

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 23, 2025, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Teams

I. Call to Order – 9:04

Mirayda called the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum – 9:04

Ricardo Lopez, Secretary

20 present

III. Welcome & Introduction – 9:06

Rolando Segovia, Staff Senate President

Rolando welcomed everyone to the staff Senate general meeting for January. Rolando facilitated the approval of the meeting minutes for October and November 2024, with Juan moving to approve and Melissa seconding the motion. The minutes were approved without opposition.

IV. Guest Speakers

a. *Dr. Kondapavuluru Chowdary, Inaugural Chair & Assistant Professor of Gastroenterology School of School of Medicine*

Dr. Chowdary discussed the importance of colonoscopy screenings, dietary recommendations, and the impact of fatty foods on health. He also provided information about his clinic location and services offered.

- i. **Colonoscopy Screenings:** Dr. Chowdary emphasized the importance of colonoscopy screenings for individuals aged 45 and above, or 40 and above for those with a family history of colon cancer or colonic polyps. He explained that screenings are recommended even without symptoms, but if symptoms like abdominal pain, weight loss, bleeding, or anemia are present, screenings should be done earlier.

- ii. **Dietary Recommendations:** Dr. Chowdary discussed the dietary issues prevalent in the Rio Grande Valley, highlighting the high consumption of fatty foods. He recommended a balanced diet consisting of 40% carbohydrates, 40% protein, and 20% fat. He also stressed the importance of fiber supplements for individuals over 30 or 40 to aid in the absorption of sugars and fats.
 - iii. **Fatty Liver Diagnosis:** Dr. Chowdary explained that fatty liver is diagnosed through abnormal liver function studies or an ultrasound of the abdomen, which can detect the extent of fat deposition in the liver. He mentioned that fatty liver is associated with obesity and can lead to serious conditions like cirrhosis, liver failure, and liver cancer.
 - iv. **Clinic Location:** Dr. Chowdary's clinic is located at 2205 E. Toronto in the southern part of McAllen, close to Rio Grande Regional Hospital. He mentioned that appointments can be made within the same week of calling.
 - v. **Services Offered:** Dr. Chowdary's clinic offers various gastrointestinal services, including endoscopy, colonoscopy, and ERCP studies. They also provide examinations for abnormal liver functions and other related conditions. He mentioned that they will soon be able to offer these services at the Surgery Oncology Center, expected to be ready by late April or early May.
- b. *Emilia Trevino*, Associate Director for Talent Acquisition & Salary Administration
Office of Human Resources
- Emilia Trevino from Human Resources discussed the upcoming National Student Employment Appreciation Week, encouraging nominations for Student Employee of the Year and Supervisor of the Year. She provided details about the events planned for the week and the importance of recognizing student employees.
- i. **Appreciation Week:** Emilia Trevino announced the National Student Employment Appreciation Week, scheduled for April 14th to 18th. The week-long event will include educational and career-based activities, snacks, and a ceremony to honor student employees and supervisors.

- ii. **Nominations:** Emilia encouraged staff to nominate outstanding student employees and supervisors for the awards. The deadline for nominations is February 7th. She mentioned that nominations can be submitted via email and provided a QR code for easy access to the nomination form.
- iii. **Events and Activities:** Emilia detailed the planned events for the appreciation week, including morning grab-and-go events, educational sessions, and a career fair focusing on summer job opportunities. She emphasized the importance of allowing student employees to attend these events and encouraged departments to celebrate their students with small gestures like pizza parties or snacks.
- iv. **Contact Information:** Emilia provided her contact information and the student employment team's email for any questions or further assistance regarding the appreciation week and nominations.

c. *Sarahi Cardoza, Youth Programs Support Manager*

College Access & K-12 Partners

Sarahi Cardoza from the Office of College Access and K12 Partnerships presented information about youth programs, including the types of programs, requirements for custodial and non-custodial care, and the registration process. She emphasized the importance of compliance with the youth protection policy.

- i. **Youth Programs:** Sarahi Cardoza explained that youth programs include camps, internships, mentorships, and events for minors, either custodial (under UTRGV supervision) or non-custodial (under parent or chaperone supervision). She provided examples of each type and their respective requirements.
- ii. **Compliance Requirements:** Sarahi emphasized the need for compliance with the youth protection policy, including mandatory background checks and child protection training for designated individuals supervising minors. She mentioned that these requirements are managed through Ideo-Logic online portal.
- iii. **Registration Process:** Sarahi detailed the registration process for youth programs, which involves submitting a compliance registration form through Ideo-Logic. She

mentioned that the system also handles participant registration, consent forms, and payment processing for programs with fees.

- iv. **Benefits of Youth Programs:** Sarahi highlighted the benefits of youth programs, including educational growth, skill development, and social interaction. She mentioned specific programs like STEM camps, railway safety, and Camp U Rec, which offer various activities and learning opportunities for minors.

d. *Luis Guzman*, Second General Manager

UTRGV Dining Services

Luis Guzman from Dining Services shared updates on new initiatives, including faculty and staff meal plans, the Grab-and-Go program, the autonomous market at the School of Podiatry, and new dining options at the Edinburgh and Brownsville campuses.

- i. **Meal Plans:** Luis Guzman introduced the faculty and staff meal plans, offering 25 and 40 block meal options with a special offer of 5 additional free meals for the 40 block plan. The meal plans are available for purchase through January 31st and can be used to bring guests to the dining hall.
- ii. **Grab-and-Go:** Luis discussed the Grab-and-Go program, which offers grab-and-go meals ranging from \$4.00 to \$8.29. The program includes hot breakfast sandwiches and new items like strawberry cheesecake and chocolate peanut butter overnight oats, available at various campus locations.
- iii. **Autonomous Market:** Luis announced the opening of an autonomous market at the School of Podiatry in Harlingen, which operates 24/7 with a self-checkout system. The official grand opening is scheduled for January 29th.
- iv. **New Dining Options:** Luis introduced new dining options, including Southern Rose Coffee inside El Comedor in Brownsville and Nuri Fusion Street Kitchen at the Edinburgh campus. He provided details about their menus and operating hours.

V. **Committee Reports**

- a. Jeremy San Miguel, Communications Committee Chair

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Staff Senate

i. No updates

b. Yesenia Carter, Constitutions & Elections Committee Chair

i. No updates

c. *Elizabeth Salinas*, Business Processes & Staff Support Co-Chair

i. No updates

d. *Krystal Marroquin*, Staff Success Committee

i. No updates

VI. Public Comments & Questions

Dr. Mirayda Torres-Avila, Parliamentarian

a. Updates and Announcements:

- i. **5k Run:** Various participants shared updates and information about upcoming events, including a 5K run in Harlingen, a speaker series event on the Brownsville campus, and the need for volunteers for the 5K run.

VII. Adjourn – 10:09

Elizabeth Reyes moved to adjourn the Staff Senate general meeting for the month of January, and Dina seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:09 by Dr. Mirayda Torres-Avila.

Prepared by Ricardo Lopez