Members in attendance:
Ona Tolliver, ex-officio member, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Sheryl Dennis, ex-officio, Associate Vice President for Business Affairs
Kay Pleasant, College of Engineering & Computer Science faculty
Kim Harvey-Livingston, Director of Student Services
Leann Morgan, Department of Psychology & Counseling faculty & School Counseling program director
Kenny Bizot, Head Men’s Basketball coach
Amber Amerson, SGA treasurer
Brakeyshia Samms, student & SGA senator for Patriot Village
Kenny Bowers, student & SGA senator for University Pines
Emily Dickenson, student & former SGA senator for College of Education and Psychology

Members not in attendance:
Julie Ann Apoderado, student

Ona Tolliver called the meeting to order at 10:07am
Quick introductions were provided by all members; titles given are listed above.

Agenda item – Review of SFAC charge
Ona introduced the Student Fee Advisory Committee website at www2.utttyler.edu/studentaffairs/sfac that displays governing details, membership, etc. We want the SFAC to be as transparent as possible and having this website clarifies the process. Forms will be loaded on-line for access by the entire campus community after our meeting today.

Ona stated that our charge is detailed in the Texas Education Code section 54.503 that is in your binder for reference. The laws provide University’s with the opportunity to allocate funds collected from student fees and our committee provides recommendations to the President and acts as a sounding board for departments/entities that would like to request use of these fees. The fees are paid by students each summer and long semester; if we were to add winter-mesters or May-mesters these would likely be charged as well. This committee is responsible for the student services fee and the recreational facility fee so if submitted we are the ones that would review that request. There a lot of other information in the code regarding fees, etc. so please feel free to review on-line for additional information.
Ona stated that the forms members approved earlier last semester is what will be used moving forward to submit requests to the committee as we want to streamline the process and make it more consistent. We want to make sure this committee receives the same specific information from all areas and you have the option to invite someone in if you want to hear more or ask questions of them. We do have the advantage of having someone from the budget office on the committee and we're waiting to see if we're going to get a tuition increase and what that would look like. Not only are we charged by the regents but the President of the United States has asked us to be really cautious of what we charge our students and not increase tuition but our expenses are going up, cost of living is going up and the service we want to provide to our community are going up. We want to be able to provide opportunities for creativity for our areas that may have seen some restrictions in past years on funding for program growth. This is what governs our committee. We have a solid committee that is very diverse. We have faculty, staff, and someone who is very knowledgeable regarding the budget and of course students which is why we’re here. You guys are the ones that will help us make good decisions and provide good recommendations to the President who is the final authority on all budgets.

Agenda item – Review of Student Service Fee budget process
Ona stated that you've already approved the new budget forms but we to make sure there weren’t any other questions on the forms or the actual process. One of the things we hope this will do will have department to streamline their requests and tell us how it ties back to their mission and what they hope to accomplish. This is going to be our test semester on the new forms and we’ve received the green light from Business Affairs and some of it is similar to what we’ve done before which gives us some continuity from year to year. We’re hopeful that we don’t have to cut budgets but the committee has the ability to reallocate funds and provide recommendations to the president.

Ona provided an example of an increase request we may receive: Student government has funds allocated for travel. Their hope was previously to send all officers to training but with costs increasing haven’t been able to do so. They have had to look at local options and partial travel by the board so they may choose to submit an increase to allow additional funds be added to travel as it positively impacts Student Government and the student body as a whole. This particular form would allow them to do this in a simplified manner do you have any input, questions, suggestions, etc.

