MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC & STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

January 18, 2007

Minutes

The Board of Trustees of the Houston Community College System held a Meeting of the Academic & Student Success Committee on Thursday, January 18, 2007, at the System Administration Building, Seminar Room A, Second Floor, 3100 Main, Houston, Texas.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT
Abel Davila, Chair
Bruce A. Austin, Member
Diane Olmos Guzman

ADMINISTRATION
Norm Nielsen, Interim Chancellor
Doretha Eason, Deputy to the Chancellor
Miles LeBlanc, General Counsel
William Carter, Vice Chancellor, Information Technology
Charles Cook, Vice Chancellor, Instruction
Irene Porcarello, Vice Chancellor, Student Success
Gloria Walker, Vice Chancellor, Finance & Administration
Winston Dahse, Interim President, Southwest College
Margaret Ford, President, Northeast College
Fena Garza, President, Southeast College
William Harmon, President, Central College
Zachary Hodges, President, Northwest College
Willie Williams, Associate Vice Chancellor, Human Resources
Kelly Zuniga, Executive Director, HCC Foundation

OTHERS PRESENT
Maureen Singleton, System Counsel, Bracewell & Giuliani
David Ross, President, Faculty Senate
Julie Gilbert, Locke, Liddell & Sapp
Other administrators, citizens, and representatives of the news media

CALL TO ORDER
Mr. Davila called the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m. and declared the Committee convened to consider matters pertaining to the Houston Community College System as listed on the duly posted Meeting Notice.
ADOPT POLICIES REGARDING CONSTRAINING COSTS OF TEXTBOOKS FOR HCC STUDENTS

Recommendation: Adopt the following policies as recommended by State Representative Scott Hochberg and by the HCC Textbook/Bookstore Committee to constrain the rising costs of textbooks: (1) Require books (whenever possible) to be used for at least three years; (2) Require earlier selection dates for textbooks to allow students to shop around for better prices; (3) Implement separate “bundling” of instructional materials so that students don’t have to buy books, CDs, workbooks, etc. that the professor does not expect to use in class; and (4) prohibit gifts or payments from publishers that could influence textbook selections.

Mr. Austin suggested that the item should be reviewed by the full Board. Mr. Davila recommended that process for presenting policies issues should be discussed at the Board’s Values and Ethics Committee. Dr. Nielsen stated that Mr. Aiyer brought the issue to administration’s attention and noted that administration was presenting the item to the committee item for discussion. Mrs. Guzman agreed that the item should have been brought to the full Board.

Mr. Davila stated that his concern was relating to privatizing and rent space to other vendors. Mrs. Walker noted that there is an exclusive contract with Barnes and Noble.

Mr. Davila asked whether there is a commitment from the bookstore to lower the prices considerably and requested an analysis on the cost savings to the students. Mrs. Walker informed that the bookstore markups are standard and noted that the College monitors the bookstore pricing.

Mr. Austin noted that it would be feasible if the instructors would support the issue of cost savings by providing the students with a choice as it relates to classroom material.

Motion – Mrs. Guzman motioned to recommend the adoption of the policy. Mr. Austin seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

APPROVE POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF PUBLIC DOMAIN LEARNING MATERIALS

Recommendation: The Houston Community College System encourages the creation, use, and ongoing maintenance of public domain-based learning materials in accordance with established curriculum standards for educational purposes of the district.

The goals of this policy are to provide students with high quality learning materials that reside in the public domain to augment and/or replace costly textbooks, to create sustainable academic resources for students, faculty and staff, and to provide opportunities for professional growth of district employees involved in these activities.

Motion – Mr. Austin motioned to recommend for approval. Mrs. Guzman seconded the motion.
Mr. Austin stated that the program should be reasonably implemented at the discretion of administration. Dr. Nielsen noted that administration would take the recommendation into consideration.

Dr. Cook noted that the material is public domain and not owned by anyone. Mr. Austin noted that the only issue with public domain material is the risk of viruses and asked the Vice Chancellor of IT what measures could be taken to protect against viruses. Mr. Bill Carter, VC of Information Technology noted that the college presently has a Norton anti-virus software in place.

Mr. Austin suggested that the issue of sinking funds should be reviewed as it relates to the college’s technology and equipment made available to its students and noted that the technology provided to the students must be upgraded.

Mr. Carter noted that the College is in the process of reviewing the technology available to students.

(Mrs. Flores arrived at 4:14 p.m.)

Mr. Davila asked if a plan had been devised that would provide a technology building for each college with current technological equipment available to HCC students. Mr. Davila recommended that administration present an analysis as it relates to having a technology building available at each college campus.

(Mr. Oliver arrived at 4:19 p.m.)

Mrs. Flores mentioned that Mr. Austin spearheaded an information technology related meeting that allowed the Board to be more informed of the needs of the students and the staff concerns. Mr. Carter noted that there has been discussion on the availability of resources to staff in order to better serve the students. He noted that there are plans to schedule meetings for such discussions with faculty.

Dr. Nielsen stated that a progress report will be provided as it relates to CampusWorks and the IT Department.

Vote: Motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

REPORT ON CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS RELATED TO IT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Mrs. Guzman informed the Committee that she requested the item be placed on the agenda after receiving a call from a student who was trying to register and was unable to access the system and apprised the Committee of an incident relating to the financial aid process. She noted that her son was not able to register due to a glitch in the system. She stated that her concern was the affect on enrollment if other students incurred the same issue.
Mr. Austin noted that he was contacted on a similar issue where a student was trying to register at one campus and was informed that they needed a transcript from another HCC college even though they were enrolled as a student at HCC.

(Mr. Aiyer arrived at 4:30 p.m.)

Mrs. Flores informed that she received a message where faculty was not able to access and post student grades.

Mr. Carter informed that the server problem was recognized as it relates to the faculty accessing the system, which was a web-server problem where one server was automatically shutting down; however, it was not a problem with PeopleSoft. He also noted that the scholarship issue mentioned by Mrs. Guzman was primarily due to the fact that the financial aid system has not been fully implemented. Mrs. Irene Porcarello noted that there is a financial aid system on-line; however, the scholarship portion has not been implemented.

(Dr. Williams arrived at 4:44 p.m.)

Ms. Porcarello provided a report on the accomplishments and updates of the current and future projects as it relates to Information Technology and Student Success.

Mr. Davila recommended developing a video to train employees and providing awareness of the process.

ADJOURNMENT
With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Recorded, transcribed, and submitted by:
Sharon Wright, Executive Administrative Assistant, Board Services

Minutes Approved: February 22, 2007