



University of North Texas  
Staff Council Meeting Minutes  
March 2, 2011  
Chilton 111

Members Present: Jaime Blanton, Jim Byford, Ryan Ferguson, Chris Foster, Paul Goebel, Nathan Hansard, Mikal Hensarling, Jennifer Lee, Xaviera Lofton, Lisa Martin, Stephanie McCane, Rachel McMullen, Scott Milligan, Joanie Smith, Hillary Talatzko, Amy Tannehill, Jackie Thames, Valerie Thornton, Amie Trahan, Uyen Tran, Margaret Vestal

Members Absent: Elvira Aguilar, Cheylon Brown, Tina Garza, Rose Preston, Erasmo "Max" Rodriguez, Raymond Rowell, Mary Ann Venner

Guests: Jean Bush (Senior Associate VP for Finance and CFO), Melina Stucky (In House)

I. Call to Order

Hillary Talatzko called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the previous Staff Council meetings were approved as submitted.

III. Guest Speaker- Jean Bush

Jean Bush responded to several budget related questions submitted to Staff Council.

1. What is the anticipated financial impact the university is expected to realize from any proposed budget cuts due to a decrease in state funding dollars?

It depends on the final bill. The current Senate bill cuts funding by \$4 million whereas the House bill brings the total closer to \$10 million including taking away funding for the System offices. We're hoping for an average between the two bills.

2. How much do the university's enrollment numbers need to increase to offset any budget cuts from the state?

There is no feasible way UNT can grow fast enough to offset the cuts. It would also create space issues. We need to invest in more classrooms and faculty to accommodate our self-defined enrollment goal of 45,000 students by 2015.

3. Will any budget cuts have an impact on current staff positions – academic and professional?

All departments were instructed to cut their budget by 5%. Importance is placed on protecting the integrity of our institution and to take care of all faculty and staff. UNT has been operating under a modified hiring freeze since July 2010. The goal is that staff cuts will be made only through attrition.

4. If a position becomes vacant due to attrition, will the position be closed permanently until further notice?

The modified hiring freeze will continue. It's important for staff to track all important data regarding what they do each day to help justify additional staff positions later.

5. Once funding cuts are made to higher education by the legislature, does the university's senior leadership believe that it is the intention for the decreased funding to become an acceptable precedence by our state government never to restore or reinstate its funding levels for higher education when the state's economy improves?

UNT has staff members working in Austin with government relations. They're keeping an eye on bills and sessions and how it affects us. You can go to the Texas Government website to view President Rawlins' testimony from February 14<sup>th</sup>.

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.senate.state.tx.us/avarchive/?yr=2011&lim=50>

6. There is an interest on the part of some staff for each supervisor at every level to receive a 360-review process so that staff under those supervisors can address issues of performance and accountability, particularly related to the use of institutional funds. Will Human Resources consider implementing that a consistent policy regarding review, with protection for staff who answer honestly.

Jean asked Human Resources and it would need approval from their office and the cabinet. She will continue asking.

7. Is it true that the entire funding for the athletics staff salaries is derived from the Student Services Fee? Why should such a financial burden be carried by students and not the university when athletics plays a more prominent role for the university's identity and not as student services?

The preliminary budget shows the new Athletic Services fee and the Student Services fee accounting for 43% of the funding. Only 8% of that total comes from the Student Services fee. Another portion of the funding comes from revenue, gifts, marketing and institutional funding.

8. Why does the new head football coach receive a higher salary than UNT's president? Does the disparity represent a disconnect with our institutional mission?

Athletics helps the university get its face out there. You will find similar situations nationwide.

9. Can you describe the process related to UNT's use of university consultants? For example, significant funds were used for consultants for Athletics and in other areas? How does the university determine when to use outside consultants, especially when they are often very costly?

Consultant firms typically have established relationships that give them more access to both historical and current information. It also allows for more objectivity and prevents overworking our staff. Bids for consulting jobs are open and posted for a considerable amount of time to ensure we are getting the best value.

IV. Officer Reports

Hillary updated the council on the Executive Committee meeting with President Rawlins. President Rawlins is very supportive of Staff Council and our goals. He is interested in making Staff Council a more formal part of University policy. President Rawlins also stated that he would like to have a new designee in place soon. The designee will be at the Vice President level, overseeing university and community relations.

V. Unfinished Business

A new Ad Hoc Staff Needs Assessment Committee has been formed and will be chaired by Paul Goebel. Please contact Paul if you would like to serve.

If you know of any staff members who would like to help, please encourage them to pitch in on a committee.

Elections are coming up. Nomination forms will be out by Friday and are due back March 15<sup>th</sup>. We're looking to increase the number of Staff Council representatives to meet the standards currently listed in our bylaws.

Jaime Blanton is speaking at Thursday's President Sack Lunch. Please attend if you are able. It's a good way to promote Staff Council and recruit new members.

VI. New Business

Faculty Senate has requested Staff Council support on a joint resolution opposing the possible bills allowing concealed handguns on campus. We will vote as a Council whether or not to sign it once the actual resolution has been submitted.

VII. Committee Reports

Chairs are meeting this afternoon to discuss new committee charges.

- Bylaws – Review Structures of Peer Institutions
- Compensation and Benefits – Explore Perks
- Communications – Develop Strategic Communications Plan
- Nominations and Elections – Evaluate Feasibility of Partially Electronic Process for Elections
- Policy Review – Recommend A Representation Districts Plan
- Staff Development – Create/Enhance SC Orientation

VIII. Announcements

The Council is taking a group photo following today's meeting.

IX. Adjournment

The next meeting will be held at 3pm on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.