Ona stated that part of the reason for our addition of the website is Senate Bill 5 which was passed during the last legislative session and impacts every of campus. There have long been discussions in Higher Education specifically regarding what an open meeting means and are higher Ed institutions required to abide by the Texas Open Meetings requirement.
The legislatures made crystal clear that all meetings should be open. Part of the reason we’ve added the website is that with the Talon publication dates the way they are we aren’t always able to get an announcement out using that avenue. We will try and set and post a schedule so we can figure out a way to let the campus know when they can submit a request to us. This will allow us to make sure we are abiding by SB5 and allow the rest of the campus community to submit a request to the committee. One aspect of this that isn’t addressed is that the President can make a decision regarding when we want a closed meeting so we’ll have conversations regarding what that should look like. Our legislative liaison contacted Ona and several other people when this bill was being discussed in the Senate to assess what the concerns were with all meetings being open. While there generally aren’t concerns about the meetings being open there may be a time that as a committee we want to have a closed discussion when deliberating on a sensitive issue that involves personnel or items of a sensitive nature. Ona is going to recommend that we have the ability to discern/deliberate so we can discuss sensitive matters. Also we don’t want to have other people come in and pressure anyone or come in simply to complain regarding who receives what and effect your ability to make decisions regarding these funds. We don’t want you view of the entire budget to be skewed based on one opinion as you all are charged with making good decisions regarding the entire budget process. Yes, people will find you and express their options but you have a view of the entire process and that shouldn’t interfere with your understand that it is a healthy budget but there isn’t enough money to go around and all the programs have equal value. That was the feedback provided to the Senate as bill 5 was written by our campus and many other campuses.

Ona stated that before we being the budget process discussions we need Sheryl to provide us with an idea of where we are in the budget process and the upcoming fiscal year. We’re meeting before budget instructions are issued but we didn’t want to wait any longer to get everyone on the same page.

Sheryl stated that in January we prepared our tuition and fee proposal to be presented to the Board of Regents. They recently met and tabled all fee discussions to a special called session and we don’t know when that will be. Right now we as a university we have made the decision to project a flat growth for safety reasons even though we’re expecting growth; we’re going to look at headcount, current semester hours, revenue, etc. to determine those amounts soon. Should our fee proposal or increase be accepted (we requested a 2.66% increase in DT off-set slightly by a decrease in course fee and a change in a name from course fee to enhancement fee which is in response to statute and to allow greater flexibility in usage of these funds on campus). Should we get our proposal accepted we have some additional numbers; three scenarios are being prepared as things are changing regularly so please bear with us as we work as fast as we can with changes.
Sheryl stated that she is projecting a budget of approx. $1,653,733 for the upcoming fiscal year. There’s also additional monies for this current fiscal year (FY 12) $175,338 that needs to be allocated by this committee.

Ona stated that in order for us to hopefully keep this process separate we’re going to address the FY 12 opportunity for the campus community so that people can request and we can come together and we’ll get back asap to address those requests. In the mean time departments will prepare to submit FY13 to the committee. We will proceed with that process immediately following this meeting.

Please let us know if there's something we need to add, or change or have missed on-line or with the forms. These additional funds will give us a great chance to test the process during FY12 prior to FY13. Having funding is really good news. There were a few things that committee wasn’t able to allocate funds to last year and this will give those departments a chance to resubmit those for review. The requests for FY12 will be one-time allocations not on-going. By the time we get to FY13 we might have a better idea of what we’re able to continue (if any). It really relies on our enrollment, retention and recruitment that we’re able to maintain the students that we have and increase the new students whether they are freshmen or transfers or certainly graduate students. The president expects us to continue to grow and we’ll likely continue to be held to greater accountability in our funding. Higher education as a whole will continue to be held accountable which is good news and means students can graduate quickly with less debt.

**Agenda item – election of chair/secretary**

Ona stated that the next thing on our agenda is to select Chair and secretary selection. We traditionally have had students serve in both those capacities because these are student fees. At this time I’d like to open the floor for chair nomination: Emily nominated Amber and Kay seconds. Amber accepts nomination with no members opposed to this nomination. For secretary: Amber nominates Emily and Brakeyshia seconds. Emily accepts with no members opposed to this nomination.

Katy keeps minutes but Emily and Katy will work together to keep everything correct at upcoming meetings and all of the communications will come from Amber regarding meetings.

Amber and Emily assume responsibilities.

