

Faculty Senate Meeting 20 July 2020

Present: Michael Ortiz, Dan Foley, Kevin Young, Thomas Matula, Audrey Taylor, Todd Russell, Miriam Muniz Quiz, Maria Gear, Samuel Garcia, Sally Roche, Edison Moura, Mary Jane Saucedo, Gina Stocks, Tim Wilson, Wesley Wynne, Jorge Hernandez

Meeting called to order 3:07 pm

Motion to approve minutes, Matula, seconded by Moura. Minutes approved.

Updates regarding officers:

- Have been meeting with President Pete Gallego and Vice President Robert Munoz
- Have been very frank regarding our issues and the conversations were very positive.
 - Have discussed why I think we have trouble reaching our true potential
 - He sees RGC as the place for growth for Sul Ross. That's the first time I have heard that from an RGC president in 11 years.
- Have been collecting data about enrollment and demographic trends
- He acknowledges that our name is Rio Grande College. Maybe it's time for our name to be Sul Ross Del Rio, Sul Ross Uvalde, Sul Ross Eagle Pass--something to consider
- Spoke with him last Wednesday and he listened for about an hour when asking about how things are working.
 - He suggests co-locating a lot of our services on the junior college campus, such as financial aid and admissions. We would share staff with the junior college and be more of a seamless institution.
 - He also suggests we share our faculty, so that sometimes we teach a class for them or sometimes they teach a class for us.
 - If we are going to grow, it is key for us to get far more students from the junior college.
 - A: Just need to work out working for 2 state agencies. Response: that is up to the administrators, but they have been working on it.
 - Another thing he wanted me to talk to you about is raising our students' tuition to be equal to the tuition in Alpine. I have heard concerns because it would make school more expensive for our students. I know when I ask my classes about this there are usually a few who pay out of pocket. He felt by doing this we could expand opportunities for students. I told him that when this has come up before it has felt like a Trojan horse-a way to get our students into online courses at Alpine. They have twice as many undergrad programs as us and four times more grad programs, even though we are serving a larger population. I told him he would need to assure us in tangible ways that we will really see the growth here in our region, and not simply offering more things online from Alpine.
 - E: as long as the tuition stays with the campus of enrollment, I'm fine with it
 - A: that already happens. When Alpine students take our business classes, they pay our tuition.
 - B: My concern is that we may run into the situation where our classes won't make for lack of students. For example, a class that is offered

online from both classes and our students prefer, for some reason to take from Alpine then I am worried we won't have enough students.

- A: we just need to coordinate with Alpine colleagues so you are not both offering the same course at the same time.
 - C: I don't understand why our tuition is different--it seems that it should be the same. He said the difference was around 40%. I always thought the legislature capped how much a course could cost per semester hour. What is the actual difference?
 - D: it looks like tuition at RGC is \$610 for a 3-hour course and >\$1,000 for Alpine. <https://www.sulross.edu/page/902/cashiers-office>
 - https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/Corina_Ramirez/rgc_quaranteed_tuition_price_plan_fall_20.xlsx
 - https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/Corina_Ramirez/guaranteed_tuition_price_plan_gtpp_fall_20_alpine.xls
 - F: Changing tuition will have very little impact on the bottom line--tuition covers only a small part of total costs.
 - G: Maybe this will give us a little slush fund to use for emergency loans.
- What do people think about co-locating staff?
 - Wide approval. It seems simpler and less problematic.
 - We would still have staff that belong to RGC, but they would be housed at SWTJC
 - We currently have work-study students who work at the junior college--it may be something similar to that.
 - H: it seems like a good opportunity for us to market and advertise ourselves better.
 - D: we are currently making the process very difficult, so anything to simplify the process would work very well.
 - F: advising and recruiting in the junior college would be good. We are not sustainable with our current numbers of students.
 - Michael: With Pete we are working with someone who doesn't have an academic background, but he is easy to work with. If we have a good reason for something we just need to articulate it and he is responsive to it. One thing I have been working with this summer is our committees.
 - Should all committees be university-wide? That would be good for most committees, but sometimes we need separate but parallel committees. I have a list of such committees, such as financial aid appeals.
 - We are starting our new academic year in a month or so. Please think about several things:
 - I found out that they pay the faculty assembly president in Alpine, but here they never have. They either get a stipend or a course release. I think whoever has this office SHOULD get a stipend.

