students and Amy wants to nominate the entire office. We will recognize Graduation Coordination in May.

Chris nominated Glynda Steele in Housing. She and Chris work one-on-one to keep students at UTSA despite financial burdens. Glynda markets UTSA Housing. She works with foster youth and homeless youth. She helps coordinate bacterial meningitis shots. She works on Moving Day to help the students move in, even if their Financial Aid has not been disbursed.

Carey Eagan nominated ITC Visitor Services Department for a May Award. The department coordinates all of the volunteers and tours at the Institute for Texan Cultures. In the March through May time frame, they have thousands of students visit the museum.

New Business

Employee Advisory Council Report, Shirley Rowe & Venetta Williams
Shirley Rowe and Venetta Williams both attended the recent Employee Advisory Council Meeting. Shirley provided an update on behalf of both ladies.

Meeting topics included:
- A Legislative Update
- UT System Budget
- Health & Wellness
- Recruitment & Retention
- Policies and Procedures

Legislative Update:
The uncertainty of the state budget may push annual enrollment for employee benefits to August instead of July, when we typically have annual enrollment. Also, there are 330 bills up for Legislative review that are related to employment conditions. A few are likely to be passed such as:
  - The Permissive Furlough Bill, which allows employees to take a furlough with pay cut if they desire it
  - Guns on Campus. System will pull together guidelines for the respective institutions to follow in case it is passed.

UT System Budget:
Our finances are better this year than they were last year. The Texas Lands Office earned $820 million. Nevertheless, System officials have created a Cost Containment Committee to look at areas for savings other than salaries. Examples:
- Getting new equipment instead of keeping equipment from lease period to lease period
- Using Skype instead of phones for people who are rarely in the office
- Centralizing services for offices
- Consolidating the number of administrative assistants that support sister groups (keeping in mind that people would not lose their jobs)
- Consolidated purchasing for maintenance jobs
- Hiring at the beginning of the month instead of the last week of the month

The Employee Advisory Council website would list these types of ideas so schools could see what their sister institutions are doing.

Health & Wellness Committee:
The UT System Health and Wellness Committee is gathering stories about healthy living. If you have done something to improve your health, it wants to know about it for possible inclusion on the UT System website. Small steps make big improvements in health.

The Committee is also looking at the work/life balance. It is drafting definitions for flex scheduling and telecommuting and examining space sharing.
Recruitment & Retention:
The Recruitment and Retention Committee is focusing on Employee Discount Programs. The UT System passed new policies that allow third-party educational discount program administrators to run our programs. The bulk negotiating is likely to pass on more cost savings to employees.

Staff development and tuition reimbursement will be reviewed soon. Staff development is more of a priority now that the budget is tight. Tuition reimbursement costs money. Shirley talked to the UT System about the UTSA-wide annual conference Student Affairs offers for $10/person.

Policies & Procedures Committee:
Venetta sits on this committee. It is examining performance evaluations. Regents’ rules require managers to conduct annual performance evaluations. The evaluations are required for merit increases, promotions, etc. Currently, there is no way to tell which managers conduct annual evaluations and which do not. How do we determine which managers are which? What are the consequences for managers who do not conduct performance evaluations?

Some managers are not trained to do them. The discussion at System was heated. The inconsistencies need to be fixed. The true purpose of the evaluation is to help the employee improve.

Some institutions are moving to electronic evaluations. Others are requiring group evaluations, which make their way into the final evaluation.

Carey wants to know if we have a process where supervisors can be evaluated. How do the evaluators of the supervisors get their information?

E-mail Venetta comments about what you are doing in your area. Tell her what works well and what doesn’t so she can take that back to her committee. It meets again in July.

The Regents will meet in November with the Employee Advisory Council. The Legislature’s budget implementations will be a reality by that time.

Texas Comptroller Data Breach, Joleen Reynolds
Joleen suggested that the UT System should provide free credit reports to employees as a result of the recent data breach. Staff Council members suggested that we direct people to the free 90-day credit reports offered by the three major credit agencies.

Elections Committee, Cindy Orth
In the past, the nomination process for Staff Council’s annual elections has been distributed in June through Survey Monkey. It is broken down by vice presidential area. We give people five to seven days to review it. More time
doesn’t work as well. When the results come back, the Election Committee validates the information. (This year, the committee includes Cindy Orth, Venetta Williams and Anne Macintosh Speights.) We ensure that the individuals who are nominated reside in the vice presidential area of the nominator and if not, that the nominee is okay with the nomination. The ballot is distributed to benefits-eligible employees and titles less than executive director down. Nominees must discuss the responsibility with their supervisor to run. We prepare the official ballots by vice presidential area. We have 17 members whose terms end in August 2011.

We have tried paper ballots in the past, but we get better responses with the electronic nominations format. We do still provide paper documents translated in English and Spanish for Facilities employees. They are delivered at the same time the Survey Monkey notice is administered.

When should we send out the notice for nominations? Last week of May? First week of June? How long should it be left open? One week? Two weeks? It was moved and seconded to send the nominations ballot out the first week of June and leave it open for two weeks. We will send out the elections ballots the last week of June and announce new members in August.

The Communications Committee will draft a UTSA story to promote nominations and elections.

Scholarship Fundraising, Chris Goldsberry
Deferred to the May meeting.

Staff Council conducted a Q&A with UTHSCSA visitor Ninette Robertson, Academic Coordinator for Department of Dental Diagnostic Science in the Dental School. She asked questions about elections authentication, meeting attendance and the Employee Educational Benefit. Tuition reimbursement and the four-day workweek are UTHSCSA’s hot topics. Select departments at the Health Science Center can’t have a four-day workweek because they’re clinical or they have laboratory animals to care for. Since President Heinrich cannot make it fair for all, he does not want to pursue it. UTHSCSA has 26 members on its Staff Advisory Council.

Reminders

May Meeting
Staff Council’s May meeting will be held on the UTSA Main Campus in the Registrar’s Conference Room. Video feeds will connect Downtown and Institute for Texan Cultures campuses.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Christi Fish, Staff Council Secretary