

Texas Tech University Faculty Senate

1997-1998:01

September 10, 1997 Minutes #181

Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Review Committee

Report & Recommendations

Background

At the Senate's April 30, 1997 meeting, Chancellor Montford presented a draft of the proposed Strategic Plan for the university. At that meeting the Senate adopted a resolution directing the Agenda Committee to send the draft to a Senate committee for review. A report from that committee was to be prepared for the initial 1997-98 Senate meeting in September.

The committee met several times, including one meeting with Ben Lock, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor. Mr. Lock was very helpful in clarifying the intent of the draft document. He assured the committee that the Chancellor's Office is interested in getting feedback on strategic goals from all campus groups and that a revised draft will be sent out for further discussion. He also outlined the strategic plan process. If possible, a revised goal proposal will be available for review in late September. The Faculty Senate and other groups will have an opportunity to respond. Once a final draft is prepared, it will be presented to the Board of Regents. Ideally, the goals proposal would have the Regents' approval before the start of the capital campaign in February. These strategic goals will provide a direction for the university. Departments and colleges will then be asked to prepare or revise their strategic plans to achieve their goals. Mr. Lock indicated that the department/college plans will funnel into a university-wide implementation plan.

The committee found it difficult to respond to what appears to be a very preliminary document. It was unclear to committee members whether specific items were meant as goals or as means of achieving goals. We agreed that many of the items listed were worthy of pursuit. However without knowing what implementation process was envisioned, we found it difficult to evaluate many of the items included.

Recommendations

Because the draft gave us few specifics to respond to, the committee makes only the following general recommendations to the Senate.

1. That the Senate express strong support for the overarching goals of enhancing Tech's performance and national standing. The focus should be on improving performance; the enhanced national standing will follow
2. That the Senate encourage the Chancellor's Office to complete a more systematic, comprehensive document in time to allow campus review, including the Faculty Senate review, before it is presented to the Regents for their approval. Ideally, that revision would

respond to the feedback obtained from the various university constituencies, clearly delineate strategic goals, and present at least some plans for university-wide implementation that are envisioned by the Chancellor's Office, tied to each goal.

3. That the Senate send on to the Chancellor's Office the following concerns:
 - A. Focus on Strengths. We recognize that building on the university's strengths is essential to enhancing Tech's national standing. We would also like to see strong support for those programs that are potentially excellent but have lacked resources in the past.
 - B. University Mission. The teaching, research, and service missions of the university should be clearly addressed. We question the separate listing of "researchers and teaching professionals," since currently faculty are expected to do both.
 - C. Library. More prominent mention should be made of the primary "information resource" on campus, the Library. Although ARL membership has already been achieved we must now maintain or improve the Library's ranking among the ARL institutions and expand access to remote resources that support the teaching and research of the university.
 - D. Diversity. Although the Hopwood decision may limit what can be done to secure a diverse student body, specific mention should be made of the desirability of a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. Diversity should be addressed as it pertains to minority, adult, "nontraditional", and part-time students.
 - E. Technology. The section on technology should be expanded to clearly address both the use of technology in the classroom and laboratory and the needs of distance education. Furthermore, a technology strategy should be devised that would achieve cost reductions and enhance the quality of education provided at Tech.
 - F. Shared governance. Recruiting and retaining quality faculty and improving faculty salaries are important to achieving the overall goal of enhancing performance and national standing. Equally important, but not addressed in the document is the role of the faculty, including the Faculty Senate, in shared governance. Efforts should be made to enhance faculty participation in decision making and provide additional opportunities for dialogue between faculty and the administration. This strategic planning process provides one such opportunity.

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