

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING NOTES
Monday, November 17, 2014

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

Special Education and Communication Disorders' Award

The meeting began with an inspiring student presentation by Jose Salas president of the TAMIU chapter of the National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association. Jose and a delegation of TAMIU students received an award for Outstanding Community Service in Special Olympics recently at Texas A&M University in College Station. The College of Education students in this organization received the recognition for their work in raising money for Special Olympics and their local involvement with these organizations. Jose was congratulated on behalf of the Council and the president congratulated him on behalf of the university community.

University Update—Dr. Keck

The president offered a series of updates on university events that he attended on behalf of the university last week. A university alumni event, that is becoming an annual event, was held in San Antonio. Dr. Keck shared that the event was very well-attended by TAMIU alumni now living and working in San Antonio. Several San Antonio dignitaries were also present to offer their support for our university and our alumni. Dr. Keck also shared that university personnel are exploring the possibility of hosting similar additional events in large cities like Austin.

On Wednesday, Dr. Keck attended a popular event that was started several years ago and sponsored by HEB. The event focuses on the promotion of literacy in our community. It was noted that those local organizations that hold some of the strongest connections for the promotion of literacy in our community were not well-represented. Efforts will be made to ensure stronger participation by the local school districts at this event.

In preparation for the upcoming December TAMIU Commencement, it was announced that Mr. Tano Tijerina was extended an invitation to serve as the Fall 2014 Commencement speaker. Mr. Tijerina is a TAMIU alumnus who will begin his work as Webb County Judge in January. In addition to his new role as county judge, Mr. Tijerina played for five years for minor league teams of the Milwaukee Brewers. His alumnus status, new role as county judge and his experience in professional sports made him a strong selection for serving as this fall's commencement speaker and connecting with the students and the graduating class.

As previously reported, Texas A&M University San Antonio is currently conducting a presidential search. Dr. Maria Hernandez Ferrier, the inaugural president, is stepping down to serve in a new role as director of development and Mexico relations in a newly created division at the Texas A&M University System. The university is seeking approval this legislative session to secure a significant amount of funding to begin the process of undertaking a downward expansion project. If approved, the university will begin the administrative process of adding both freshmen and sophomore classes to its organization as well as creating all of the additional support systems that are needed for such an undertaking.

Needless to say, the person selected as the next president of Texas A&M University San Antonio will need to hold significant previous experience leading downward expansion projects. As such, it was explained that, individuals with such experience have been sought after for this position with a total applicant pool of 100 applicants. With such experience, our Vice-President for Student Success Dr. Minita Ramirez is part of that applicant pool.

Holiday Gala

Mr. Robert Garza from the TAMIU Staff Senate provided the details for the upcoming Annual University Holiday Gala on behalf of the Staff Senate President Mr. Fred Reyna who was not able to attend the Executive Council Meeting because he was conducting an audit. Yikes! At any rate, Robert explained that this year's Gala will be held on Saturday, December 06, 2014, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Student Center Ballroom. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and dinner will be served from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The event is sponsored annually by the Staff Senate and is open to all university employees and retirees. Those planning to attend should RSVP no later than Monday, November 24, 2014.

Enrollment Report

Dr. Minita Ramirez presented current enrollment information as of the sixteenth day in the enrollment period (see attachment B). As always, it was advised that every department, college, academic unit, faculty and staff should make every effort to facilitate the enrollment process.

Thanksgiving Holidays

Next week marks the beginning of the Thanksgiving Holiday Season. Dr. Arenaz reminded all administrators to ensure that all classes meet as regularly scheduled on Monday and Tuesday.

Meditation and Reflection Room

Mr. Jerry Alva shared an update for a space in the Student Center that was recently opened for anyone in the university community to use for meditation and spiritual reflection. During the last year, several groups of students representing several spiritual and religious backgrounds worked collaboratively to seek and find and reserve university space for the dedication of a room that could be used for reflection. The small room has become highly utilized by students and employees alike, and there is a possibility for expansion of the room.

Office Move

Ms. Lisa Paul, university compliance officer, is now located on the first floor of the administrative side of the Killam Library Building where the University Grants Office was previously located. Mrs. Candy Hein will occupy the office left vacant by the Compliance Office once she transitions to her new part-time position.

SSE Landscape Contractors

The president informed the council that he met last week with a representative from the SSE Landscaping Contractors Inc. This company represents a third party vendor who has been contracted by the Texas A&M University System to provide landscaping services for the system. This company is one of the new third parties that provide services as part of the outsourcing of several organizational functions in the system. The representative that met with

Dr. Keck provided several proposals (for a fee) for the care of several of the oak trees on campus and other aspects of the landscaping.

It was explained and widely recognized that the local landscaping and vegetation requires landscaping approaches that are consistent with dry arid landscapes such as those found in the South Texas Region. As an example, the consultant explained that all grass should be removed from the bases of all of the oak trees and replaced with rocks to allow water to reach the roots of the trees. Dr. Keck explained that it has been a hit and miss survival process for the campus oak trees since the university moved to its current and new location given the extreme local temperatures in the summer months. No decisions have been made about the financial resource allocation for such a project.

Athletics

Mr. Griz Zimmermann provided an update on current athletic events. In particular, he recognized cross country runner Rebekah Hernandez who recently won the Heartland Conference Cross Country Championship and was recognized by the Laredo City Council at last night's meeting. Mr. Zimmermann also distributed schedules for both the men's and women's basketball seasons.

ARSSOB

Dr. Steve Sears shared with the Council that a reception was recently held at one of the local banks in recognition of the A. R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business's accreditation process. Faculty and administrators as well as several local business representatives were present to celebrate the college's success.

Vice-President for Institutional Advancement's Last Executive Meeting

In an emotional goodbye, Mrs. Candy Hein said goodbye and offered her best wishes to everyone on the Council at yesterday's meeting which marked the end of her full-time work with the university serving in the capacity of vice-president for institutional advancement for the last fourteen years. Dr. Keck thanked her for her work and dedication to the university and underscored the vital role that Mrs. Hein has played in positioning the university in a competitive and strategic position to fund raise with local donors who have pledged and donated millions of dollars to TAMIU. Mrs. Hein will now serve in a part time role at the university and will assist the new VP selected to fill this position.

Faculty Evaluations

Mrs. Veronica G. Martinez, our director for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, reminded all deans that student evaluations are currently underway. All evaluations should be administered in courses and delivered to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for processing.

Committee for Educational Excellence

Mrs. Mary Trevino attended a meeting of the Committee for Educational Excellence that is now under the leadership of Dr. A Marcus Nelson, superintendent of schools for the Laredo Independent School District. This committee's purpose is to integrate the cooperation of local organizations with the goal of positively impacting the delivery of educational services in the

local community. Mrs. Trevino explained that Dr. Nelson is highly motivated and eager to lead the success of this committee.

With that, the meeting adjourned.

Alfredo Ramirez, Jr.