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FOR
STUDENT, FACULTY, AND STAFF CAMPUS LIFE COMMITTEE

Committee Meeting: 5/14/2008
Tyler, Texas

James D. Dannenbaum, Chairman
John W. Barnhill, Jr.
Printice L. Gary
James R. Huffines
Michael Swindle, Chair, Employee Advisory Council
Ted Pate, Chair, Faculty Advisory Council
Tommy Thompson, Chair, Student Advisory Council

<u>**U. T. System: Annual Meeting with Officers of the U. T. System Student Advisory Council**</u>

The U. T. System Student Advisory Council will meet with the Board of Regents to discuss accomplishments of the Council and plans for the future. The Council's recommendations are on Pages 143 - 147. Also attached on Pages 148 - 155 is a chart showing the status of prior recommendations from the Council.

<u>AGENDA</u>

1. Executive and Standing Committee Member Introductions

2. Chairperson's Report and Overview

3. Executive Committee and Standing Committee Remarks and Recommendations

Council members scheduled to attend are:

Chair: Mr. Tommy Thompson, U. T. San Antonio, Management

Academic Affairs Committee: Mr. Stephen Myers, U. T. Austin, Government
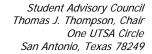
Student Involvement and Campus Life Committee: Mr. Jaime Villanueva, U. T. San Antonio, Mathematics

Graduate and Health Affairs Committee: Mr. Sean Paul, U. T. Health Science Center - San Antonio, Medicine

Financial and Legislative Affairs Committee: Mr. Andrew Solomon, U. T. Austin, Radio-Television-Film

<u>BACKGROUND INFORMATION</u>

The U. T. System Student Advisory Council was established in 1989 to provide input to the U. T. System Board of Regents working through and with the Chancellor and U. T. System Administration on issues of student concern. The operating guidelines of the Council require that recommendations have a multi-institutional focus and that the Council explore individual campus issues with institutional administrators prior to any consideration thereof. The Student Advisory Council consists of two student representatives from each U. T. System institution enrolling students, and meets three times yearly in Austin. The Standing Committees of the Council are: Academic Affairs, Student Involvement and Campus Life, Graduate and Health Affairs, and Financial and Legislative Affairs.

March 29, 2008

Chancellor Mark G. Yudof
Chancellor, University of Texas System
601 Colorado St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chancellor Yudof:

I would first like to thank you for giving a voice to the students through The University of Texas System Student Advisory Council. Begun in 1989, this council of students allows The University of Texas System Board of Regents to obtain further suggestions, ideas and plans brought by our members. In its current configuration, this fantastic opportunity allows two members of each University of Texas System institution the opportunity to voice their concerns and offer support within our four standing committees; Academic Affairs, Student Involvement and Campus Life, Financial and Legislative, and Graduate and Health Affairs.

Additionally, I would like to offer my thanks and bring to light the hard work of the members that served on the 2007–2008 U. T. System Student Advisory Council. Attached are the recommendations that represent the hard work and dedication to excellence of these members. You will see that they represent a variety of issues, each affecting many campuses in the U. T. System.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Edward Baldwin and Dr. Jim Studer for their continued hard work, guidance, and dedication. Without their support, none of what we do could be possible.

I look forward to presenting our recommendations to the Board of Regents in May.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Thompson
 Chair

Prepared for the Student Advisory Council
by the Office of Academic Affairs
March 2008

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM

After careful consideration, we the members of The University of Texas System Student Advisory Council (SAC), respectfully submit the following recommendations to The University of Texas System Board of Regents. These recommendations concern a wide variety of students at multiple institutions in The University of Texas System.

Academic Affairs Committee

Recommendation 1

Each campus should model the on-line course instructor and course evaluation survey results tool used at The University of Texas at Dallas. The course instructor and course evaluation surveys should be linked to the on-line course catalog and be made readily available to students during registration periods from the registration menu.