**Agenda Item – VPBA funding item**
Amber introduced VPBA funding request

Ona stated we have been in discussions for a couple of years in establishing a veteran’s center on campus. If you look at other institutions we are a little bit behind or even significantly behind. We are currently in place to have our campus have a more positive view of our veterans and provide greater support to veterans as well as dependents and family. We have a couple of things now that are pretty independent including a website that’s been up for about a year now to provide resources to veteran’s and dependents on-campus. Veterans operate in a world that is very different than other college students especially in the way they communicate and the level of interaction they expect. Because of this it’s becoming a standard in higher education to create a sub-one-stop-shop for veterans. We anticipate an increase in veterans as they return in the upcoming year one of Ona’s goals is to become a veteran friendly campus and we want to take them from the ‘we’re thinking about to we’ve graduated you’. Veteran’s support involves a lot of pieces including classroom, academics, counseling, career planning, advising and admissions but veterans and their dependents are used to having a point person and we don’t want to make their service lessened by our inability to provide support, services and concise information once they arrive. We’ve been discussing this over the last year and a half starting with the website and we got final approval from Dr. Mabry for a position to serve as a point person and resource to support veterans in all of their needs whether academic, social, etc. and support the veteran friendly persona in our institution. We might have veterans that return without issue but others may need a place to connect or additional support that we aren’t currently providing. Ona is really excited about the president’s endorsement and our Vice President of Business Affairs, Dr. Randall Powell and our Associate VP for Student Success, Jesse Acosta, are extremely supportive of this position.

Ona stated that this position will really impact us in two ways:
One is recruitment, as we will have one person to answer all these questions. Rosemary Cooper provided us with some numbers: Smith county has 18000 veterans or dependents in the area. If we’re able to recruit 2% - 5% of this group that’s a huge number, and if we expand out Anderson 4500 Gregg County has 9500, Van Zandt has 5200, Wood County has 5100. With those numbers we are already at 30,000-40,000 and that doesn’t include those coming home so that number we know will go up.

The other area the center will benefit is retention. Because of the way Veterans Benefits process works they have to self identify so we are fully aware that we have a larger number of dependents or veterans enrolled but if they don’t seek benefits (Hazelwood, financial benefits) we are not able to identify them and serve their needs. We currently have 538 veterans/dependents who use benefits but again, only those that self identify are in that number and this position will help bring both groups together so we get a better idea of how
many veterans and dependents we have. We have student who may not need the benefits but need support in other ways or want to just be an active part of the campus community.

We are requesting funding for a full time professional and operating expenditures for the remainder of this year and FY13. Ona want to present these to you together because at this point we're not able to request on-going funds but we wanted to get this started because we're already behind and also, Dr. Powell has made a commitment to support it beyond the first year. We think it's going to pay for itself through increased enrollment and retention so this at this point is a one-time funding request for 18 months. The piece not a part of this is a grant request for a student work-study position to work solely with veteran students so the only thing not part of this is the potential need to offset the cost of one work-study student.

Leann asked where did the salary amount of 34,000 come from, as that seems really low.

Ona stated that 34,000 is the base salary for a student development specialist II. The committee can certainly recommend a different amount, as it may be hard to recruit a qualified person at that amount.

Leann stated that as a spouse of a disabled veteran she believes this is extremely important and we won’t attract the right person at that amount.

Sheryl asked if we bring someone in at this position (SDS II) at a higher rate are we creating other problems?

Ona stated she doesn’t know if it would be an issue but potentially because of the number of personnel currently working with a significant job description at that 34,000 amount. We have a job description prepared and ready to post.

Leann inquired about the degree required for the position. Katy stated that for an SDS II a bachelor’s degree is required but a master’s degree is preferred.

Sheryl stated that A&M central Texas has one of the leading programs in the nation and the day that they opened their veteran’s center was just amazing. She recommends that we go back to Human Resources and recommend that we create another title, etc. as we have other options for titles, as this is not enough.

Ona stated that we are open to other recommendations and we have other options for titles. Currently in the division we have other SDS II positions that are responsible for equal level
of responsibilities and if the committee wants to approve a target amount we can work with Human Resources to identify an appropriate title.

