The president’s executive council met on Monday to discuss a series of agenda items impacting our university. The following is a summary of that meeting.

**Electronic Roster Verification Form—Mr. Juan “Chelelo” Garcia and Dr. Brian Gaskins**
The meeting began with a presentation by our registrar regarding the development and implementation of a new electronic student roster (census day roster) form to replace the former hard copy format. Juan explained that the development of the form and the implementation of it was a coordinated effort between the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Information Technology. The implementation of this form will take place immediately. The form can be located on UCONNECT in the Teaching and Advising Tab for each person teaching a course at TAMIU. Faculty should feel free to contact the Registrar’s Office with questions.

**Texas A&M University System Board of Regents (BOR) Meeting—Dr. Ray M. Keck**
The president shared with the council that, at last week’s BOR meeting, the chancellor met with all of the university system presidents and issued a challenge that appeared to be focused on those universities located close to the border to develop, implement, and announce any initiative that has the potential to further create, define, and continue to shape our unique organizational identity along the Texas-Mexico border. The chancellor compared this challenge to those initiatives that have served to establish other university’s identities such as the recent selection of Texas A&M Corpus Christi as one of six test sites for drones, or Unmanned Air Systems (UAS), by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A second example cited by the chancellor was the recent findings of a study conducted by Texas A&M University’s Division of Finance and Administration citing a $4.42 billion impact on the Bryan, College Station and surrounding communities.

Dr. Arénez explained that the administration at TAMIU, specifically the provost’s office as well as the Bi-national Center, headed by Maria Eugenia Calderón, has been working collaboratively with several high level officials in the Mexican government with regard to future academic possibilities related to Mexico’s recent legal developments impacting its mineral resources and the exploration of such minerals. Also, Dr. Arénez explained that his office is also working with the government of Ecuador on the possibility of offering a degree program(s) at a campus in Ecuador. These efforts are being approached very cautiously as there are formidable political implications of such agreements, explained Dr. Arénez.

**City of Laredo—Dr. Ray M. Keck, Dr. Minita Ramirez, and Mrs. Candy Hein**
The president explained that, last week, he, Minita, and Candy met with the City Manager Mr. Carlos Villarreal and three members of the city council to present the “master plan” that Dr. Keck unveiled to the president’s executive council in early January 2014. The meeting was an attempt to foster the interest of the city council to invest long range in our university through the development and expansion of our campus in the next several decades. According to Dr. Keck, everyone in attendance at this meeting was very pleased with the “master plan” and the future economic opportunities that plan will bring once it is fully implemented. Further discussions
will continue in the next several weeks with members of the Laredo City Council regarding the plan.

**Faculty Retreat—Dr. Ray M. Keck**
Dr. Keck and several university administrators and academic administrators shared their perceptions and impressions of the Spring 2014 Faculty Assembly with author and journalist Jeffrey Selingo. Most, if not all, of the perceptions were very positive especially those that reflected the faculty’s reactions related to the opportunity to collaborate, almost a full day, with colleagues they had never had the opportunity to work with.

Dr. Keck explained that he has now asked Dr. Kevin Lindberg, associate provost, to lead a group of about eight faculty group leaders to begin analyzing the qualitative data. Dr. Keck stated that he believes that it is of the upmost importance that the university administration remains distant from the process of analyzing and interpreting the data. He feels very strongly that the interpretation of the recommendations should be led by the faculty. Subsequent implementation of any plans of action would, at the appropriate time, most definitely include the president’s, provost’s, and other university administrators input.

In the meantime, Dr. Lindberg has begun communicating with the faculty leaders who are heavily engaged in analyzing, coding, identifying recurring themes and unanticipated issues that emerged from the data collection process. Employing a method of inductive reasoning, the committee hopes to identify common themes that will be made available to the faculty in the near future through a published report. In turn, hopefully, this report will drive the implementation of some of the faculty’s recommendations.

