

**BRIEFING NOTES FOR
U. T. SYSTEM STUDENT ADVISORY GROUP
MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF REGENTS
FEBRUARY 11, 1998**

Introductory Remarks: Luke Keller, U. T. Austin, SAG Chair

Tuition and Fees Committee: Eric Denton, U. T. San Antonio, Committee Chair

- Implementation of Student Services Fee Advisory Committees at each component

Students compare procedures at the various components and have identified two areas of general concern: (1) that some campuses appoint advisory committees too late in the budget process to allow for appropriate student involvement and (2) that at least two campuses [UTEP and UTSA] have in the past appointed administrators as chair of the student-majority committee. The System Administration continues to work with the individual institutions to improve procedures for student input and UTEP and UTSA are proposing changes in selection of the committee chair. The SAG members know that System Administration follows up with institutional administrators but that the procedures at some of the components still have room for improvement.

- Effectiveness of student input for review of other required fees

Students are concerned that, in a few instances, a component institution convenes the committee too late to accommodate adequate student input or discussion. The impression is left that the administration has already decided on a fee (or increase) and that the students have no real option other than to pay the fee. [We have found the students to be a valuable source of information for the System Administration for our follow-up with a component where improvements may need to be made. Follow-up with components is already underway on this issue.]

Student Rights Committee: Kirk Pozadzides, U. T. Dallas, Committee Chair

- Previous committee discussions concerning Chairman Evans's suggestion to name the committee the Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee (with input from Luke Keller, last year's committee chair)

① ADA Compliant
② TABC Policies
③ Student Discipline Guide

④ Instructors + Course Evaluation made public - recommendation

Luke Keller will report that the committee did seriously discuss the suggestion made by Chairman Evans at the Board of Regents meeting with the Student Advisory Group a year ago. The committee agreed that students do indeed have responsibilities and that these responsibilities are evident to students. The SAG concluded that the nature of the committee, however, was to identify problems that may need to be addressed. Such questions tend to be related to student rights.

- A System-wide web resource for student access to course instructor evaluations

The students are working on a proposal that is expected to recommend that each component adopt an on-line course instructor evaluation report similar to the on-line information that is available to students at U. T. Austin. The report will probably be finalized for forwarding to the Chancellor by the end of the spring semester. Details of the proposal are still being discussed, but the recommendations are likely to propose that content be limited to questions which have a numerical rating and not include individual student comments. The information is expected to be accessible only to enrolled students (and perhaps admitted students) at the specific component institution.

Minority and Multicultural Affairs Committee: Roy de los Santos, U. T. Brownsville, SAG Secretary and committee member

- SAG interest in institutional responses to diversity issues

Committee members are trying to be active on the respective campuses in identifying the institutional plans for recruitment, admission, academic support programs, and award of institutional grants and in offering student support for such programs.

- Continued interest in identifying successful activities that can be transferred from one campus to another

To the extent that student leaders at the components can identify useful and successful practices and programs that support diversity, the SAG will try to encourage adoption of similar programs at other components. The first step was made a year ago by commending to the Chancellor a list of outstanding diversity programs [which we subsequently shared with institutional presidents].

Graduate Affairs Committee: Mike Pearlman, U. T. HSC Houston, Committee Chair

- ✓ • Needle stick policies at components with clinical training (Roy Herron, U. T. HSC San Antonio, SAG Historian, will also provide additional information)

All the health institutions have policies on prevention and testing related to accidental needle sticks, but students think some uniformity and general consistency need to be established among the components and among the various programs within a component. The academic components with clinical programs, such as nursing programs, would also need to be included in such a policy.

- ✓ • Need for a course or seminar in college teaching for teaching assistants and/or assistant instructors at components that do not have such programs

The primary interest in the need for graduate students to be given instruction on how to teach has come from the health components. Since several components do not have established programs, this need might be addressed through distance learning or some other type of shared instruction. Some of the emerging and growing graduate programs in academic components might also be interested in a cooperative arrangement.

Academic Affairs Committee: LaDorna Goff, U. T. Arlington, Committee Chair

- Information technology resources and student accessibility

Students are concerned about whether institutions are carefully monitoring how information technology resources on a campus are deployed and that enough "work stations" or labs are available for student usage. Students also want such labs to be accessible for longer hours, including 24 hours at the end of a semester when "crunch time" occurs. The model used by U. T. Austin to obtain student input on the use of the technology fee may be useful to other components, most of which employ some type of student funding for expansion of technology resources for students. [We will share a copy of the U. T. Austin model with SAG members.]

- Impact of distance learning opportunities on traditional degree programs

Students want assurance that currently enrolled students could take advantage of distance learning courses as they become available. The students support policies that assure high academic standards for distance courses so that the value of degrees are not diminished. Students also want procedures related to course credit and financial aid to be articulated. [Note: Dr. Mario Gonzalez has been alerted to these issues and will be present tomorrow at the meeting with SAG. In addition, Dr. Darcy Hardy, Interim Director of the UT TeleCampus, will be a guest for the SAG Academic Affairs Committee at the February 20-21 meeting of the SAG.]

Area of General Interest: Tom Brown, U. T. San Antonio, SAG Vice Chair; Others

- Gathering information on university systems in other states which have student regents and comparing that approach with the Student Advisory Group model in the U. T. System

The students are aware that previous SAG students have studied this issue and that the earlier groups have concluded that the SAG gives better representation for the multitude of different types of institutions and students than could be achieved by having a lone "student regent." Nonetheless, each new group of students seems to have a need to consider the issue and usually wonder why several public universities in other states seem to be satisfied with having a student regent. Students are aware of the potential difficulties and limitations. The Chancellor talked at length with the students about this subject when they raised the question at the November SAG meeting. The students have wondered if the BOR would find it useful to have a student perspective expressed regularly at Board meetings. [The SAG Executive Committee will be reminded that the SAG Chair is invited to attend all regular Board of Regents meetings and to address issues of interest as needed by making a request to the Board Executive Secretary. Further interaction with the Chancellor and SAG is also scheduled for the SAG meeting on February 20-21.]