The U. T. Dallas course instructor and course evaluation survey tool can be found on-line at: http://www.utdallas.edu/lookup/.

The Academic Affairs Committee found that U. T. System institutions currently do an adequate job of collecting student feedback through course instructor and course evaluation surveys. However, campuses do an inadequate job of making the results from these surveys available to students. Such information will be helpful to students during the course selection process, as it will allow them to assess a professor's teaching style and ability as well as the effectiveness of a particular course.

Recommendation 2

Each campus should implement a policy encouraging professors to post course syllabi on-line preferably before the first registration period but at least before the first day of class.

Course syllabi provide important information (i.e. grading policies, assignment due-dates, examination dates, and course procedures) that can help students make informed decisions about courses. There are various benefits to helping students make well-informed choices during the course selection process, including better student performance in class, fewer dropped classes, and more timely graduation rates.

A recommendation from the 2004-2005 Academic Affairs Committee of the Student Advisory Council encouraged each institution to develop and promote an honor code. We reiterate our support for this idea and ask again that it be made a priority at the U. T. System level. Each campus president should be charged with the task of convening a group of students, faculty, staff, and administrators to develop and implement an honor code.

A well developed and integrated honor code demonstrates the significance institutions place on academic integrity, ethics, and civility. Research also shows the positive effects a well-integrated honor code can have when it comes to curbing scholastic dishonesty among students. Currently only a very few of the U. T. System's institutions have an honor code of some kind.

Student Involvement and Campus Life Committee

Recommendation 4

Concerned with campus safety, we request that each institution implement a criminal emergency response system in order to avoid additional potential crimes against students on campus. We ask the U. T. System to look at the possibilities of a Shared Services Contract in order to keep costs low when shopping for a criminal emergency response system.

The U. T. System should consist of a three tier communication process that protects student privacy. Students should have the ability to opt out of any emergency response system put in place.

First Tier- These are first response crimes, examples of murder, aggravated assault, and sexual offense. The main issue with reporting these crimes comes when the suspect is at large and can harm other students.

Second Tier- These are viewed as person-to-person crimes where the suspect is caught or there is not a potential to harm other students.

Third Tier- These actions occur when property or other crimes are committed where the potential danger to other students is minimum or rare.

We ask that First Tier crimes be reported immediately to students using a system like Reverse 911 using a voice call or text message. Second tier crimes should be reported using university email within twelve hours of the given crime. Third tier crimes should be reported on a weekly basis in order to keep students aware of potential crimes.

Prepared for the Student Advisory Council
by the Office of Academic Affairs
March 2008

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Graduate and Health Affairs Committee

Recommendation 5

We commend the report from the Task Force on Doctoral Education and Post-Doctoral Experience. To continue this goal of improving the doctoral education and post-doctoral experience and to better recruit and serve graduate students, graduate housing must be addressed for graduate students.

The report is a great start toward positively impacting the graduate student experience; however the report did not thoroughly address the importance of appropriate and affordable housing options for U. T. System graduate students.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that a student representative from the SAC be included in the evaluation, analysis, and investigation of developing a standard of student health care for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. Once established, the standard should be a required goal for each of the student health care facilities in the U. T. System.

We support the review of student health centers of the U. T. System to evaluate adequate and appropriate health clinics for students. Student representatives at each institution should be consulted to assure that campus specific needs be met.

Financial and Legislative Affairs

Recommendation 7

Conduct a survey to ascertain the adequacy of student health insurance in the U. T. System. The results of this survey should be used to study the possible development of a Tiered Health Insurance System with options for additional coverage for students with specific needs.

We acknowledge that a survey is being conducted for graduate students but recommend that a health insurance survey be conducted for undergraduate and professional students as well.

This survey would be an opportunity to explore the unique health care needs of our diverse student population, and that it would lead to better solutions of providing appropriate health insurance options.