**Texas Provosts’ Meeting—Dr. Pablo Arènaz**
Dr. Arènaz shared with the council a summary of his attendance at a recent meeting of all Texas provosts. Of specific interest was the announcement by several universities who are developing or who have already developed and are implementing competency based Bachelor’s Degrees a la Selingo. The current degrees are focused in the academic fields of arts and sciences, but Dr. Arènaz explained that many are looking at these programs with a critical eye especially at the component that deals with awarding credit through a competency-based assessment process.

**University Athletics—Dr. Ray M. Keck**
The excitement continues for several of our athletic teams as the start of the Spring 2014 Sports Season starts, explained Dr. Keck. The women’s and men’s basketball team continue their successful seasons, with several games still left in the season. All events promise any spectator an exciting and rewarding experience. It is hoped that everyone will attend these to support our student-athletes!

**University Student Fees Referendum—Mr. Juan Castillo**
Mr. Castillo brought the group up to date on current efforts to present a student referendum to increase several fees. It is expected that a vote is possible by April 08, 09, and 10. Currently, the administration is meeting with student groups and all others who need to be involved to reach a decision to present to the students at large.
**Fixed-Rate Tuition—Mr. Juan Castillo**

At the last week’s BOR meeting, the Board approved the adoption of a fixed-rate tuition process for all A&M System Universities. According to Mr. Castillo, the adoption of a fixed-rate tuition process will allow students to lock-in tuition prices for four (4) years or 12 semesters. Initially, students will pay more for tuition based upon a Consumer Price Index (CPI) method, at the start of the four years, but this price will be immune from any further price increases for the remainder four years. At the end of the four years and if the student has not completed the degree, the student will then have to pay an adjusted amount that will be higher. Mr. Castillo explained that the BOR required all universities in the System to participate. TAMIU will begin implementation of the process in May 2014.

**Chick-fil-A—Mr. Juan Castillo and Dr. Ray M. Keck**

An announcement was made that Chick-fil-A would be hosting a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Tuesday, February 04, 2014, at 11:00 a.m. in the Student Center Rotunda.

**Philosophical Society of Texas—Dr. Ray M. Keck**

Dr. Keck announced that he would be traveling this month to a meeting of the Philosophical Society of Texas in Fort Worth as he has been invited to join this group.

**Health and Wellness Committee and Initiatives—Mrs. Elizabeth Martinez**

Elizabeth announced that a committee composed of several members of the TAMIU community and representing several departments and colleges has been formed to undertake health and wellness opportunities throughout the year. These health and wellness events will be made available to the university community. The first event was held on Tuesday, February 04, 2014. Other events will follow as the committee is meeting regularly to plan future events.

**Annual Evaluations—Mrs. Elizabeth Martinez**

Elizabeth provided a gentle reminder to all department heads and academic supervisors that annual evaluations will be due in two months on April 01st. It is highly recommended that all those with supervisory duties pace themselves adequately as they work to complete these evaluations.

**Emergency Drill—Dr. Pablo Arénav and Mr. Juan Castillo**

In an effort to ensure that everyone on our campus is aware and familiar with our public announcement system and the university emergency drill procedures, drills will be held on Thursday, February 06, 2014. Anyone on campus at all locations including classrooms is expected to comply with the emergency procedures and evacuate all areas as directed through the emergency notification system.

**Volunteers on Campus—Mrs. Liza Paul, Mrs. Elizabeth Martinez and Mr. Juan Castillo**

Mr. Castillo explained that university policies do not allow for anyone to volunteer on campus. For those performing other duties similar to those of volunteers such as internships, everyone is instructed to contact Ms. Kimberly Martin del Campo, director of continuing education, with any questions. Kimberly is the person who can answer any questions related to campus volunteers or other volunteer personnel.
Mrs. Elizabeth Martinez announced that, at their last meeting, Mrs. Sandra V. Pena, TAMIU Human Resources Director, was elected as president of the THEHRA. It is an honor to have one of our human resources professionals representing TAMIU at the state association in the position of president. The council expressed their most sincere congratulations to Sandra and the HR department for this honor.

Enrollment—Mr. Gerardo Alva

Mr. Gerardo Alva, associate vice-president for student affairs, presented the most current data on student enrollment. Attached, you will find a copy of that report.