- I think our senate should meet more frequently. Perhaps monthly for one hour. I think we can get more done and maybe have shorter, more effective meetings.
- I think we should revise our constitution.
- I think we should have a faculty colloquium to make presentations about our research or interests. We could have students come and present as well. Maybe once a month, maybe twice
- I think we have tried a lot of task forces, committees, etc. where administrators seem to pick certain people to make an end-run around the faculty, and sometimes a faculty committee for that very thing already exists. I think we should expect an annual report from each committee
- Old business: COVID 19.
 - J: I am concerned about upper management not being as concerned about it, but I noted the new hand sanitizer dispenser at the entrance of the building (it did not work).
 - N: every A&M campus is offering free tests for all of their students.
 - J: because we have so few students coming into to buildings, it would be fairly easy to do temperature reads.
 - C: Del Rio is over 800 cases and Eagle Pass is over 1,000. Our mayor has put out a request for people to shelter in place for 21 days. If we open, it is going against what our local government is asking us to do.
 - Discussion of the challenges of going online. With COVID we cannot do group work, so even meeting F2F would not be the same.
 - The Junior College has announced it is keeping its class times, but it is all online. They are still taking roll.
 - A: we can do Blackboard Collaborate in place of Zoom. Michael & J commented that the Zoom experience was better. You can use breakout groups and polling in Zoom, which is helpful. We can do things to make it authentic
 - Zoom is working better than teleconference
 - K: My concern is accommodations of faculty who feel at risk and don't want to teach F2F
 - And what accommodations for students?
- Enrollment: we are about 50 students down from this time last year, but we were up about 10% for Summer 1 and Summer 2
- Faculty summer workload: we seem to have more and more administrative work over the summer. For example, student advising.
 - Pete and Robert felt it might be a good idea to remove the hold. Yes, we need to do more advising, but we should not be making it harder to register for classes.

- One troubling aspect of this summer work is that major work on university policy may be carried out during the summer with insufficient faculty input.
- L: I volunteered to do the calling. There is some value, but it has not been laid out well and is a long process. M and I have about 130 people to call. It has grown out of control. I reminded Jeanne that I am not on contract.
- K: crowd-sourcing has its disadvantages. Division of labor works well because certain people are good at certain things. We should play to people's strengths rather than push all the work to everyone.
- J: I agree with this concern--I have been doing a lot of meetings this summer, for which I am not being paid. Between the committees, the training, the extra training, etc. I think we need to either ask for pay or put our foot down.
- Michael: I will talk to the administration about this.
- Our name: Rio Grande College
 - I told Pete a lot of people were hurt by how our name was taken away from us. The RGC name came from long conversations with our communities, not from a unilateral change.
 - Pete has said that our name is Rio Grande College, but that it might change. I acknowledged there could be good reasons, but that it should be in consultation with the community.
 - Thoughts?
 - C: he told me he would personally like it to be changed to reflect each community.
 - J: what about Rio Grande Campuses?
 - Michael: Bill Kibler wanted to completely change the brand, so he rejected it, but it might have been a good compromise.
 - E: I think it can cause confusion to name them Sul Ross Del Rio, Sul Ross Eagle Pass, Sul Ross Uvalde because they register for RGC as a whole
 - J & D: Rio Grande College is one entity
 - N: separate names fragment us
 - K: we could be Rio Grande Sul Ross or stay Sul Ross Rio Grande College.
 - E: we could be Sul Ross Rio Grande (take off "College")
- Enrollment: Robert Munoz asked about community involvement. If you have thoughts, please send them to me.
 - Jeanne Qvarnstrom is holding a meeting about La Vida Lobo. If we can prove we are doing something extra to help students he can pay extra.
 - N: she needs to be told that such a meeting should be held in September.

- Consensus: we don't like La Vida Lobo
- Faculty senate secretary: Dan nominated Audrey Taylor and Todd seconded. Motion passed. Audrey will serve until the fall meeting.
- K: Lorenzo De Zavala for a new university name