

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

Monday, September 15, 2014

The President's Executive Council met this morning to discuss a series of agenda (see attachment A) items impacting our university. The following is a summary of the discussion of those items.

Legislative Appropriations' Request Hearing before LBB

The president briefed the Council regarding a presentation he made this past Friday to the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) from the Office of the Governor. Attached, you will find a copy of the document that was used for that presentation (see attached pdf). The purpose of the presentation was to give the university's administration an opportunity to present the anticipated financial needs of the university in advance of the upcoming legislative session.

Dr. Keck reported that, historically, it has been difficult to convince those vested with the powers of state government of all the financial needs in our university. The atmosphere at this meeting, however, was untypical as the financial arguments presented appeared to be received more positively by the board than in previous years. In the final analysis, it is everyone's hope that our university will be in a stronger position to secure more than adequate funding levels at the close of the upcoming legislative session.

University Athletics

The university's athletic director provided an update. Mr. Griz Zimmerman informed the Council that an important meeting of the Presidents' Athletic Council for the Heartland Conference, of which TAMIU is a member, will be held this week in Dallas to discuss the interest/request by the Lone Star Conference to merge/join the Heartland Conference. Both Mr. Zimmerman and Dr. Keck discussed with the Council the complexities of such a union/merger. Because of these issues, it is difficult to anticipate the outcome of the deliberations in the upcoming presidents' meeting.

Task Force for Junior and Senior Student Retention

The president shared with the Council that the first meeting of the Junior and Senior Retention Task Force was held last week. He explained that this task force was organized by the administration for the purpose of identifying and responding to the reasons surrounding junior and senior student turnover. Mrs. Gina González shared some initial data reflecting, in some years, 200 to 300 junior and senior student drops for academic reasons with no evidence of return. Since current efforts at retaining freshmen and sophomore students have been successful, the president would like to replicate those results for both junior and senior students as well.

The members of the task force in their initial meeting identified a cyclical organizational model that will focus on approximately five areas with feedback loops. These five areas will focus on: (a) coordinating and conducting a fair for those students becoming juniors where students can reach a final decision about an academic major; (b) hosting an open house by those academic departments reflected on the selections that the junior students made at the previously held fair; (c) holding a junior convocation or similar event to help institutionalize the students' academic journey to their final years, (d) coordinate advisement duties aimed at specifically serving and

meeting the needs of junior and senior students, once they have made a selection; and (e) organizing a program focused on giving students the tools they need to create paradigms for looking at or conceptualizing their junior year experience.

Below, you will find a model that I believe reflects this committee's work. The inputs, outputs, and feedback loops have been purposely left out from this diagram for the purpose of emphasizing the internal operations of the committee's work.



It is important to note that this is only a very rough sketch of a proposed model that will, in all likelihood, go through additional revisions to finalize the model before implementation begins. For now, it appears to be a good starting point to focus attention to the issues of junior and senior student retention.

Multidisciplinary Student Lecture Series

Dr. Jeff Brown announced to the Council the creation of a student research presentation series that will begin this fall. The meetings will take place on October 8, 2014; October 22, 2014; November 05, 2014; and November 12, 2014. All meetings will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on those dates. Anyone interested in attending these sessions or those interested in having students participate should feel free to contact Dr. Brown for further details.

Several in the Council stated that these student research opportunities serve not only to further advance students' knowledge in research but also to connect with the focus of the university's newly adopted QEP.

Student Enrollment

The meeting continued with the weekly enrollment update by Dr. Minita Ramírez. Attached, you will find the most recent enrollment numbers (see attachment B). While the report does not

reflect any significant differences from what was reported last week, any help faculty can provide by simply reminding students that they have until September 23, 2014, at 11:59 p.m. to make all final payments and/or make arrangement for those payments will be greatly appreciated. Currently, 230 students hold accounts with no payment activity; 58 students reflect accounts with partial payments; and 244 students hold accounts with some type of financial aid implication.

It is important to note that enrollment is a major source of revenue for the university, and greater revenue allows the university to fund a number of important financial functions. Therefore, it is in everyone's best interest to facilitate the student payment process in any way that is appropriate and acceptable.

New Director for Student Services

Mr. Jerry Alva announced that the university has successfully filled the position of director of student services. The person selected for the job is Ms. Blanca González. Dr. Keck asked Jerry to invite Ms. González to next week's Executive Council Meeting so that she can be formally introduced to the Executive Council members as the deans and department heads work closely with the person in this position.

Studio Code

Dr. Catheryn Weitman, dean of the College of Education, shared with the Council that a new faculty member in the College of Education introduced students in the College of Education to the services of a company called StudioCode. "StudioCode is a video analysis tool used within the healthcare, education, research and corporate sectors to improve, measure and analyze performance." This company conducted a 1:00 p.m. webinar for anyone interested in learning about their services. Dr. Weitman invited members of the Council to attend.

The Council adjourned at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Alfredo Ramírez, Jr.