A member of SAC, as well as a Student Health Coordinator Representative should be included in the design, bid process, collection of data, analysis, bid process, and distribution of results to all campuses.

Recommendation 8

Concerned with the Archer Center, we wish to express our support for the program, and encourage the U. T. System to offer a similar program during the summer whether it is an abbreviated version of the Archer Fellowship or a new service targeted specifically for summer students, when more students are likely to take time away from their home institution.

SAC believes that the Archer program is a positive experience for its participants; we only wish that more students were able to participate in the Archer Program.

Currently, the Archer Program is only offered during the fall and spring semesters. At this time only undergraduate students are allowed to participate in the Archer Program. We feel that the U. T. System should also offer a program that graduate students are eligible for in Washington, D.C.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that U. T. System and its Governmental Relations office institute a policy to effectively communicate legislative issues to student leaders during the next legislative session. We recommend that students be designated as campus liaisons in the information-sharing process.

During a legislative session it is difficult for students to stay up-to-date on new legislation that could potentially affect them. This is especially true for students not at the U. T. Austin campus.

Often times, students do not know about a piece of legislation until it has already been enacted. Student leaders may not find out about an important committee hearing on a bill until it is too late for them to actively engage their student body.

In addition to the nine recommendations presented above, the SAC wishes to express its strong disagreement with the U. T. Board of Regents in regards to the tuition cap that was voted on in December of 2007.

We acknowledge that outside forces, such as the Texas legislature, played a factor in the Regents' decision making. The SAC also acknowledges the difficult balance between excellence and affordability.

We appreciate the previously set tuition-setting process that involves a collaborative effort between students, faculty, the administration, and the University presidents before a recommendation is sent to the Board of Regents. We do not believe that the process was followed this year, and we believe it has diminished the student collaboration in this process.

We also believe that a universal cap set on all U. T. institutions in response to a tuition proposal from U. T. Austin does not take into consideration the diversity of the schools with the U. T. System and the diverse needs at each school.

As students, we look forward to working with the Board of Regents on future decisions regarding tuition.

Student Advisory Council Recommendations

Two Year Cumulative List/Update

Subject	Recommendation	System Administration Response
Investigate the effectiveness of current anti-drug efforts at our health institutions **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #1	Institute random drug testing to those students who are directly involved in patient care and investigate the effectives of current anti-drug efforts at our health institutions	The Office of Health Affairs has surveyed the health institutions and found that those students who are involved in direct patient care are randomly tested by the facilities where they work. Under the *Drug Free Schools and Campus Act* regulations 34CFR 86.1 our institutions are already required to promote Student Health Service Programs about drug rehabilitation. *Status: Acknowledged and completed.*
Tuition Guarantees **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #2	Ask all institutions to begin setting tuition locks or guarantees for incoming students based on their academic program's expected time of completion	A tuition guarantee policy may not make sense for all institutions. In general, the policies are designed for, and benefit, the traditional full-time university student who may be able to complete the degree programs in four or five years. At many U. T. System institutions, large numbers of part-time and nontraditional students would derive no benefit from such a policy. To date, two academic institutions are using tuition guarantees. In fall 2006, qualified freshmen, at U. T. El Paso had the option of selecting a guaranteed tuition rate for four years. Beginning fall 2007, incoming freshmen at U. T. Dallas are given a tuition guarantee for four years. Other undergraduates were given the opportunity to opt in to the guarantee. In fall 2008, entering graduates will be given a four year tuition guarantee. *Status: Acknowledged and sent to individual institutions for discussion.*

