

**Provost Council**  
**Oct. 20, 2010**  
**3:00 PM – 5:00 PM**  
**MB 3.106 Regents' Room**

**AGENDA**

**PRESENTATION BY TOMÁS RIVERA CENTER**

**LETICIA DUNCAN**

Staff members from the TRC were present to inform the Council about the first year programs offered to our students. Susan Colorado, Director of the Learning Communities spoke about the many programs within this area. Learning Communities are small groups of freshman (25) that enroll in three courses together as a group. The goal is to assist in the transition from high school to college and to develop relationships with peers and university staff and faculty. Learning Communities provide a great resource in the student's academic success. Those students who participated in the Learning Communities had a higher first year retention rate, higher GPA, and a higher 6 year graduation rate than those students who were not enrolled in the Learning Communities. Ms. Colorado would like to create learning communities for groups such as student-athletes, first generation student, migrant students and those wanting to have a career in healthcare.

Sabina Kapoor, Director of Undeclared Programs and Cynthia Rodriguez, Director of Academic Program Development discussed the various program offered to our students. There are two programs that Sabina oversees, the PACE, which is for incoming freshman who are undecided majors and the SSP, which targets incoming freshmen who are historically first generation. Both programs focus on the academic transition from high school to college, leadership development, and major/career exploration. Not unlike the Learning Communities, students in this program will be followed through their entire academic career in order to ensure their academic success.

Cynthia Rodriguez reported on the Academic Development Program offered through the TRC. This program is designed for students who have the "provisional student" designation. Provisional students are undeclared major students, attend a Freshman Seminar course along with other core curriculum courses and must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA for 18 hours in order to avoid academic dismissal. These students also meet with an academic advisor each month and attend other events that increase their success and assist with the transition from high school to college. Unofficially, the ADP program saw a 63% one-year retention rate in 2009-2010.

**FACULTY RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY**

**JEFF KANTOR**

Dr. Kantor discussed the Faculty Research Activity Summary which is sent to the PI's, Dept. Chairs and Dean in November. The Summary provides the following information:

- Number of Grants
- Number of Contracts submitted
- Dollar value of the grant
- Number of awards
- Total Research expenditures
- Total F&A recovered from research
- Total Sponsored Program expenditures
- Total F&A from sponsored programs

Dr. Kantor also updated the Council on the Faculty helping Faculty database. He recently sent out a survey asking how many faculty have served as proposal reviewers and would they be willing to share their expertise with a colleague. 70 faculty responded positively to the survey. This database will assist our faculty in preparing stronger proposals. The database is on the VP for Research site.

## **CONTRACTS & INDUSTRIAL AGREEMENTS**

## **JIM CASEY**

Mr. Casey discussed the Office of Contracts and Industrial Agreements progress since opening a few years ago. The staff has been adopting best practices to support the universities mission to become a Tier 1 university. The staff has also developed graphs that can show the growth of our research/sponsored programs and non-financial contracts. The growth from FY 07 (41) and FY08 (33) to present (FY10 538) is due to the fact that we were not counting financial contracts. However, the growth of non-financial contracts for the same period FY 07 (41), FY 08 (33) to (FY 10 135) does represent an accurate picture of our growth and can support the earlier figures. Mr. Casey further stated that his office is training faculty and staff on contract-rights and responsibilities as this area continues to grow. They are also willing to help facilitate partnerships between the university and industry as we moved toward Tier 1. The website link can be found on the VP Research main webpage.

## **COMMERCIALIZATION RESULTS**

## **CORY HALLAM**

Dr. Hallam gave a report of the accomplishments since the Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization was established two years ago. Besides adopting best practices and procedures from other UT System institutions and other Tier 1 universities, they have participated with UT System, the Coordinating Board and national organizations for research commercialization. The office has overseen the following university achievements:

- Joint IP Office with UTHSC, UTPA and UTB
- 1<sup>st</sup> SBIR and STTR
- Proof of Concept Fund
- Faculty Start Up
- Technology License
- 1<sup>st</sup> License Income (Merck)
- Incubated Commercial Company
- Faculty Innovation Trademark
- Incubator Spin-Off Company
- Developed Commercialization Council

Among the Student achievements they are:

- Tech Boot Camp
- \$100K Student Start Up Competition
- Student Start Up
- Incubated Student Company

Going forward, the office has hired a new STTM director who will focus on transferring intellectual property to industry. The office will also assist on developing commercial partnerships and incubations, work with academic programs to further entrepreneurship and reinvest licensing revenues into research.

## **+/- GRADING**

## **JOHN FREDERICK**

Dr. Frederick discussed the recently passed Faculty Senate resolution on +/- grading system. Dr. Frederick stated that he supported this proposal as he would like to see a more permissive grading system as opposed to a restrictive system. He also mentioned that his last institution, Nevada, had a similar grading system and he did not see diminished GPA's as the Dean's believe will occur. Dr. Frederick also suggested that the departments should adopt a plan to have consistent grading within the same section of course. He also stated that if we have a problem with how our catalog is written regarding pre-requisites, then we need to make a change so that we remain consistent. For instance, if a pre-requisite for a class was a C, which is a 70 or above, then the pre-requisite should be changed to C-, which would also be a 70. Dr. Williams and Dr. Flannagan were asked to write guidelines that can be used as this new grading system does not go into affect until Fall 2011.