Official Approved Minutes

UT DALLAS STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
February 13, 2013    ECSS 2.102    9:00 a.m.


GUESTS: Dr. Lani Connally, Dr. Kenneth Berry, Thy Lam from the Science and Engineering Education Center (SEEC)

1) CALL TO ORDER
   Meeting called to order by President Rochelle Peña at 9:06 am.

2) ROLL CALL
   A quorum was met.

3) SPEAKERS: DR. LANI CONNALLY & DR. KENNETH BERRY
   Dr. Connally provided the council with an overview of the Science and Engineering Education Center (SEEC). The center promotes scientific literacy and science/technology/engineering/mathematics (STEM) education in the community via outreach programs, such as exhibits and workshops in public libraries across the Dallas area, as well as on-campus camps for students grade 4 through 12. Dr. Berry spoke about various robotics competitions that SEEC sponsors each year and the desire for UT Dallas to continue nurturing STEM learning in the Dallas area and across Texas.

4) MEETING MINUTES
   Several council members said they were mistakenly reported absent in the January minutes despite attending the meeting, including Linda Heard, Sandy Runowski and Letitia Andrews. Rochelle Peña expressed the need for all members to arrive to meetings prior to roll call to ensure their attendance is properly recorded. Ms. Andrews made a motion to approve the minutes. Melissa Wyder seconded, and the motion was approved.

5) COMMITTEE REPORTS
   a. EXECUTIVE BOARD (Rochelle Peña)
      Ms. Peña said the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) Committee is passing down a change in the cash handling procedure that requires cash to be deposited the day it is received. All staff will be notified of the policy change. Ms. Peña also said the Staff Council is working with the university’s Wellness Committee to promote staff wellness and activity, referencing the “10 at 10” email message sent to staff earlier that week.
   b. ATTENDANCE REPORT (XXXXXXXX)
   c. BENEFITS COMMITTEE (Jay Jascott)
      Mr. Jascott was absent and Ms. Peña provided an update in his stead. The committee has announced the 12 recipients of the Staff Council scholarship, nine of whom received the Jody Nelson Endowed Scholarship. Because of a scheduling error, the recipients were not notified to attend the February meeting to receive their checks and will do so at a later time.
   d. FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE (Paula Austell)
      Ms. Austell said the Valentine’s Day fundraiser would begin at 11 a.m. that day and requested assistance from council members to man tables at various locations across campus. Ms. Austell said almost half of the Valentine’s Day inventory already had been sold and she had received 28 pre-orders. Student ambassadors will deliver the orders. The lone complaint Ms. Austell said she has received is that the committee opted not to sell balloons this year.
   e. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE (Chad Thomas)
Mr. Thomas said the SUN newsletter would be distributed later that day. The new Staff Council website is still under construction with a planned live date of mid-March. Mr. Thomas said he is now an administrator on the Staff Council facebook page and there should be more activity in the future.

f. STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Arturo Elizondo)
Mr. Elizondo announced that the next staff appreciation event is scheduled for Thursday, April 4 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the Faculty-Staff Dining Hall. The theme will be “Take Me Out to the Ballgame,” and refreshments will include peanuts and other ballpark fare.

g. SECRETARY AND TREASURER’S REPORT (Rochelle Peña)
Ms. Peña said she should have account access by the end of the day and plans to send the December 2012 and January 2013 treasurer’s report to the Staff Council once she is able to access the account information.

h. FACULTY SENATE (Dr. Murray Leaf)
Dr. Leaf said faculty recently were made aware of a report about a “disturbed student” whom he described as experiencing difficulties but was not considered a threat. Faculty members expressed their concern about not having been told specifically what protocol to follow when reporting so-called “at risk” students, and to whom they should report. Dr. Leaf said Dr. Darrelene Rachavong, the vice president for student affairs, would meet with Faculty Senate in its next meeting to address the issue. He and Rochelle Peña both acknowledged the need for Dr. Rachavong to attend an upcoming Staff Council meeting to discuss the issue, as well.

i. STUDENT GOVERNMENT (Rajiv Dwivedi)
Mr. Dwivedi reported that Student Government had successfully worked to extend hours for The Pub until 1 a.m. Monday through Thursday and until 11 p.m. on Friday. The Pub also will now open on Saturdays from 3 to 8 p.m. Student Government is also working to allow alumni to permanently retain their UT Dallas email address.

j. RETIREE ASSOCIATION (Sandee Goertzen)
Ms. Goertzen announced that a retirees lunch meeting was scheduled for Feb. 14, during which time Steve Whitson from UT Southwestern’s medical clinics would speak. A retirees arboretum tour and lunch is scheduled for March, and a new retirees reception is set for April.

6) OLD BUSINESS

a. Suggestions
i. 2012-002s: PeopleSoft Roundtable (Staff Development Committee)
Rochelle Peña indicated that there was some sentiment to no longer pursue the roundtable option now that PeopleSoft concerns have eased. Paula Austell moved to close the item, and Melissa Wyder seconded. There was no discussion. In a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

7) NEW BUSINESS

a. With the retirement of Lin Maute, Rochelle Peña nominated Nancy Finch to serve on the Staff Council. Rhonda Walls made a motion to accept Ms. Finch as a new member, seconded by Arturo Elizondo. There was no discussion. The motion was approved.

b. Sandy Runowski provided a recap of the January Coffee with the President. The portion of the university’s operating budget funded by the state should expand thanks to increased enrollment. UT Dallas is also working to increase its freshman retention rate and is improving its four-year graduation rate. The next coffee is scheduled for March 22 and likely will be the last of the academic year.

c. Ms. Peña reported that the next Executive Committee meeting with President Daniel is scheduled for Feb. 25. She asked council members to notify her via the Staff Council email of any issues to raise to the president.

d. Ms. Peña reported that the Staff Diversity Award will be presented later this spring, and the council is encouraged to make nominations of worthy staff members and to serve on the award committee. Volunteers were told to contact Paula Austell, who is chairing the committee.

e. Ms. Peña reported that council members are needed to serve on an election committee in anticipation of Staff Council elections in the summer. The committee should be formed in the next six weeks, and council members are encouraged to make nominations of staff to run for a representative seat.
f. Melissa Wyder asked Ms. Peña about the status of the Staff Council secretary position. Ms. Peña said the position was posted online last week, and the previous application period in the fall did not yield any appropriate candidates.

ADJOURNMENT
Ms. Peña requested a motion to adjourn at 9:55 am. Melissa Wyder made a motion to adjourn. Daniel Calhoun seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

CHAD THOMAS
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR