

Provost Council
10.11.24

Dr. San Miguel called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Career Services

Yelitza Howard, director, presented on services provided by the Office of Career Services

- Choosing Majors
 - Advice on how to choose majors, what one can do with that major, and other majors-careers pathways.
- Job Preparation
 - Services provided include help with resumes, cover letters, statements of purpose, elevator pitches, mock interviews, internships, part-time, full-time employment search, and on campus jobs.
- Interview Preparation
 - Interview preparation is available both in-person and virtually using an AI platform called Big Interview. More information here: <https://tamiu.biginterview.com/login>.
 - AI coaching is available with analytics on things like eye contact, head engagement, etc. Can be customized with hard vs. easy interview. Students benefit from multiple rounds, and can practice multiple times. These can also be customized for the discipline and questions.
 - Questions:
 - Can these be customized for bilingual/Spanish interviewing. Will look into it.
 - Feedback and data? Software generates an Excel sheet with responses, metrics, etc.
- Dress for Success–Career Closet
 - Business professional clothing to borrow for free for interviewing, conferences, available in a variety of sizes, colors, etc.
 - Can be borrowed up to two days, longer loan periods possible for conferences.
 - Free to students.
 - Had a grant last year to get new items.
 - They accept donations of business casual or business professional clothing.
- Events and Workshops
 - Coffeehouse Wednesdays
 - Professionals brought to campus–alumni or people in a position to hire.
 - To network or give advice on professional success.
 - Students can ask questions, get advice, tips, etc.
 - All Majors Career Fair–Oct. 23rd
 - Open to students and community
 - School Districts Career Fair–Nov. 13th

- Graduate and Professional School Fair–Oct. 31st.
 - Law schools, dental schools, medical schools, graduate schools, and TAMIU Graduate School as well.
- Workshops are also offered
 - Personal statements/statements of purpose, elevator pitches, etc.
- Faculty can embed these in their courses as assignments
 - Career Services will let faculty know what their students did, if they showed up dressed appropriately in line with assignment guidelines, pre- and post-session resume submissions, all of which assist faculty in incorporating Career Services into the curriculum.
- How can faculty help promote Career Fairs?
 - Encourage students to begin early to get experience before their senior year. Encourage attendance at career fairs in freshmen, sophomore years, to overcome anxiety and shyness so they can become comfortable with these things by the time they're searching for jobs.
 - Can be embedded in course work as a grade–did student show up, did they participate, etc. Career Services can advise if they came, etc.
 - Question: Can we get placement statistics so we know where our undergrads are winding up by discipline in order to help students with career paths?
 - Career Services is working on a First Destination Survey–where are graduates winding up at 6-month mark post-degree?
- Q&A
 - How is Career Services tracking these by school/college?
 - Discussion ensued concerning which schools/colleges' students are coming to utilize services.
 - Business School sends a lot of students, for example.
 - Dr. San Miguel noted that the administration has encouraged the embedding of Career Services into early years of the student experience, starting to work on resumes freshmen year, embedding in curriculum, etc.
 - Google micro-credentialling: looking into this to further enhance student career readiness.
 - Increasingly, there is an emphasis by these large organizations to push internships into earlier years, not the junior-to-senior summer.
 - Deloitte and KPMG both want freshmen and sophomores applying to intern.
 - Oftentimes, large organization plan well in advance. For example, some federal agencies and the large consultancies have students applying this fall for internships in the summer of 2026.
 - Can we find ways to push these into the curriculum at an earlier time, to give students credit for these things?
 - Career Services has membership in a Hispanic-serving career networking organization.

- Through this membership, the office has been able to bring in large national employers through their services and networks.
- Discussion ensued on the difficulties of getting students to think bigger than Laredo. There are often barriers and challenges with home/family ties/reluctance to leave Laredo.
 - Not a lot of encouragement at home to leave.
 - Not a lot of resources to do so.
 - But what can faculty do to get them out of here, take risks?
 - We get a lot of interest by employers because students are bilingual. There is interest in our students from people outside the immediate city and region.
 - Conferences and conference travel can help develop these skills for students and broaden their horizons. Encourage faculty to take students along.
- Career Services will be doing a PROF Center talk. Oct. 16th during common hour, food and refreshments will be provided.
- Discussion ensued concerning federal government agencies
 - Examples–FAA is doing a project to recreate Laredo Int’l Airport in Minecraft, drone piloting projects, etc. Can this be incorporated into Discover TAMIU?
- Discover TAMIU
 - The provost would like to maintain the strength on programming for lower elementary age children
 - But would also like to expand the pitch to middle and high school students to entice/preview things for older students.
 - Mini lectures on hot topics to preview the college experience, for instance, experiments or demos in labs, etc.
 - Can we find ways to include employers in Discover TAMIU as well, in order to help build the pipeline?
- Career Services can also come to department meetings to help infuse these into the curriculum and get faculty buy-in.
- Prairie View has an initiative.
 - Every student has a career advisor, academic advisor, and financial aid and literacy person who follows them throughout their career at the university.
 - Is there a way to replicate some version of this at TAMIU.

