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Committee Meeting: 5/13/2009
Austin, Texas

*James D. Dannenbaum, Chairman**
Printice L. Gary
R. Steven Hicks
Robert Stillwell
Michael Swindle, Chair, Employee Advisory Council
Mansour El-Kikhia, Chair, Faculty Advisory Council
Aaron Rosas, Chair, Student Advisory Council

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Convene	5:15 p.m. <i>Chairman Dannenbaum</i>	
U. T. System: Annual Meeting with Officers of the U. T. System Student Advisory Council	5:15 p.m. Report <i>Mr. Rosas</i>	78
Adjourn	6:00 p.m.	

**Pending approval by Board*

U. T. System: Annual Meeting with Officers of the U. T. System Student Advisory Council

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 80 - 83 and the Council's February 2009 resolution on Tuition Affordability and Financial Aid is on Pages 84 - 85.

AGENDA

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. Aaron Rosas, U. T. El Paso, Graduate School, Public Administration

Academic Affairs: Ms. Kerrie Ambort, U. T. Tyler, Business

Student Involvement and Campus Life Committee: Mr. Raghuvier Puttagunta, U. T. Pan American, Chemistry

Health and Graduate Affairs Committee: Mr. Bradley Carpenter, U. T. Austin, Graduate School, Education Policy and Planning

Financial and Legislative Affairs Committee: Mr. Keshav Rajagopalan, U. T. Austin, Plan II/Communication Studies

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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, Health and Graduate Affairs, and Financial and Legislative Affairs.



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April 6, 2009

Dr. Francisco Cigarroa
Chancellor
The University of Texas System
601 Colorado St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chancellor Cigarroa,

I would like to express my appreciation to the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System for giving us this opportunity to present our recommendations on how to improve the lives of our fellow students and improve the educational experience as a whole.

Year after year, the council works diligently to formulate recommendations to present to our Board of Regents. Attached you will find the formal recommendations of this year's council. These recommendations, along with the Tuition Flexibility and Financial Aid Resolution that I forwarded to you and Chairman Caven this February, complete the Council's work for this academic year. I would like to recognize the hard work that this Council has demonstrated. Together, we have developed recommendations which are aimed at improving multiple aspects of our institutions, with one goal in mind – improving the success of our students.

Words cannot convey the gratitude that the Council and I have for Dr. Edward Baldwin, Dr. James Studer, and all the System staff and fellow administrators for their tireless devotion to our success, endless support of the council, and superb guidance throughout the entire year. It is because of them, that the Council successfully puts forth strong recommendations, and I confidently speak on behalf of the Council in voicing how deeply grateful we are.

I thank you for the opportunity to share with you our recommendations and look forward to presenting our recommendations to the Board of Regents in May.

Sincerely,

Aaron Z. Rosas
Chair, Student Advisory Council
The University of Texas System

Attachment

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The University of Texas at San Antonio

The University of Texas at Tyler

The University of Texas
Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas

The University of Texas
Medical Branch at Galveston

The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Houston

The University of Texas
Health Science Center at San Antonio

The University of Texas
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center

The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Tyler

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**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 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

The U. T. System Student Advisory Council is concerned that students may not be adequately involved in academic integrity disciplinary proceedings. As stakeholders in the integrity of our institutions and fellow students, we recommend that the Board of Regents facilitate student input in such proceedings. A possible solution is the inclusion of students on an advisory committee, which offers counsel to the dean of students or a designated hearing officer regarding sanctions imposed on students who have either admitted guilt or have been found guilty to a charge of academic dishonesty.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the Board of Regents reinforce syllabi guidelines at all U. T. System academic institutions. The course syllabi, distributed by professors within the first week of classes, should include but are not limited to:

- The purpose and objectives of the course
- The semester in which the course is being offered
- Course prefix/number and title
- Course description in correlation with course catalog
- Prerequisites for course
- A list of required and recommended reading material and passages
- Class policies that pertain to grading, assignments, examinations, and absences
- Due dates for major assignments
- Professor contact information including email, phone number, office hours, and location
- Policies regarding student expectations
- Disability/Special accommodations statement
- A department or university honor code or statement of ethics
- An explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism

Financial and Legislative Affairs Committee

Recommendation 3

The U. T. System Student Advisory Council recommends that each institution establish a service that educates the student population on financial literacy and financial management matters. This service

should target students in their first year of enrollment and should include financial literacy and financial management seminars that are performed throughout the year and a peer-to-peer type of educational advising system that counsels students on these issues.

Possible topics that should be covered include but are not limited to the following:

- Credit card responsibility
- Loan payment and consolidation
- Savings
- Budgeting
- Economic climate
- Consumer responsibility
 - Negotiation of loans
 - Insurance
 - Taxes
 - Liens
 - Investing
 - Bill payment
- Identity theft

Examples of these services are the Texas Tech University's Red to Black program and the University of North Texas' Student Money Management Center.

