

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Minutes of the Staff Senate

August 6, 2018 9:30 – 11:30AM

Edinburg: EEDUC 3.204 Borderlands

(Remote Locations in Harlingen: HCEBL 2.100 & Brownsville: Salon Esperanza LHSB 2.604)

I. Call to Order at 9:37 AM by Lisa Smith, Staff Senate President

II. Establishment of Quorum - Roll call was completed by Monica Tovar, Staff Senate Secretary

Staff Senate Senators Present: David Marquez, Peter James Ehimika, Monica Tovar, Lisa Smith, Diana Ocanas, Jaime Villanueva, Leslie Jones, Javier Zambrano, LanLan Alvarado, Rebekah Sepulveda, Jesus Buitron, Krystal Marroquin, Veronica De La Garza, Milton Hernandez, Dalyn Ruiz, Roberto Castro, Carla Lopez, Roberto Cantu

III. Approval of Minutes- Motion to approve minutes by Rebekah motioned, Krystal Marroquin 2nd motion

IV. New Business

a. FY19 Budget Discussion / Dr. Bailey

First all, thank you for all that you do for UTRGV. Hopefully students are successful within 4-6 years. Faculty and administrators move around, but the constant is the staff. How many saw the trends in education presentation that I did? Good show of hands.

We were in a tight budget situation: 24 million reduction a year in state appropriations. No one lost a job, special item funding (2-3) employees may have been affected, but overall NO RIF due to budget cuts. That is quite an accomplishment!

We did not meet our numbers in our enrollment, reduction of graduate enrollment. State funding is heavily weighted on graduate students. Tuition revenue did not really grow and state appropriations didn't change or increase. We were also able to put money in salaries; FY16, FY17, FY18, and FY19 we have put 11.8 million dollars in salary adjustments.

When we started salary was all over, and didn't match pay from Brownsville to Edinburg. 11.8 equals, 5.1 faculty and 6.7 to staff. This effected over 2957 staff. (No downward adjustments, just up adjustments) HR did an analysis to put people within the pay range. We have a 12 million reduction in state funding, with little growth in enrollments and added 11.7 in salary adjustments.

2 reasons that was able to be done; there were able to reduce administrative cost to 11.4 (decline) of 4.7 million, and a soft hiring freeze. We didn't fill positions right away.

We got many issues resolved, but we still have compression issues, but it is being resolved. Every dollar of revenue has been put to resolve pay issues. FY19, this year we still have reduction, summer enrollment was up 10-11 %. Some of that is graduate students.

Hiring freeze continues, last year was a frost, more of a freeze this year. No merits increases, we are going to try to do that already 12million short in our budget, and boost enrollment in the fall. We are planning a 2% merit increase, by November or December paychecks. There is no way to do this until census day. If we do 1 – 1 ½% across the board, we can make the 2% merit raise.

How do we do this? This can be an adjustment to your base or everyone in your department. In the fall, it will come to you. Midyear goal, in November or December.

Budget picture not much hiring, alternate is to do force reduction.

Questions: In terms of the hiring freeze, in past, we had exceptions; with student facing departments, will that still apply?

The difference, is that I have to approve them all myself. Critical positions need to be approved right away. We have to be disciplined when reviewing, and it is important to invest in the people we do have.

Graduate enrollment, do you know why it was down?

Many of the processes are different; a lot had to do with our own process. MBA enrollments across the country has gone down.

Do you think the online programs could have helped?

Yes, in some programs. Yes, you can help with that, but it is unsure if that is a contributing factor. The program mix, when I first started was not very strong.

What is the fastest growing job growth in the State of Texas? Healthcare, what percentage did healthcare account for jobs?

84% contributed to new job growth in state of Texas. We have some programs; our nursing was not as large as it should be. We have PA, occupation therapy, but not the Physical. We have the School of Medicine coming in with new programs, and expanding the mix of our programs. We have to bring the right program mix, and each has to go through an approval process and SACCS approval as well. 48% of students are majoring in medical or stem field. That number will only grow. Those are just things to keep in mind. We need keep this in mind to have a robust future.

Question: (from Jerry, in Brownsville) Concerns in Brownsville, in regards to growth, numbers shows decline of students taking all their classes in Brownsville; 2700 are taking classes down from 4700 in Brownville. **With the increase, how does the future look for freshmen spend their 1st year on Campus in Brownsville?**

It was space at first, but now how is looking for students taking class online, 67,000 students taking the classes on campus.

Whether they students take classes online or on campus, they are still students. If they are taking classes online or on campus, depends on work schedules and other factors. Before UTRGV, there was a decline in enrollment in Brownsville,

Space is not an issue anymore. One of the things we are trying to do, with the reduction in students coming over from Matamoros, we now have a student recruitment and student building in Matamoros. We want to make it easier for the students. We want to work closely with Brownsville ISD to increase our numbers there. We know we have students going to Edinburg and students traveling to Brownsville along with new programs.

Part of the decline, they see engineering and health, for accrediting issues; we can't have programs in Brownsville.

