

Baylor University
School of Engineering and Computer Science
Board of Advocates
Fall Meeting – October 1, 2010
Baylor University

Board members attending: Mark Cannata, Joe Cestari, Fred Logan, Hector Martinez, Bill Mearse, Jim McDonough, Craig Nickell, Ken Ross, Shawn Sedate, Steve Smith, Harold Spangler, Andy Spencer, Rick Tullis, Matt Watson, and Jim Wiethorn

Board members absent: Stephen Butt, Beth Casteel, Chip Fichtner, Harold Rafuse, Dean Swisher, Trent Voigt, and Richard Willis

Others attending: Dean Ben Kelley, Don Gaitros, Bill Jordan, Kwang Lee, Kevin Ludlum, Greg Davis, Dusty Bedwell, Leigh Ann Marshall, Cheryl Tucker, and various faculty, staff, and students from the School of Engineering and Computer Science

Welcome

Following a continental breakfast, Bill Mearse convened the meeting. He introduced [Dr. Brian Webb, Chief Investment Officer](#) at Baylor University. Dr. Webb gave a brief history of Baylor's endowment, which dates back to the 1960s. The Baptist Foundation of Texas (BFT) managed Baylor's endowment through the late 1990s when a transition to a diversified portfolio occurred. The BFT was "ill-equipped to move in that direction" with Baylor. The Baylor administration preferred to bring endowment management onto campus, and the Office of Investments was formed. In 2007, the billion dollar endowment goal was achieved, and Dr. Webb was confident that goal may be attained again soon.

Steve Smith asked how Baylor compares with other universities. Dr. Webb answered that Baylor has a "mid-range" endowment for a university its size. Baylor covers 6% of its operating budget, and that is a smaller amount than other comparable universities. He went on to explain that there is a particular mineral asset in East Texas that has been extremely beneficial. Future focus will be on liquidity. Dr. Webb remains concerned and focused on expected and unexpected inflation.

Rick Tullis asked how many endowed scholarships exist in the School of Engineering and Computer Science. Greg Davis answered that there are twenty-two, although some are not fully endowed. Dr. Webb concluded that his office remains committed to maintaining the values of endowed scholarships.

BRIC Briefing

Mr. Jim Kephart, Director of Program Development, Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Research, gave the Board a briefing on the Baylor Research and Innovation Collaborative (BRIC). The BRIC will allow collaboration between education and industry. His report included

space allocation, timeline, floor plan organization and next phase goals. Mr. Kephart discussed the BRIC partnership will include Texas State Technical College (TSTC) in order to involve workforce development. Following his report, the Board of Advocates toured the facility.

Dean's Report

Following the BRIC tour, the Board members heard the Dean's report. Dean Kelley introduced four new Board members and gave an update on enrollment, faculty and staff personnel, *US News and World Report* rank, changes within the Baylor administration and new President Ken Starr, and programs within the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

Strategic Plan

Dean Kelley apprised the Board on the progress of the School's strategic planning process. Currently, the School's strategic plan consists of six over-arching aspirations that include thirty-two goals. The plan can be categorized into three groups: Scholarship/Development, Admissions/ Enrollment/Retention, and Research/Publication/Faculty. Some preliminary planning has already been accomplished. In other areas, data collection is underway.

Development Update

Mr. Greg Davis, Director of Development, reported on fundraising progress. He gave an overview of sources of support and shared statistics relating to alumni/donor fundraising. He outlined the Corporate Partners program and described the President's Scholarship Initiative and discussed future fundraising plans.

Breakout Sessions

After lunch, the Board divided into three departmental sessions.

Computer Science Topics:

- [CS/BINF Senior Exit Survey Results](#) – Bill Booth
- [BINF Research Grants](#): Research to be Done – Erich Baker
- [Capstone Project](#) – Greg Speegle
- Gaming/Simulated Systems: Forming a Board – Jeff Donahoo
- ICPC 2010 and Beyond – Bill Poucher

Electrical and Computer Engineering Topics:

- Faculty hiring issues and challenges
- Laboratory space challenges
- Entrepreneurial service opportunities in Honduras and Rwanda
- Improving performance on the FE Exam
- BRIC: lack of focus on green technology in the facility

- overflow space in Sid Richardson science building

Mechanical Engineering topics:

- New assistant chair, Prof. Dick Campbell
- Two engineering service trips: Honduras and Rwanda
- future focus: the ME Strategic Plan
- Big 12 Engineering Consortium and the nuclear engineering course
- Entrepreneurial expansion within ME; incorporating an entrepreneurial mindset into the curriculum
- The ME graduate program
- faculty space challenges

Board Closed Session

The Board of Advocates met in closed session.

Full Board Session

Following the closed session, the Board reconvened as a group to report on the departmental breakout sessions and discuss the day's topics.

Jim Wiethorn asked whether the BRIC space has been allocated according to department. Dean Kelley replied that it has not, although he anticipates that ECE may receive a larger allotment to support the new Ph.D. program. Steve Smith asked whether the BRIC space will be dynamic, and Dean Kelley answered "yes." Rick Tullis asked whether the additional space at the BRIC will help alleviate overcrowding in the Rogers building, and Dean Kelley answered that it will. Bill Mearse confirmed that there are no assumptions regarding the BRIC space allocations, and he suggested that ECS ought to aggressively pursue more space. There was a longer discussion about the BRIC space, including the suggest that the space be "mapped out" in order to accommodate proposed departmental space requirements and outlining the consequences of not receiving a reasonable allocation. There was general consensus that the Board supports the School's efforts toward additional BRIC space, as well as faculty and equipment needs.

Mark Cannata observed that the long-term looks very positive; it is simply a matter of achieving goals. Further discussion focused on available space on campus, including space in Truett, the Baylor Science Building, and Sid Richardson.

Bill Mearse said that the Board appreciated Dr. Webb's morning presentation. With regard to fundraising, the Board agreed to match the current telephone campaign, and Greg Davis agreed to follow-up with Mr. Mearse.

As the conversation shifted to fundraising, the Board appreciated the efforts of the ECS Alumni Network and approved of the emphasis on alumni giving. Jim Wiethorn suggested that current students be instilled with the notion of "giving back." Shawn Sedate echoed the suggestion and suggested brainstorming ways to involve current students in the spring Board meeting. Jay Battershell said the engineering mission/service projects are central to the ECS and Baylor's mission.

Rick Tullis asked about the frequency of alumni surveys. Dean Kelley explained their necessity as related to the accreditation process.

Dean Kelley challenged the Board regarding faculty externships, the opportunity for a faculty member to spend time, such as part of a summer, in industry. The faculty member gains industry experience and perspective relating to the academic discipline. Dean Kelley asked about the possibility of financially supporting that faculty member during a month of the summer. Jim McDonough observed that such experiences might lead to other opportunities. Bill Mearse cautioned ECS not to limit the scope of this idea to only companies represented by the Board of Advocates, but seek meaningful companies that would also benefit faculty and the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

The Board agreed that the next meeting would be April 15, 2011.

In his concluding remarks, Dean Kelley thanked the Board for their feedback and support. He said it is “very valuable to hear the honest, unique perspective of the Board.”