

Baylor University
School of Engineering and Computer Science
Board of Advocates
Spring Meeting – April 27, 2007
Baylor University

Board members attending: Mark Cannata, Joe Cestari, Rick Maule, Jim McDonough, Craig Nickell, Clell Oravetz, Bill Ratfield, Brian Sheets, Steve Smith, Dean Swisher, Harold Spangler, Trent Voigt, Matt Watson

Board members absent: Mike Ingram, Larry Johnson, Lloyd Lund, Bill Mearse, Danny Meyer, Daryl Sims

Others attending: Dean Ben Kelley, Jim Farison, Bill Jordan, Rob Kennedy, Leigh Ann Marshall, Cheryl Tucker, and various faculty from the School of Engineering and Computer Science

Welcome

Following a continental breakfast, Dean Kelley convened the meeting. In Bill Mearse's absence, Steve Smith welcomed the Board members and reminded them of topics discussed at the previous Fall meeting and all that has been accomplished since then. He introduced Rob Kennedy, Director of Development.

Mr. Kennedy introduced Dr. Dennis Prescott, Baylor Vice President for Development. A 1983 graduate of Texas A&M, Prescott also earned a master's degree from A&M in 1995 and his doctorate from Mississippi State University (MSU) in 2006. Dr. Prescott arrived at Baylor from MSU in January, 2007 and is responsible for planning, organizing and implementing programs to secure financial resources for the university and will lead Baylor's forthcoming capital campaign. One of MSU's accomplishments during his tenure there included a cash commitment of \$25 million, the largest gift in the university's history, which resulted in MSU's first named college, the James Worth Bagley College of Engineering.

Dr. Prescott observed to the Board that, according to the current list of Forbes' 400 wealthiest, there is more wealth in America and in Texas than ever before. He reminded the Board of the reorganization within Baylor's University Development and the transformation from a geographic- to discipline-centered fund raising model. Today, a unit's development officer can be better informed about that unit when meeting constituents. Additionally, the Dean's fund-raising priorities can be advanced. University Development continues to be in transition, and with approximately 100 development staff, everyone is working to be successful. Dr. Prescott reminded the Board of the importance of being volunteers who give resources and steer the University towards others who will help Baylor. Finally, he said the approved strategic initiatives will form the "backbone" of the upcoming major capital campaign. In a brief question/answer follow-up, Dr

Prescott highlighted the uniqueness of ECS's short history, which may enable fundraising success. He reminded the Board members of current leeway for determining development priorities, which will determine fundraising prospects. He encouraged future corporate giving as a priority, especially for the School of Engineering and Computer Science. Even as a small, young unit, "success comes in finding uniqueness, and that may not be among the graduates."

Dean's Report

Dean Kelley presented his report to the Board. He introduced new faculty and staff hired since the previous meeting; related the recent loss of a graduating engineering student; summarized recent faculty accolades, scholarship, and publications; reviewed the strategic initiative process, accreditation status, and Dean's review by the faculty, gave forecasts for enrollment and upcoming ECS initiatives. His presentation can be found at:

<http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/44443.pdf> . Finally, Dean Kelley introduced Dr. Reagan Ramsower, Baylor Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Overview of the University and ECS Budget, Process, and Internal Resources

Dr. Ramsower led an in-depth session with the Board of Advocates that covered the University's budget process and the long-term financial model. He began by reminding the Board that Baylor is a not-for-profit institution, and some areas of the University may operate at an indefinite deficit. The University's mission and vision should drive the budget. He explained the budgeting tools, the annual budget process and how the strategic planning process relates. He included comparison tuition and fee structure data from other private schools. Next, he reported on the annual budget process, operational review process, annual strategic planning process, and annual faculty review process as they relate specifically to the School of Engineering and Computer Science. He demonstrated the "cost to educate" and ECS "profit and loss." He concluded the discussion with the following observations:

- Maximize current resources by:
 - Increasing the number of majors
 - Increasing students in elective courses
 - Increasing the number of courses faculty teach
- Increase endowment and scholarships
 - Endowment should benchmark scholarship
 - Scholarship should benchmark student quality
- Develop and focus on core areas

Dr. Ramsower's presentation may be found at:

<http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/44444.pdf>

Lunch Presentation

Following a time of lunch and fellowship among the Board and faculty, the group heard from Professor Cindy Fry and computer science sophomore, Mitchell Mebane, about “Assembly Language Robots.” Mitchell recounted his creative solutions to various space war scenarios.

Analysis of Global/Business/Communications (GBC) Initiative

The Board reconvened in the afternoon to hear about the progress of the Global/Business/Communications (GBC) Initiative. Professor Fry moderated this session, which included presentations from participating faculty and partnering faculty from other areas of the University. Other ECS faculty were present to hear the presentation. The faculty presenters and their topics were:

- Prof. Cindy Fry, pilot course background
- Dr. Doty- overview of GBC course; observations for economics portion.
- Prof. Bill Booth- analysis of economics portion
- Prof. Karen Johnson- observations about engineering economics
- Mr. Rishi Sriram- approach and outcomes of writing portion
- Dr. Anne Grinols- approach and outcomes of communications portion
- Prof. Kia’Iah James- observations about ECS communications
- Student Perspective—Blake Buchanan, Dusty Dodge, Chris Matcek
- Dr. Greg Leman- connections to Technical Entrepreneurship follow-on course

Initial Board consensus was positive. Brian Sheets called the initiative “excellent” and said it was a positive response to earlier Board feedback. Dean Swisher observed that the course included many facets that stretched the capacity of the course for both students and faculty. Professor Fry said that the Board and ECS faculty ought to provide some direction for the future of the courses. She reminded the group that the two-course sequence could be taken for required credit within each of the ECS programs. The Board’s concluding consensus was that the GBC initiative was accomplishing the goal of making graduates ready for the workplace. Shawn Sedate said the Initiative is “right on track.”

The GBC presentation may be found at:
<http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/44445.pdf>

Following the GBC Initiative session, the Board adjourned to the Rogers Building to observe an engineering senior design presentation.

Closing session

After the engineering senior design presentation, the Board gathered for the closing session. Dean Kelley recognized Brian Sheets and Mike Ingram, whose terms of service were concluding with this meeting. He also recognized Larry Johnson, Rick Maule, Bill Ratfield, Matt Watson, whose terms were renewing for another three years.

The Board agreed on the date for the Fall meeting: October 5, 2007.

Leigh Ann Marshall began a presentation about the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Job Fair, held the previous February. When asked why larger, more prominent companies did not participate in the STEM Fair, she responded that those companies do not recruit at Baylor, often, because of the small number of graduates. Some large companies recruit from large programs where their recruiting success may be more easily measured.

The Board began to discuss this issue as it related to Dr. Ramsower's earlier presentation and brainstorm ways to grow the engineering and computer science programs in response to resource and financial needs, creating a critical mass of students and faculty, and to attract greater company/industry attention. The Board discussed what they heard earlier about ECS enrollment and facilities use. They suggested developing a proactive plan to set accurate and goal metrics for presentation to the University administration.

Finally, Steve Smith reminded the Board of the Board's scholarship and encouraged everyone to contribute to it. The meeting concluded at 5:20 pm.