Students do not just go to college, they go to major and do a specific thing. UTPA program mix was not very strong before the merger, and you need to develop programs that can anticipate growth and jobs for the future. The budget is tight and we have done pretty well. When you look at this (presentation), in the Trends in Education, UT Dallas, they lost 24 million; UT DALLAS, increased their budget in 24 million, they are not doing pay raises.

SACCOS, we have had fun that the last couple of years. December we got a great report, we solved all the items they marked us first, but they did not release us the full report. State audit reports were not released before their visit, and the state auditors came back this summer, by our invitation. So, now we have we have an accreditation visit in October and final report in December. Financial Aid and auditors did really well; they went far and beyond. When you see them give them a pat on the back.

Climate survey results, we knew we would have issues, what we hoped to see this would be a base line for where we can make improvements.

Someone asked if things are getting better or worse, for me (Dr.Bailey) it has been the most interesting. If this were one of my first jobs as president, I would have turned it down. We have a medical school coming in with several partnerships and this is interesting mix of things with hospital agreements.

My job is what happens to you 2 -5 years in the future. Your jobs are what is going on now.

It is hard to communicate all that we have done. We have an endowment, and we have increased it. When the School of Medicine gets going and better, the School of medicine requires or pull a lot, and SACCOS, we still have issues. State appropriations are declining.

Question, (Peter James Ehimika) what levels of support, do we have for programs?

We recognize that some programs need to have positions, and with the results of the next legislation session how will that effect us.

The state economy is growing and starting with 4 Billion deficit plus Hurricane Harvey happened this year. It won't be a great year, but we can do well. We can take the

money to invest it in the people you have or hire new people. We have certain critical things to address.

The UT System named the final candidate for chancellor do we know what his goals are? We know him, but we don't know what his goals are. The System goal is to reduce the size of the system, and the board thinks that UT System was involved in too many things; there could something about those issues that made them want to bring him in. One of the task would be to downsize the system. 2005 and 2014 the growth and size in academics surprised me. We also need someone that works well with the legislation.

Questions, there is more advertising for TSC than UTRGV. If you see advertising, it does not mean it works. It all depends on where you are seeing it, Facebook, Instagram.

Kids in 20s, don't have cable. A lot of recruiting is the relationships you build with school counselors or teachers. I don't have a twitter account, don't even know how to use it. We can do more things like building new relationships. For example the Early College High School in Harlingen, we are working with them now.

Stem and health affairs, are you officially for academic prioritization, how does funding work for that?

If you look at the College of Science, those programs are funded at a higher rate by the state. Some programs can generate surplus or private funding. Doctoral students need a fellowship, and the STEM and science generate more funds.

Parking, fees were just increased and again this year. Where are the fees going to? In some staff parking, you don't see the lines.

New parking is going to students. Robert Cantu can help answer, questions.

Robert, stated they are using new technology that helps you locate what spots are available. We are also trying to develop a more robust maintenance program.

Comments: But is some areas you don't see the lines and people don't park straight within the lines. Some the pot holes are very bad.

Streets are not ours, but we can work on the parking lots. We them on a schedule.

Meters have new technology that allows you to use a debit or credit card. Working with bike share programs. We also made changes in other areas not just in parking. The student side, we have increased the number of slots. We have transportation shuttles that can bring them closer.

For staff, we have enough. Brownsville, changing zoning to allow people to be closer to their areas; there are changes in zoning and new parking spaces, it takes 4 minutes to get to the classes. We are also working on videos promote the use of shuttles and remote parking spaces. We are not ready for parking garages; we are still working other options before that. We have one of the lowest fees in the UT System, we are one of the lowest charging areas. From the funds generated, over 1million is transferred over to campus police. We need to continue supporting Campus Police.

Question: Parking, at what point, will the garage be an idea? When the spaces are maxed out, and when we find funding.

More parking: Several students and staff use the shuttle stops on the ½ circle (Brownsville). **Have you consider doing the drop off closer to the parking lot?** Students are still parking lots at the other end of campus. Sometime they have to run across campus to make sure they can catch the shuttle. Shuttle parking in front of the building stops the flow of traffic.

Comment: Our parking fees are the lowest in UT system, but we are in the valley and we are still in a high poverty driven area.

Now, we are going into 12 month vs. 9 month to pay for the parking permits.

We did invite parking and transportation department to do a presentation in Harlingen back in [April 2019](#). We have minutes on our Staff Senate website that you can refer to; they do cover the presentation that was given and could answer more questions.

Peter, we can bring them back in the fall and do another presentation. Dalyn, staff senator shared a comment, parking fees, I would pay \$200 anytime for the space that I have and the distance to that I have to walk. Parking in we have is awesome compared to the parking we get in Austin vs UTRGV.

Please email, Gabriel Zuniga (gabriel.zuniga01@utrgv.edu) or Pablo Aguilar (Pablo.aguilar@utrgv) for more questions. Veronica, staff senator also added the revenue they generates goes to the budget that pays their staff; they do not get state funding.

