

Provost's Council
January 16, 2013
2:00 – 4:00 PM
MB 3.106 Regents' Room

AGENDA

New Student Convocation / Orientation

John Frederick discussed the current options for UTSA's convocation. He said that due to construction to the upper deck of the convocation center (to comply with safety regulations), only a limited number of students and faculty were able to attend the ceremony last semester. He said that going forward; there are 3 main options for commencement:

1. Do not make convocation mandatory for students and don't invite faculty (this was the option used last semester);
2. Make the ceremony mandatory for students and invite faculty, but hold two separate ceremonies at different times; or
3. Hold two concurrent ceremonies (one in the convocation center and one in the recreation center).

Dr. Frederick wanted this issue presented so that the academic affairs area could discuss it and provide their feedback to business affairs. He said that last year there was support for the second option. The council discussed holding a separate convocation downtown. It was decided that the sense of community would be lost if the convocation ceremonies were split. A concurrent ceremony is also an option, but one of the ceremonies would lose the physical presence of having the President and/or guest speaker attend. Since it was also agreed that student attendance should be mandatory (in accordance with the GRIP), the council decided to request that funds be used to add additional seating in the convocation center and continue to make the necessary repairs needed for safety compliance. This option would allow for all students to sit together at one large ceremony. Dr. Frederick said that he would discuss the issue with business affairs. In addition, he said this issue provides a good opportunity to discuss possible changes with student affairs regarding changes to orientation going forward. An idea was brought forward to incorporate a face-to-face carnival-like setting for freshmen orientation. Upper classmen and faculty could provide meaningful interactions at various major/college information "booths". This type of a freshmen orientation would foster a sense of belonging among freshmen students and provide them with more interaction and an opportunity to gather more information on various degree options. On another note, the upcoming May commencement ceremony will be held at the Alamodome. It's possible that the fall commencement will be held there as well.

Limited Submission Grant Process

Bernard Arulanandam reminded the council that he had proposed revising/editing the process in the last meeting. One goal of the revision was to broaden the net by gathering and passing information on to the RSC directors. They distribute the information to faculty and encourage the submission of pre-proposals. In addition, technical writers will assist faculty with larger proposals. The proposals are sent to the Associate Dean of Research and are reviewed by a Limited Submission Review Panel. If the proposal isn't granted, the panel will provide feedback regarding the outcome to assist with improvements for the next time a proposal is submitted. This information is sent back to the RSC directors to be disseminated to faculty. Dr. Arulanandam believes that this process will be more streamlined and transparent going forward. A question was asked about whether the review panel will select only one pre-proposal from each college to review, as they have done in the past. Dr. Arulanandam said that the panel will look at all of the proposals submitted. In regards to timing the selection of pre-proposals, he said that the panel will look at new ones with funds currently available, as well as proposals with a cyclical or recurring nature. He assured the council that consideration will also be given to 2-phase proposals. He explained that the reason for sending the pre-proposals to the Associate Deans is simply a mechanism to keep them aware of the developments in each college. Another question was asked regarding the funding sources that will be involved in the review process. He said that this process only applies to grants from federal and private foundations, not gifts. He said that large institutional grants will be handled by a group qualified to understand the details of the proposal, in order to comply with the conflict of interest policy.

Faculty Resource Center

Kris Maloney said that the new 50,000 square-foot faculty resource center on the 4th floor of the library has been briefly delayed. The Board of Regents is waiting on the coordinating board for approval. The center is currently funded at \$2.8 million. Due to the delay, the project may not start until February, which would create an October completion date. She said that the center will have a 200-seat assembly room, 6 small meeting rooms, 20-person conference rooms, and an informal seating area. The center may be used for workshops and as a resource center/faculty gathering area. She told everyone that she would have more information at a later date.

Top Scholar Recruitment

Lisa Firmin said that a meeting will be scheduled this month or next, to begin the recruitment process. She said that UTSA invites top students to sit in on classes, attend receptions with faculty, and attend various college-specific events. She said that the top 5% of students (with a 1400 SAT score) are from COS and COE but that diversity is still a factor. She said that new ideas on recruitment and outreach are welcome. Financial affairs and the scholarship office have provided \$500,000 to build the recruitment program and arrange for larger scholarship amounts. In addition, the timing for outreach events will be modified to coincide with prime opportunities to reach students. She briefly discussed the increase in Terry Foundation scholars at UTSA and the importance of working with high school counselors, in order to inform students of their scholarship opportunities.

2013 SACNAS National Conference

Lisa Firmin said that additional funding is needed for UTSA to sponsor the 2013 SACNAS national conference as a platinum member. This will be the 40-year anniversary of the conference which is aimed at advancing the success of Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in science. The conference is set for October 3-6 in San Antonio, Texas. She mentioned some of the benefits for being a platinum sponsor, as well as some additional benefits for being the first platinum sponsor. UTSA had already agreed to commit \$50,000 and she asked if there were any other areas that would be willing to assist with meeting the necessary amount to participate. Representatives from the colleges of science and engineering agreed to commit the remaining amount for UTSA to be a platinum sponsor for SACNAS.

UT System Policies

Dr. Frederick mentioned some new policies recently mandated by the UT System. He said that one policy requires a significant increase in incident reporting, including reporting for allegations of sexual misconduct, fraud, criminal activity, etc. He said that UTSA's reporting contact is Dick Dawson. Dr. Frederick said that there will be a mandatory training module for all university faculty and staff. The increase in reporting is coupled with a mandatory monthly follow-up on all incidents we report to the UT System. He said that this new policy applies to faculty, staff, and students.

Dr. Frederick also discussed the new conflict of commitment policy and reporting guidelines. He said that this policy applies to any outside employment or consulting work, including any gifts over \$250 received from non-family members. This applies to any gifts, even if they are not related to the work you do for UTSA. He said that UTSA has received a draft of the policy (which must be implemented by February 1) and there is not much room for edits to be made. He said that although the reporting load/documentation upkeep is expected to increase, it is likely that 90% or more university employees will still be able to participate in the same things they were doing before. Dr. Frederick said that he will send out the policy draft to the council members.