Health and Graduate Affairs Committee

Recommendation 4

Health insurance remains a critical problem for U. T. System students. In response to the 2007-2008 UTSSAC Recommendation 7, the Board of Regents suggested, "a health insurance survey be conducted for undergraduate and professional students." As a result, the 2008-2009 UTSSAC conducted a System-wide survey in order to better identify and represent the diverse opinions of students on issues pertaining to health insurance.

We recommend that U. T. System consider these survey results when negotiating the bidding process for student health insurance contracts and services provided through these policies.

Recommendation 5

Emergency situations stemming from natural disasters can affect students' accessibility to health care and student services. During Hurricane Ike, students from U. T. Medical Branch - Galveston were dispersed to campuses throughout the U. T. System. Some displaced students were unable to access needed medical attention and other student services at host institutions.

We recommend the Board of Regents ensure mechanisms are in place following a state of emergency that allow displaced students to receive adequate medical help and student services at any of the U. T. System campuses.

We also recommend that while this policy is in effect, it is well communicated to all involved students and healthcare administrators.

Student Involvement and Campus Life Committee

Recommendation 6

Environmental sustainability is an important issue for current and future students on all U. T. System campuses. The U. T. System Policy on Sustainability Practices promotes generalized goals but does not set comprehensive evaluation criteria and quantifiable standards such as those found on www.greenreportcard.org. This is evidenced by published reports where a “C” average was assigned to the only two evaluated UT institutions. We would like to improve our sustainability practices to work towards surpassing the standards set by our relevant competitors.

For example, GreenReportCard. org profiles and grades the sustainability efforts at 300 plus universities on the following categories: administration, climate change and energy, food and recycling, green building, student involvement, transportation, endowment transparency, investment priorities, shareholder engagement, and assigns an overall grade.

We recommend that The University of Texas System:

- take a more concerted action to promote environmentally responsible practices on each campus
- create an assessment tool (similar to www.greenreportcard.org) for evaluating each institution in order to gauge and promote progress towards environmentally responsible practices (Table 1)

Table 1: Sample Indicators used by the *College Sustainability Report Card* and The University of Texas System Policy on Sustainability Practices

Administration
Sustainability Policies
Sustainability Staff
Green Purchasing Policies
Advisory Council
Maintenance of a Sustainability Department/Office
Website
Climate Change & Energy
Carbon Emissions Inventory
Commitment to Emissions Reduction
Energy Efficiency
Incentive Programs for Energy Conservation
Renewable Energy Purchase and Investment
Food & Recycling
Local Food
Organic and Sustainably Produced Food
Reusable Dishware and Eco-friendly To-go Containers
Composting Food and Landscaping Waste
Recycling Program for Dining Halls & Offices
Green Building
Green Building Policy and LEED Certification
Renovation and Retrofits
Student Involvement
New Student Orientation
Internships/Outreach Opportunities
Sustainability Challenges and Competitions

- include students as members of the U. T. System Sustainability Steering Committee and each institution's sustainability committee
- increase transparency of sustainability practices by publishing progress reports on institutional and U. T. System websites on an annual basis



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February 17, 2009

Mr. H. Scott Caven, Jr.
Chairman, Board of Regents
The University of Texas System
201 W. 7th St., Suite 820
Austin, TX 78701-2981

Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D.
Chancellor
The University of Texas System
601 Colorado Street
Austin, TX 78701-2981

Dear Chairman Caven and Chancellor Cigarroa,

As Chair of the UT System Student Advisory Council (SAC), I am writing to you today to formally introduce a resolution on behalf of the council. In our February meeting, the council passed one resolution that we would like to pass on to you prior to our presentation of our recommendations in May. Please find the wording of the resolution below. The resolution is concerning Tuition Flexibility and Need-Based Financial Aid.

**TUITION FLEXIBILITY AND NEED-BASED
FINANCIAL AID RESOLUTION**

The UT System Student Advisory Council recommends that the UT System Board of Regents continue to support tuition flexibility and actively recognize the importance of state and federal need-based financial aid.

We understand the need for and are in full support of tuition deregulation. The ability for an institution to set its own tuition is paramount in today's climate of less-than-acceptable state funding for higher education. In order for our institutions to maintain their excellence and improve their programs, tuition flexibility is an important tool for them to have. It allows them to assess their own needs and set tuition in a transparent and accountable manner that includes students.

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The UT System is also committed to maintaining educational accessibility for students and their families from any socio-economic background. Therefore, UT SAC recommends the UT System Board of Regents actively recognize the importance of need-based financial aid and pursue greater funding for need-based financial aid programs, both state and federal.

The resolution passed unanimously in favor of tuition flexibility. We look forward to presenting the remainder of our recommendation at the Board of Regents meeting in May. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

/s/

Aaron Rosas
2008-2009 UT System SAC Chair
The University of Texas at El Paso
915 474-0220

AR/plc

Cc: Dr. David Prior, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Kenneth Shine, M.D., Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs
Dr. James Studer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ms. Francie Frederick, General Counsel to the Board of Regents
Dr. Edward Baldwin, Senior Policy Analyst, Academic Affairs