How soon can you see improvements on the parking lots? We do have a parking lot improvement plan; we are looking at student pedestrian traffic. The traffic by UREC, is a safety concern. We need to address that. Van Week is getting improvements so it is ongoing.

b. FY19 Staff Senate Elections/ Rebekah Sepulveda & Peter James Ehimika

Peter James explained there were some technical issues with the voting; we are looking at how those occurred, and we are going to redo the nominations.

Something else we would like to add a list of current senators and vacancies. Some areas are full, so you may not have received an email.

c. UT System Employee Advisory Council June Meeting Minutes /Lisa Smith & Michael Aldape

Employee advisory council meeting in June.

One of the announcements, Lisa Smith and Michael Aldape were voted as part of the Executive Board for the Council. Susan Frances looked at the list of topics that have been

brought to past advisory boards that never flourished or resolved, so we will be revisiting them.

We are working on easier way for departments to nominate employees, staff senate will still recommend nominees to president.

Questions or eligibility will change at the system level.

Tuition reimbursement is also being looked at; they are trying to decide if all UT System institutions should follow one set of guidelines or leave at the institutional level.

UTRGV does not have a Flextime in the HOP, and they are looking at this to see if all institutions should have them.

Question: What is the Employee Advisory Council?

The University of Texas System Employee Advisory Council (EAC) is a selected representative advisory group that works with, and on behalf of, The University of Texas System. Each year the EAC meets with the Board of Regents to present information and make recommendations regarding issues of importance to the employees of UT System.

UTRGV has 2 representatives, Lisa Smith and Michael Aldape, and the appointment is 3 years. There are 15 institutions, and we have 2 reps on the EB. Congratulations to our UTRGV Staff Representatives.

Can you clarify FLEX TIME? Institutions with health components, can choose to have flex time because of the hours they have. You work 10 hour days and get Friday's off.

How can we request items to look into? At staff senate, you can bring items to the meeting or email (staffsenate@utrgv.edu) the staff senate with your issues.

For health and morale, does we other preventative components?

Email Lisa Smith or Michael Aldape for UT System questions and Carla Lopez is your contact for the Wellness Champions. The Wellness website will be resource for preventative and wellness activities.

We are started 2 years ago, and we are opening the invitation to join the group; some institutions have fitness centers just for staff, we do not . We have the UREC in Edinburg or some areas based on location, but we want to offer the same services in all the areas. Something we can look for is funding.

Some of the programs, if you choses to participate, costs \$495. Can you explain? Naturally Slim is covered 100%; you may see this in your explanation of benefits when you see your benefits, but it is covered UTRGV. You can get a reimbursement for other things like with UT Living for gym memberships; exercise has to prescribe for the employee or dependent.

Policy is under review, employee discount program is something to look for, where you can join a group that will benefit UTRGV employees. Business's usually post that information.

Our email is , Employee.wellness@utrgv.edu and you can look for more information posted on messenger, and join list-serve.

School of Medicine has UTRGV Employee clinics, and Health and Human Services has services opening soon. If it is by the department, no one has mentioned anything new.

It's great that you can come by and visit the meetings to bring up these topics.

d. Academic Affairs Convocation/ Peter-James Ehimika

August 22nd -23rd , there will be a 5 minute presentation to discuss what staff senate has done, the regents awards, the years of service award, and Taco About It sessions.

Please email Peter James with more items we have done and goals.

e. Noteworthy Announcements/ All Senators

Lisa Smith thanked all the Senators, for all that they do.

Peter James thanked Lisa for her leadership to develop goals. She was one of the biggest pushes for the years of service awards. It is needed and everyone should be appreciated.

Thank you for your service!

October 1 – 6th HESTEC

Veronica De La Garza, added RGV Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is having a Town Hall Luncheon, \$20 for UTRGV staff. The speaker is former UTPA Alumni President and CEO of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Javier Palomarez. This will be August 10, 2018 from 11:30 am -1:00 PM in McAllen at the Double Tree Hotel.

V. Committee Reports

a. All committees will deliver updates on their most recent meeting(s) and developments.

I. Staff Appreciation ad-hoc Committee

II. Business Processes and Procedures – Monica Tovar added, PeopleSoft Trainings are well on their way; everyone is encouraged to sign up and to download the DUO app on your mobile devices. People Soft, duo app is needed when accessing PeopleSoft off Campus for time cards or other activities.

There is also Blackboard trainings and presentation that are getting updated.

i Communications

ii Constitution and Elections

iii Professional Development

iv Staff Relations, Retention, and Morale – Taco About It, we hope to have 1more last event for the year, details TBD.

v University Development and Events

VI. Public Comments & Questions

PeopleSoft training, we have had low numbers. ORACLE roles are going to transfer to PeopleSoft. We recommend, you test access before attending the class. You get a link in your email, test the link to see if you have access, and roles you do have.

Roberto Castro commented that Marketing did meet with Alex, and talked about going to each area, and asking people who should go.

Veronica De La Garza asked that if your departments need help with Letters of Support for special projects, please allow 2 weeks for the letters.

Peter James Ehimika wanted to add a quick comment, emails or messages have gone out about time cards are due August 7th. Please remember to turn in your time cards. Make it a priority because you need to allow time for supervisors to approve all those time cards.

VII. Pending Items

- a. There are no pending items.