**1/22/18**

**TAMIU Executive Council**

**Pablo Arenaz**

1. Update on University Issues

There is a Texas A&M System Board meeting coming up on February 6-9. TAMIU has nothing major for consideration.

Note that there will be some pending changes in the policies that govern sexual conduct. If you have consenting relations that someone that reports to you, you must inform your supervisor. Failure to disclose this information can lead to dismissal.

This week a system audit team and real estate lawyers will visit TAMIU. The main purpose is to review environmental safety with a particular focus on laboratory spaces.

There will be a follow up meeting with LCC. In this forum, an interchange will occur that will explore the divergent issues that challenge both institutions.

2. Graduation Rate Task Force Report (**Discussion led by Tom Mitchell**).

On an unrelated note that the Masters of Arts in Cognitive Psychology received accreditation.

The complete seven-page report is attached as a separate document. This report compiles suggestions and observations and explores obstacles to timely graduation. Not that the information is a mix of fact, anecdotes, and process driven data.

It was stressed that there are some factors beyond our control that impede graduation rates. For example, students placing their part-time jobs over taking classes.

Dr. Mitchell stressed that we need to think creatively about scheduling. Changes made already include removing undergraduate classes that meet only once a week.

In Dean’s Council, the discussion focused on WIN courses, Foreign Language requirements, and Advising. There was no clear consensus about whether to remove or minimize the number of WIN courses in the curriculum. If we do remove them then there must be a writing based outcome that is assessed annually in each program. This needs to be a rigorous process. We cannot allow students with poor writing skills to graduate from TAMIU.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that seniors are excessively registering for foreign language courses and blocking the registration of juniors, sophomores, and freshman. Dr. Mitchell will submit a data request to see if in fact this is true.

Advising is a critical issue. Apparently, this is a disconnect between freshman in the advising center and more upper-level students who are transiting into a degree. Some solution for this problem include having each major set up an information booth in the SC rotunda at least once a semester (TW 11 to 2 pm).

COAS will also target freshmen and sophomores who have already declared majors for group sessions where they will get a chance to meet the advisor. Also, for freshmen and sophomores who have declared a major, the idea of transferring them from the advising center to the colleges was discussed.

**Minita Ramirez**

Enrollment numbers are slightly up for the spring (see attachment). Retention of first-time freshmen remains good. The final spring enrollment numbers will not be finalized until sometime later in February.

Because of last week’s weather late registration has been extended to January 26.

There was discussion of the slight drop in graduate numbers. Part of the reason might be that some student still have not registered for the spring semester. This semester we have a flex schedule and classes begin on February 5.

A survey of 100 students close to graduation but not completing was presented. Various reasons can account for the loss of these students such as health issues and moving out of town. The analyses have not been completed yet. Will be a topic of a future EC meeting.

Dr. Ramirez attended a A&M system meeting of Student Vice Presidents. The difficult issue of how to cite code of conduct violations on student transcripts was discussed. This can potentially deal with sexual misconduct, addictive behavior, and more academic violations like plagiarism. Apparently, the UT system has already developed a unified vocabulary for handling this. Dr. Arenaz stressed in this case that we do not want to be trail braziers in crafting new policies.

Another concern was how do we prepare for the opioid crisis. Our counseling services could be overwhelmed as we are not set up to deal with this issue at present.

**Juan Castillo**

Mr. Castillo provided a handout that compares our old HR system with Workday (see attachment). He will also send an all-employee e-mail with this information.

There are some significant changes you should be aware of. For faculty from now on summer and overload pay will be issued on a monthly and not biweekly basis.

NOTE THAT EMPLOYEES WHO DO NOT SUBMIT A TIME SHEET WILL NOT GET PAID. This is different from before when a single time sheet held up submissions from an entire administrative unit.

It is also important that employees submit leave during the same pay period as they are being paid.

Note that Workday does not keep a record of earlier timesheets.

**Gilbert Zimmermann**

Dr. Arenaz and Mr. Zimmermann attended the NCAA Division 2 convention last week. Dr. Arenaz also attended a meeting of University Presidents.

Four proposals relevant to TAMIU were passed. One of these will allow Mexican schools to join NCAA Division 2.

A concern was the creep in the length of the season in some collegiate sports. Also, encouraging students to volunteer for practices at the expense of academic pursuits worried some attendees. A new word ‘volutoldnism’ was coined to describe this phenomena.

Sadly, woman’s basketball remains winless in conference play. This Sunday (1/28/18) at 6 pm there will be a student athlete meeting.