

Provost's Council
May 20, 2015
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Regents' Room, MB 3.106

AGENDA

VISION AND GOALS FOR 2020

Dr. Frederick discussed the university's strategic planning process that is going on at this time and stated he would like for each college/vice provost area to develop 2 – 3 goals each area can realistically accomplish over the next 5 years. He stated that objectives should focus around:

- Student success
- Obtaining and retaining high quality faculty and staff
- Community priority—connections to local environment, community needs, workforce, research center/hub for issues of the Southwest. Things that make San Antonio/UTSA unique

He also stated that he will be scheduling a breakfast or lunch meeting with each Dean and Vice Provost to review their plans. These meetings will be held in June and July.

One of the Deans mentioned that they would like to see a strategic plan for space management. Instead of moving people around when space opens up, they would like to see a plan that reviews each building and consolidates activities. Dr. Frederick stated that his office, which oversees space management, does their best to think strategically when assigning space and relocating offices to other areas. But, it is a difficult task when space is at a premium for the university. He is hoping that the legislature will approve the TRB request. He also stated that the university should be considering building facilities similar to the Plaza Norte Building to meet our current needs.

FACULTY ENGAGEMENT IN STUDENT SUCCESS

Dr. Frederick mentioned that he recently met with a group of faculty, advisors and staff from OIT to discuss the EARN (early alert) system in an attempt to learn about the difficulties utilizing the system and to come up with solutions. The faculty stated that EARN is very difficult to use and does not communicate with Blackboard. He also stated that several faculty did not understand the importance of using the early alert system. Dr. Frederick explained to them the purpose is to catch students who are struggling in more than one class with the hope of assisting them so that the students do not fail the class or wind up on academic probation. The faculty mentioned that was the first time they heard this explanation and thought it would be helpful to communicate this to other faculty. Their opinion is that faculty see this as another onus instead of seeing this as a bigger picture item. Dr. Frederick further stated that a sub-set of the group he met with will continue to meet to develop a plan, but in the meantime, OIT and advising will automate most of the processes so that faculty do not need to send out

messages. The messages will be sent to students at the 4 week and mid-term marks, which means that faculty must have assignments early in the semester and enter grades in Blackboard. Dr. Frederick stated that a message will be sent to faculty prior to the beginning of the Fall semester.

One of the Deans mentioned that the number one complaint they hear from faculty is that it is difficult to set up a gradebook in Blackboard. It was suggested that additional training classes be held. Another Dean mentioned that there is confusion as to who intervenes with the student who is struggling/failing a class—the faculty member or the advisor. It was also suggested that both groups do not know how to properly counsel a student. One Dean stated that he asks his department chairs to meet with the advisors each semester in order to improve communication, but that the advisors are really busy with petitions, paperwork and career advising.

INTRODUCTION OF VP FOR BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Dr. Frederick introduced the new VP for Business Affairs, Kathryn Funk-Baxter, to the Provost Council. She stated that since her appointment began on April 27th, she has been busy meeting with various constituents across the campus, working on issues surrounding PeopleSoft, preparing for the Business Affairs external review, and preparing for the budget process. She further stated that she looks forward to learning more about UTSA and improving business processes.

THINGS WE CAN DISCONTINUE

Dr. Frederick informed the Council members that the university will no longer be required to complete replacement position justification forms, which were implemented a few years ago during the flexible hiring freeze; however, the justification forms will still need to be completed for any new position. With the discontinuation of this process, Dr. Frederick wanted to review other processes to see what could be eliminated. The following items are ones that were mentioned and will be reviewed:

- Staff evaluation form: most of the members stated that this format does not adequately meet the needs of a true evaluation process and would like to see it eliminated or changed to another instrument.
- Foreign travel approval memos: the deans and vice provost's did not understand why the Vice Provost for International Initiatives needed to approve their foreign travel. Dr. Frederick stated that he would look into the need for this memo.
- UFRAC, specifically for promotion and tenure evaluation. The Council members were unsure as to whether their analysis added value to the review process—currently UTSA has 7 layers of review for P&T cases (DFRAC, Dept. Chair, CFRAC, Dean, UFRAC, Provost and President). Dr. Frederick stated that he would contact Legal Affairs to determine whether or not the Regents' Rules call for a university level committee review of promotion and tenure cases, or if this was a level-review that was added to UTSA. Dr. Frederick stated that his previous institution, University of Nevada had a system where the DFRAC and department chair wrote one memo, the CFRAC and the dean wrote a combined memo before sending the cases to the Provost and the President. He stated that the committee votes could differ from the department chair and the dean, and were communicated in separate parts of the respective memos, but that they were not separate memos similar to the structure that we currently have. Dr. Frederick

stated that he would discuss this with the chair of the Faculty Senate and the executive committee to see if a change should be made in our processes.

NTT ORIENTATION

Dr. Jesse Zapata, Sr. Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Support, announced that there will be an orientation for NTT faculty who are brand new to UTSA or teaching 2 or more courses. The date for orientation has been set for Sat., Aug. 22nd. He stated that the agenda is being developed, but one of the items that will be on the agenda is student success and the importance of placing grades in Blackboard. Several of the Deans mentioned that they conduct their own orientation for these faculty. Dr. Zapata said that he would be happy to review their agendas and to determine if two orientations are needed. But, since the university-sponsored orientation does not capture all NTT faculty, his opinion is that both will be needed.

Announcements:

Legislative Update

Next Provost Council Meeting: Sept. 16th; 9:00 – 11:00; location TBD