

Staff Advisory Committee to the President
November 21, 2013, 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Joy Cook, Brooke Dedmond, Susan Henry, Patrena Hicks, Kaye Loftis (chair), Donna Russell, Randa Thompson, Denette Way

Others Present: Evelyn Chambers, President Oldham and Terri Taylor

President Oldham opened the meeting stating it has been a busy semester thus far. Campaigning for the reprieve on the closure of the ROTC program was a major undertaking for the University. Upcoming events include hosting the Legislative Forum with area legislators, TBR Regents as well as the TBR Chancellor and others. This event provides the University an opportunity to highlight on-going campus priorities. This year, three priorities will be the focus:

Business Incubator Facility—TTU will seek \$2.15 million in state matching funds for the construction of a \$4.3 million facility that, when completed, will support startup businesses generated by our research centers in the areas of engineering, logistics, manufacturing and medical informatics. This facility will be an invaluable resource in TTU's ongoing initiative to develop entrepreneurial and innovative companies that will merge industry, students and faculty. The incubator space will be leased to regional entrepreneurs, industry/student teams, faculty/student teams, and regional industry starting new enterprises. Constructing this asset is a result of our research and multiple meetings with local leaders to identify and capitalize on the region's competitive strengths. We intend to use it to complement the Upper Cumberland region's economic push to keep TTU graduates in Tennessee through the creation of higher skill and higher wage jobs and by educating highly qualified employees within the region – significantly increasing the technological proficiency of the region's workforce.

TTU Science Complex—TTU endorses the state initiative to create bond funding for capital construction, and urges strong legislative support. TTU also supports the concept of a matching program and pledges to work to secure a percentage match for

SAC Meeting

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Suggestion Box

Suggestion—A suggestion was received concerning TTU’s HR policy as it relates to clerical and support staff and the tuition reimbursement program which states that courses must be taken at a Tennessee public institution. The tuition reimbursement program for faculty, administrators, and professional staff states that those employees may take courses at any public or private accredited institution, and that tuition is reimbursed at the Tennessee public institution rate.

The suggestion received from a support associate stated they respectfully disagreed with the policy and that clerical/support staff should have the same opportunity that a faculty or administrative member would receive. Also, the TBR policy states that clerical and support staff may take courses outside of Tennessee, at a public or private institution, with reimbursement fulfilled up to the Tennessee public institution rate.

Response—TTU just recently revised the policy “Educational Assistance for Tennessee Tech Employees” to mirror/adopt TBR Guideline P-130 as may be amended from time to time. The