Meeting recess called at 10:05 AM.

Meeting reconvened 10:15 AM.

Dr. O’Meara mentioned a TEA-approved retention and college readiness program.

- Uses the WICOR framework: Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading for learning.
- 15 slots are available to employees to sign up and get access to the curriculum.

- Microsoft form to sign up.
- May be of interest to advisors, retention specialists, etc.

Discussion of Degrees conferred by TAMIU, workforce needs, and general alignment of curriculum with career readiness and outcomes.

- A&M Has an Analysis of jobs created vs. degrees awarded by Dr. Blake Decker
- Provost: What is it we need to enhance in terms of degrees and course offerings?
 - What degrees do we need to offer?
 - Need to be v. aggressive on how we do this.
 - UTRGV and UT system is getting aggressive on recruiting locally and by offering local programs in Laredo.
 - We need to be more aggressive in marketing campaigns.
- Local business leaders are willing to come into classrooms and discuss career opportunities, reinforce the bonds between community and university.
- New degree programs like computer science in addition to engineering, autonomous computing, etc. can be tied into local needs like law enforcement, land management, as examples. Wastewater engineering coursework. All of these will help address gaps between what we offer and what the community needs, as well as develop greater associations between TAMIU and what we offer.
- In COAS, for example, we could be tying math into career outcomes—math majors do very well for law school admissions. “Sociology of” various topics. Sociology of medicine, for instance, would be more marketable. These would allow for more upper-division offerings that might help bolster enrollments by tying more traditional disciplines to outcomes.
- Teacher preparation and competitive advantage—We can get teachers their 18 hours to offer dual enrolled courses, but we should probably consider offering some of these online, which would require a 7-week format.
 - RicePoint, Academic Partnerships, etc.
- Aerospace, airport opportunities with FAA, what programs can we put in place in order to capitalize on these opportunities?
- Library: suggested ties in employer needs and multi-literacy, information literacy, etc. Can we partner librarians with disciplines to co-write data literacy courses, information literacy? This would become part of librarians’ workload and would free faculty up and build relationships with library to supplement other academic departments in ways employers are desperate for.
 - There is no MS in Library Science in the A&M system.
- Registrar: Reality is that UTSA, UTRGV, and UTEP offer certain programs online that students can earn without leaving Laredo. Everyone who offers an online degree is our competitor. Students are reluctant to leave. Are we offering degree programs that allow students to remain in Laredo after graduation, and say, work remotely for companies who aren’t in town?
 - How are we known? What are we known for? Kingsville—ranching, CJ—Sam Houston, etc. What does TAMIU “do?”

- We need to be better at marketing and brand identity.
- We are growing, yes, but most of the growth is in online graduate programs. How do we attract more undergraduates, who have remained relatively flat in terms of enrollment.
- UTSA does an excellent job connecting what they do and the needs of the community.
 - We need to do better at connecting the needs of the area with the degrees that we offer.
 - We should be graduating the best import-export folks, bilingual nurses, bilingual teachers. We probably are, but we don't highlight it.
- Programs need to be revised in more systematic ways and with more regularity to ensure we are currently offering the present best practices in our curriculum and with an eye toward more current recruitment goals that allow us to capitalize on our offerings and prevent students from going elsewhere.
 - We probably have a lot of what these other universities have, but we're just not making connections and marketing as effectively as we can.
 - Discussion ensued concerning the fact that many of these curriculum changes are faculty-led, and faculty are exhausted and overburdened by existing job duties, which makes it difficult to execute curriculum changes. Service doesn't count for much on the annual evaluation.
 - Provost suggested maybe AIER person for programs can also be the curriculum revision point person, and that would justify some release time.
 - Hiring is also an issue—the cutting-edge folks oftentimes have better offers and then we move down the line when hiring, resulting in less innovative pedagogy.
- Discussion ensued concerning marketing
 - The question might be why the students who come here choose this particular university. Once we know, capitalize on that.
 - We also need to attract students from outside Laredo, which means more student housing and more campus activities, so they have a reason to come. Can also promote what we have in terms of campus activities, which are much more numerous than in years past.
- Moving forward: the provost requests a list of people from chairs who are doing assessment. May consider doing course releases for assessment coordinators and adding curriculum review and revision to their duties for the next assessment cycle.
 - Discussion ensued concerning reclassification and how that removes that existing pin from instructional faculty to TT, and that reduces instructional faculty and reduces the pool of available people to engage in instruction and do these sorts of tasks.
- Websites need to be updated, highlight accolades, etc. Search engine optimization. Social media needs to be updated as well.

- Academic Success Coaches are available for large-enrolled undergraduate courses; will remind faculty going forward.
- Provost suggests starting with a review of curriculum. Workshops for curriculum revisions, etc.
- AI policies: should be brainstorming at the chair and dean level.

Provost adjourned meeting at 11:30AM