Sheryl stated she recommend we look at what other campuses are paying for this position.

Ona stated that, as we don’t have the ability to have pay equity reviews across the board that might cause significant problems with current employees.

Coach Kenny stated that not other areas are doing that (review other campuses) and people all over campus are underpaid compared to others.

Ona stated that we will not be able to pay what A&M pays as even in Central Texas the military base is in Killeen so their equity scale is closer to A&M’s scale.

Leann stated we just hired someone in our college with a master’s degree preferred for much more that that. If we call it something like Director of Veteran’s Affairs would we have more options?

Kay inquired about other options beyond SDS II and Katy clarified that there is an SDS III but are none on this campus and after that would come Director/administrative and professional staff.

Kim asked if the SDS II was picked because it addresses career and veterans together?

Ona stated that one of the things this person will work with other areas, help retain students, educate the campus community on veteran’s support. Point person for Veteran's Benefits, and provide career development. There’s a package of things this person is responsible for doing. What happens right now is the director of career serveries will oversee this individual and we don’t want to have that person make more than their boss. The Director of Career Services is posted at 41,000.

Leann asked what if the person reported directly to Ona?

Ona stated that the committee could recommend whatever they prefer.

Leann stated she thinks that person could be equal to the Director of Career Services and posted at an equal level and could report directly to Ona especially now with mental health issues that may arise with a greater number of returning veterans.
Sheryl stated that a number of our budgets would be affected as these returning veteran’s needs trickles down.

Ona stated when she was leaving UNT they were creating our Veterans center and we have a lot of work to do. You can’t group this set of veterans in with the veterans from last campaign or any other, as it’s a very different situation. We’re looking for someone who is 1) a veteran and 2) has some experience with higher education. They have to be able to communicate with military and someone who is leaving the military will not accept that amount. It’s up to you guys. This is a minimal operating budget based on us not knowing what’s available at the time we put it together.

Sheryl I realize we have to take this back to by boss and Jesse but I was a military wife for a long time and what that pays and to bring someone in at that salary is not acceptable

Ona stated that whatever the committee is willing to funds out of the student fee account we would work with HR to find an appropriate title.

Brakeyshia stated sees this position as being comparable to the Director of Enrollment Services and their salary should compare to that area (as a sub one-stop shop).

Ona stated this position would not supervise other personnel initially as the Director of Enrollment Services does and so they’re not comparable.

Coach Kenny asked if the veteran students would have the same admissions requirements.

Ona stated yes but we’re looking to make the process more clear.

Kay stated that if we can bump it to the director title that gives us the opportunity to find someone who has experience and has flexibility.

Ona asked to confirm that the committee prefers that this position be director, that we have a salary range between 40,000 and 65,000. Is there a cap number?

Sheryl recommended 50,000 as a cap.

Ona stated that if we list it as a director we don’t have to decide on an amount today and can move forward between so 40,000 and 50,000
Leann recommended that we have someone in the position that has served in either Iraq or Afghanistan as that is a whole different experience.

Coach Kenny agreed that would be crucial.

Ona asked if there was anything else in the operating budget or travel to change.

Leann stated we need to consider training required is significant in a number of areas in this first year and 2000 covers only one conference. For the first year we should bump that up that to maybe 5000.

Sheryl agreed with the travel; it needs to be 5000 for 12-13

Leann stated there are great implications for this position.

Sheryl stated the food for the grand opening would be covered by Business Affairs Lindsey funds. Which will make a lot easier transition and she will commit that from her office. She would recommend 2,500 for the remainder of this fiscal year for travel.

Amber asked what the outreach programming is.

Ona stated that is for any training that needs to be done with faculty for issues related to veterans in the classroom, for a veteran’s benefit session, for veteran’s orientation or programming that is more veteran inclusive.

Ona asked if we were prepared to vote on both of these or are there other questions she can answer.

Amber called for a vote for approval of the request with adjustments made to salary and travel totaling 37,540 for FY12 and 81,760 for FY13.
All members approved. No members opposed. No members abstain.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Dickenson