

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

Monday, September 22, 2014

The President's Executive Council met this morning at 8:30 a.m. to discuss a series of agenda (see attachment A) items impacting our university. The following is a summary of the discussion of those items.

Student Who Passed Away

The meeting began with the very sad announcement of a student who was currently enrolled at TAMU and who passed away unexpectedly this weekend. Dr. Minita Ramirez announced that this student was also approximately 97% complete with their undergraduate degree. Apparently, the former student suffered a serious medical event that led to their passing. The student was very active at the university and worked for the university in the Rec. Center.

Dr. Keck asked Dr. Arenaz and Dr. Ramirez to work on the awarding of a posthumous degree.

Junior and Senior Student Retention Task Force

Dr. Keck provided Council members an update on the progress of the newly formed Junior and Senior Student Retention Task Force. He explained that the task force met last week to review a series of documents issued by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to all public universities in Texas for the implementation of the upcoming outcomes-based funding state initiative. The committee observed that the weights or multipliers that will be used for determining funding levels for each student classification appear to provide for heavier funding percentages for junior and senior retention levels. As such, the local university task force recently created to "tackle" these issues is timely and needed.

Merger of Lone Star Athletic Conference with Heartland Conference

Dr. Keck shared a follow-up report from last week's meeting between university presidents of both conferences to discuss the possible joining of both athletic conferences. Dr. Keck explained that while it appears both conferences will merge, both sides had questions regarding the implications of such a union. Private faith-based universities were concerned about game schedules and the possibility of playing on Sunday and the introduction of football to a no football conference. Both of these events are highly unlikely.

Legislative Issues/Update

Dr. Keck shared with the Council that he had an opportunity, this past week, to visit with Dr. Judith Zaffirini regarding the upcoming legislative session. The visit focused briefly on issues relating to financial priorities relating to Tuition Revenue Bonds (TRBs). TRBs are the state's vehicle for financing the construction of new buildings by the state. Since the legislative session is still a few months away, Dr. Keck stressed that it is almost impossible, to create, much less rank, TRB priority lists. Nevertheless, it is on everyone's radar screen, hence the reason for a brief conversation with the senator about the near future and our building needs.

Latino Leadership Initiative (LLI)

A few years ago, the LLI was organized and held at Harvard University for the purpose of facilitating and promoting Latino student leadership throughout several Hispanic serving

institutions. TAMIU was selected as one of the first universities to participate in this initiative and has therefore been sending a group of students, competitively selected, every year to participate in this program.

Because of financial constraints at several of the participating university campuses, last year, LLI was held at TAMIU. As such, last year's LLI cohort did not have the opportunity to experience parts of the East Coast which was an integral part of the experience. Resources had been set aside for these purposes but were not used because LLI was held locally. For these reasons, the students from last year's TAMIU LLI cohort will be traveling to parts of the East Coast they would have experienced if the LLI had been held at Harvard. Three TAMIU personnel will lead the group of students on this trip.

AutMus Fest

Mrs. Candy Hein provided an update on the progress of the alumni association's work on the upcoming AutMus Festival. The festival will be held on Saturday, October 04, 2014, beginning at 5:00 p.m. Pre-sale tickets are now on sale. Mrs. Hein explained that, over the years, the organization and administration of the annual festival has gradually been transitioned to the alumni association, and this year, it appears to have been completely adopted by the alumni association. In previous years, the alumni association depended on the administrative help and expertise of key personnel in the university. This year, the alumni association has assumed full responsibility for it.

Enrollment

Mrs. Gina González and Dr. Minita Ramírez provided the most current enrollment data (see attachment B). The report reflects increases as of today's date, but Gina cautioned the Council that tomorrow is the 20th class day and the final day to pay. Historical data provides some predictive value, and typically, on average, about 120 students are dropped after this day. Therefore, the administration remains cautiously optimistic about the enrollment increases reflected on the enrollment report.

Parking

Mr. Juan Castillo informed the Council that, last week, several cars parked in the reserved parking area were booted because these cars did not display the required parking permit. Since no charge exists to park anywhere other than in two designated reserved parking areas on campus, Mr. Castillo informed the Council that TAMIU Police is strictly enforcing the parking requirements. Those who have elected to not pay for parking are free to park in any area of the university not designated as reserved parking.

Mr. Castillo also informed the Council that the enforcement of this requirement is a serious one and that anyone tampering with the equipment that is used to enforce the parking rule, such as the parking boot, will be subject to criminal prosecution. Apparently, in the past, some people, not including students, have tried to remove the boot and in the process have found themselves subject to criminal prosecution for damaging and tampering with official police property.

I imagine they still had to pay the parking fine!

New Director of Student Health Services

Mr. Jerry Alva introduced Ms. Blanca González as the new director of student health services. Ms. González joins the university with 18 years of experience working with the City of Laredo of Laredo's Health Services.

Also, Student Health Services is providing flu shots for students at the university clinic.

Dr. Leo Cigarroa continues to serve as the independent medical service provider for the clinic. He follows a weekly schedule where he sees student cases at the clinic.

Federal Financial Aid Processing on Campus

Mr. Jerry Alva shared with the Council that his office received the latest federal financial aid data. These data reflect that a total of \$14,000,000.00 in federal financial aid was processed by the TAMIU Financial Aid Office, and \$5,000,000.00 of that was paid out directly to the students. It was observed that these are significant amounts of federal financial aid that flow through this university.

Texas Tribune Festival

Mr. Juan Castillo and Mr. Fred Juárez attended this year's annual conference or meeting in Austin of the Texas Tribune. Mr. Castillo provided an extensive summary that is beyond the scope of these notes regarding the educational issues discussed at that meeting by several key legislators and state politicians. These included topics relating to the possible use of Pell Grant resources by high school students for dual credit courses, Early College High Schools, articulation agreements between community colleges and universities, and several others.

It was concluded that none of the issues discussed at the conference centered upon additional sources of funding for public universities in the state. Most of these focused on public school districts and community colleges.

New Associate Registrar

Dr. Minita Ramírez informed the Council that, next week, she would ask Ms. Judy Barrera, the newly hired associate registrar, to attend the Executive Council Meeting so that she could be formally introduced to the deans and department heads. Ms. Barrera joins TAMIU from the Laredo Community College with extensive experience using Degree Works and other university registrar functions.

University Facilities' Repairs

Mr. Castillo communicated to the Council several building repairs that are taking place on campus and asked everyone to use caution around these areas. Recent rain has helped to uncover leaking roofs and windows that require some rather extensive repairs to large window areas and high roofs.

With that, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m.

Alfredo Ramírez, Jr.