Standardize dates for the tuition setting process **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #3	Implement standard dates for the tuition setting process at each institution	The tuition-setting process was designed to be flexible to allow each institution to set timelines based on due dates to U. T. System and the institutions' own academic calendar. *Status: Acknowledged.*
Online Degree Audit Plan Evaluation **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #4	Require an online degree audit plan evaluation tool at each institution	In 2006, U. T. System academic institutions were in different stages of implementation of an online degree evaluation tool. To date, eight of the nine academic institutions have a system in place and the ninth academic institution is currently beta testing a system. *Status: Acknowledged and completed.*
Advising Accountability **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #5	Require advising accountability	Academic advising needs to be improved. At most campuses the bulk of advising, at the undergraduate level, is done by staff rather than by faculty. For faculty members, advising is part of the promotion and tenure process. For staff advisers we will determine whether or not we have a sufficient career line developed. *Status: Acknowledged and ongoing.*
Course Transfer Equivalency Guide **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #6	Develop a Transfer Equivalency Guide that is useable by all U. T. System Schools	The Office of Academic Affairs will ascertain the state of course equivalency guides at each institution and will determine if this service is best provided on each campus, centrally, or in combination. *Status: Acknowledged and ongoing. Many institutions have already developed online equivalency guides which allow students to check courses from and to institutions, including community colleges, for which transfers are common.*

Communications Portal for Student Leaders within U. T. System schools **May 11, 2006 Board Meeting** Recommendation #7	Create and moderate a network (similar to the U. T. System Student Advisory Council (UTSAC) portal) to facilitate communications within the U. T. System	The Office of Academic Affairs will test using the already created U. T. System Student Advisory Council (UTSAC) portal for this purpose. Most of members of UTSAC are already the student leaders for their campuses. *Status: Acknowledged and ongoing.*
24 hour quiet study facility **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #1	Establish an on-campus 24-hour quiet study facility to students at all U. T. System schools	This recommendation is best addressed at the campus level. Each campus will be guided by available resources. Some campuses have already established 24 hour on-campus quiet study facilities. *Status: Acknowledged and sent to individual institutions for discussion.*
Study Days **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #2	Implement study days before final examinations	This recommendation is best addressed at the campus level. Each campus will be guided by available resources. Some campuses have already established study days before final examinations. *Status: Acknowledged and submitted to individual institutions for discussion. Most of the academic institutions have study days, while others have days when limited exams are given.*
University Supported Recycling Programs **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #3	Require all institutions to have a university-supported recycling program	This recommendation is best addressed at the campus level. Some campuses have already established university-supported recycling programs. *Status: Acknowledged and sent to individual institutions for discussion.*

Tuition Information **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #4	Encourage all U. T. System institutions to make tuition information more readily available to Texas students and families	Since the Legislature granted tuition-setting authority to public university governing boards in 2003 one of the top priorities of the U. T. System Administration is to provide transparency in the tuition-setting process. A recently launched web page, "Access and Affordability", contains information about tuition and the tuition setting process. Information on a particular campus is 2 mouse clicks away. To aid in that effort, each campus has a "Tuition at Work" web site containing information on how student tuition dollars are advancing excellence at the institutions. Also included on this web site is a link to "Texas College Money" which will help students calculate the cost of college attendance at any of the U. T. System schools. *Status: Acknowledged and completed.*
Textbook Lists **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #5	Require that all U. T. System institutions maintain and publish book lists in a timely manner to allow students the opportunity to purchase their textbooks from multiple venues	It should also be pointed out that at some institutions and in some departments this practice is already in place. In addition U. T. System has created a task force on textbook affordability. *Status: Acknowledged and sent to individual institutions for discussion.*
Bundled Textbooks **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #6	Discourage the purchase of bundled textbooks in cases where there are purchasing options and not all of the contents of the bundle are required by the professor	*Status: Acknowledged and sent to individual institutions for discussion. In addition U. T. System has created a task force on textbook affordability*

