

## **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING NOTES**

### **Monday, March 30, 2015**

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

#### **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**

The meeting began with the president announcing that Dr. Arenaz, provost, would not be present for the EC meeting because he was out of town serving as a reviewer for NIH grants. The president observed that this was a very beneficial service opportunity for both the provost and the university as serving in this role would provide the provost a unique insight into current proposals and requests by researchers in the field.

#### **Glen Dowling Consultant for the Texas A&M University System**

A brief discussion followed regarding the presentations by Mr. Dowling held last week. These focused on the state's legislative staffing ratios for faculty and space utilization. Attached, you will find several charts reflecting our university's staffing percentages (see attachments B-D). Overall, the university faculty is "running" at approximately 125% of benchmark standards from a total of 38 senior public institutions of higher education in the state. The percentages vary by individual college within the university community, with the College of Arts and Sciences at approximately 120% on one end of the continuum and the College of Education at approximately 99.7% on the other. Please refer to the attachments for additional information.

#### **State Legislative Session 2015**

The administration is closely monitoring the progress of the tuition revenue bond (TRB) filing. There is strong optimism that TRBs will be funded during this legislative session, but one cannot anticipate with total certainty that all university requests for TRBs will be funded.

Of greater concern is the university's budgetary request for matching funds for our petroleum engineering program. The administration will be in Austin this week to meet with several state officials including Mr. Chuy Hinojosa, our university's assigned legislative liaison regarding this and other requests.

#### **SACSCOC**

The university has received the official report from SACSCOC. The university administration now has an opportunity to make any corrections of fact to the report. No other changes or negotiations are allowed at this point in the process. Once corrections, if any, are made, the report will be resubmitted to SACSCOC and, hopefully, the process will end in December when the SACSCOC Board of Trustees meets and votes on final approval.

In the meantime, Ms. Veronica Castillo and members of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness are currently working on finalizing the 2014-2015 AIER reports. This office is now holding work sessions for AIER coordinators and the AIER advisory committee in order to complete this year's assessment process.

### **The Big Event**

Mr. Jerry Alva reported that The Big Event was a great success. Approximately 327 students, faculty, and staff participated in this annual university service project that is held in partnership with the South Texas Food Bank. Jerry reported that representatives from the Texas Food Bank were very impressed and appreciated the students' and the university community's responsiveness to this community need.

### **Faculty Senate Update**

A very long and intense discussion was held regarding concerns associated with the logistics for this year's commencement as well as the lack of a confirmation from the proposed graduation speaker. As reported last week, Senator Ted Cruz's office staff had shared with the president their proposal for the university to possibly host Senator Cruz as this year's commencement speaker. Faculty concerns regarding this proposal were shared, confidentially, with the executive council. Responses will be shared with the Faculty Senate members at the Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the TAMIU Faculty Senate.

Additionally, the TAMIU Student Government Association president shared with the council their strong concerns that no final decision has been made regarding the time(s) and locations for this year's spring ceremonies. The president informed the council that he would work on contacting the senator's office staff to try to determine if the senator would indeed be attending and speaking at this year's spring commencement.

### **Enrollment**

Mr. Juan Garcia, registrar, shared the most recent enrollment information. Approximately 1,700 students registered on the first two days of priority registration reflecting an excellent response. Registration continues.

### **Junior and Senior Student Retention**

Dr. Minita Ramirez provided an update regarding a study and research project that several university faculty and administrators are working on regarding junior and senior student retention. Dr. Ramirez informed the council that under the direction of Dr. Marcus Ynalvez, members of the committee have been meeting regularly to adopt a series of recommendations that will help in the retention of a greater percentage of junior and senior students.

Members of the committee include: Dr. Jeff Brown, Mr. Juan Garcia, Dr. Minita Ramirez, and Gina Gonzalez.

### **Mariachi Nuevo Tecalitlan Concert**

Dr. Ramirez also announced that concert tickets are now available and being sold in their offices for the mariachi concert that will be held on the final day following a three day visit by the group. Those interested in purchasing tickets should contact Dr. Ramirez's office staff.

### **Athletic Update**

Griz Zimmermann, athletic director, provided an update. The baseball team currently holds a 4-8 record in conference play, and they are three games away from securing a place in the playoffs. The softball team won this past weekend by beating St. Edward's University.

### **Employee Evaluations**

The president strongly reminded everyone in the council that annual employee evaluations are due on April 01<sup>st</sup>. He urged everyone to ensure that these are completed and submitted by the deadline.

### **LBV Conference**

Dr. Jeff Brown also reminded everyone of this year's Lamar Bruni Vergara Student Research Conference that will be held on Wednesday, April 01<sup>st</sup> and Thursday, April 02<sup>nd</sup>. The conference staff is in need of additional judges. Anyone interested should contact the Office of Graduate Studies.

### **Celebration of Life Ceremony**

The meeting ended with an announcement by Ms. Rosanne Palacios, vice-president for institutional advancement, regarding this year's Celebration of Life Ceremony. At the ceremony, 18 alumni and members of the university community who passed away this year will be honored in a memorial service including Dr. Rafael Lecuona, former professor of political science in the College of Arts and Sciences. The event will be held on Tuesday, April 07, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Center for the Fine and Performing Arts Recital Hall (see attachment E).

With that, the council adjourned at approximately 10:45 a.m.

Alfredo Ramirez, Jr.  
Faculty Senate President