Additional Course Charges **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #7	Special notation for course charges over $50 not included in tuition and fees	*Status: Acknowledged and submitted to individual institutions for discussion.*
Tax-free Textbooks **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #8	Actively support tax-free textbooks	Legislation that would have extended tax exempt status for textbook purchases did not make its way through the legislative process. Please be reminded that officials and staff of U. T. System and its member institutions serve only as resource witnesses and by law, would only be able to comment on the effects of the bill. *Status: Acknowledged*
Early Voting **May 10, 2007 Board Meeting** Recommendation #9	Encourage U. T. System campuses to engage city and county officials to ensure that each campus has a polling location and the option for early voting on campus	*Status: Acknowledged and sent to individual institutions for discussion.*

| Student Representative on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

May 10, 2007 Board Meeting
Recommendation #10 | Support having a student on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board | Senate Bill 1007 by Representative West, passed during the 80th Legislative Session, provides for student representation at several levels. One student will sit on the full Board and not less than four student representatives will sit on designated advisory committees of the Board, including the Common Application Advisory Committee, the Distance Education Advisory Committee, the Financial Aid Advisory Committee, the Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee, the Transfer Issues Advisory Committee, or any other advisory committee created to address the needs of higher education, including committees addressing financial aid, student services, and undergraduate education needs.

Status: Acknowledged and implemented by the 80th Texas Legislature. |

| Support for Graduate Students

May 10, 2007 Board Meeting

Recommendations #11, #12, #14 | Graduate student recruitment and financial assistance

Provide access to health insurance to all graduate students

Provide adequate support for graduate student academic employees | The University of Texas System Strategic Plan was designed to help ensure that the U. T. System, the State of Texas, and the nation will be competitive in the 21st century. Strong doctoral and post-doctoral programs are necessary for the U. T. Systems' strategic goals. The U. T. System convened the Task Force on Doctoral Education and the Post-doctoral Experience in June 2006. Among the charges to The Task Force were

Identify the most critical areas for improvement in the quality of doctoral and post-doctoral programs within the U. T. System.
Recruit, retain, and graduate more doctoral students and post-doctoral trainees in support of the *U. T. System Strategic Plan 2006-2015* and the State's *Closing the Gaps* initiative.
Enhance the value and contributions of doctoral and post-doctoral programs to their institutions, the U. T. System, and the state.
Increase the competitiveness and prestige of the U. T. System's research, education, and service programs.
Status: Acknowledged. The Board has just adopted the recommendations of the Task Force and the Offices of Health Affairs and Academic Affairs have begun to implement those recommendations. |
| **Graduate International Study Programs**

May 10, 2007 Board Meeting

Recommendation #13 | **Expand graduate student international study programs** | The issue of international study programs will be addressed in the Global Initiatives activities which are a part of the U. T. System Strategic Plan. The Offices of Strategic Management, Academic Affairs and Health Affairs have already begun planning for this initiative.

Status: Acknowledged and ongoing. |

| Graduation Rates

May 10, 2007 Board Meeting
Recommendation #15 | Help improve graduation rates

- Define full-time and what is full-time status and timelines for degrees

- Decrease the student-to-advisor ratio

- Increase the availability of prerequisite courses | Raising graduation rates is a top priority of the Board of Regents. U. T. System institutions are involved in various campus level activities designed to raise graduation rates on their individual campuses.

Since 2003, the U. T. System's academic campuses hired more than 370 faculty and additional advisors and graduate assistants. More than 470 courses were also added. By adding these positions, the campuses intend to enhance the personal attention students receive. The new courses offer students more flexible schedules, including early-morning, evening and weekend classes. With these improvements, the academic campuses hope to raise student graduation rates and increase on-time graduation.

Status: Acknowledged and ongoing. |
| Diversity

May 10, 2007 Board Meeting
Recommendation #16 | We strongly encourage all U. T. System institutions to conduct a survey to explore and share best practices for incorporating diversity into the culture of the university. | Issues involving diversity are handled by the Student, Faculty, Staff, and Campus Life Committee of the Board of Regents. The Committee biannually hears reports on the diversity efforts at each of the U. T. System's campuses.

Status: Acknowledged. |