

SOUTH TEXAS CONSORTIUM FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Minutes of Meeting

September 15, 2000

The South Texas Consortium for Institutional Research met at Coastal Bend College (Beeville) on Friday, September 15, 2000, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

David Andrus – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Blanca Bauer – Texas State Technical College – Harlingen (TSTC)
Evelyn Cook – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Jane Leask – The Victoria College (VC)
Teresa Le Sage – University of Houston – Victoria (UHV)
Elizabeth Martinez – Texas A&M International University (TAMIU)
Veronica Martinez – Texas A&M International University (TAMIU)
Joyce Miller – The Victoria College (VC)
Bill Morris – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Paul Orser – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Andy Rios – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Lynn Sanders – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Jerry Scheerer – The Victoria College (VC)
Ken Stevenson – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Christopher Vinger – South Texas Community College (STCC)
Tong-Ai Zhang – University of Houston – Victoria (UHV)

The meeting was opened shortly after 10:10 a.m. The following is a summary of the major presentations and discussion items.

Fall Enrollment

The group discussed basic trends in fall enrollment. Most institutions had a slight increase, but no institutions showed a dramatic increase or decrease in enrollment. Some considerations affecting enrollment were discussed. New programs appeared to have had a positive influence at several institutions, while several community colleges experienced relatively large increases in concurrent high school enrollments. Paul Orser (TAMUCC) led a reflective discussion of the impact of distance learning (specifically online instruction) on our enrollments. The focus of that discussion ranged from how we incorporate this instructional mode into our mission to the long-range strategic planning implications. Discussions also touched on licensing Internet courses, the Virtual College of Texas, and the dilemma of funding and reimbursements for multi-institutional efforts. Tong-Ai Zhang (VC) also brought up issues of assessing the quality of these non-traditional formats.

IR and IE Issues from the Legislative Issues

This discussion focused on looking forward to issues that may arise from the next Legislative session. Beyond performance measures and dealing with the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), the discussions consisted of various prognostications of what may come out of various Legislative initiatives and how some proposals may affect higher education. Paul (TAMUCC) shared the basic details of the Higher Education Plan (HEP) that THECB was putting forward to the Legislature (*note: the plan was accepted by the Coordinating Board at their October meeting*). The Perry Commission, a different “Blue Ribbon”

group studying higher education headed by the Lieutenant Governor, was generally viewed with less respect and many had heard that this other commission was not likely to be effective as THECB's planning group.

The Higher Education Plan, subtitled "Closing the Gap", has increased access and success at its core. It is widely viewed as a response to the demographic warnings of Dr. Steve Murdock, state demographer at the Texas State Data Center, which point out that the increasing population of Texas is likely to become poorer if more educational opportunities are not afforded the underserved populations in the state. The key elements of the plan are 1) participation (or access); 2) success (retention, degree production, etc.); 3) quality (or developing excellence); and 4) research productivity. (The plan can be viewed at THECB site at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/divisions/planning/HEPCmte/HEplanFinal.PDF>.)

In terms of specific institutional requests, the universities shared some of their special item initiatives with the group. Some of the Texas A&M University campuses are requesting additional funds for new facilities. The University of Texas – Pan American is requesting funds to develop an upper level institution at Rio Grande City (in Starr County). The University of Houston – Victoria is requesting funding to develop an outreach center and other initiatives. The University of Houston System is also proposing a new West Houston multi-institution teaching center (MITC).

STCIR Web Page – Jane Leask

Jane (VC) presented the group with several pages from the proposed STCIR web site. The members were very pleased with her hard work and the quality of the pages. The web page will be connected to The Victoria College Institutional Research & Planning office web page. The page will contain information about the IR members from South Texas institutions, a thorough directory (from the latest TAIR directory with our own corrections), links to joint data projects, and some historical information with minutes from previous meetings. The site can be reached at <http://www.vc.cc.tx.us/dept/ir/STCIRindex.html>. Kudos to Jane for all her great work!

General Discussion

The members also had various small discussions on interests to specific institutions. There was some discussion of the new Workforce Investment Act (WIA) performance reporting that has begun to affect community colleges. Del Mar College and Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi also proposed sharing information from their ongoing transfer study. With no further business, the meeting closed at 2:00 pm.

Future 2000-2001 Meeting Dates

Friday, February 16	TAIR, Clear Lake (Houston)
Friday, April 27	The Victoria College
Friday, July 13	The University of Texas – Pan American

SOUTH TEXAS CONSORTIUM FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Minutes of Meeting

November 17, 2000

The South Texas Consortium for Institutional Research met at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi on Friday, November 17, 2000, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

David Andrus – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Evelyn Cook – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Ruth Creekmore – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Ed De la Garza – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Carol LaRue – Del Mar College (DMC)
Bill Morris – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Paul Orser – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Rebecca Richter – Del Mar College (DMC)
Andy Rios – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Lynn Sanders – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Jerry Scheerer – The Victoria College (VC)
Ken Stevenson – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Gale Stuart – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Christopher Vinger – South Texas Community College (STCC)

The meeting was opened shortly after 10:10 a.m. The following is a summary of the major presentations and discussion items.

Transfer Study – Del Mar College and TAMU-Corpus Christi

Rebecca, Carol and David discussed the ongoing study of Del Mar College transfer students that attend Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. They noted that the project is still a work in progress. They only recently received some data files from the THECB that they are using to identify some students. At TAMUCC, they are helping DMC look at the “leavers” from academic year 1996-97 that attend TAMUCC in 1997-98. The basic analysis is focused on how these transfer students’ performance compares to other transfer students and “native” students. The standard DMC is trying to meet or exceed is transfer student performance equivalent to native student performance.

The collaborative study is also beginning to focus on how the DMC transfer students perform in selected core curriculum courses. To be included in the study group, a transfer student must have completed 15 SCH or more at DMC. Longer-term goals of the project include a course performance analysis and a measure of persistence and time to graduation.

Uniform Recruitment and Retention Plan

This discussion was relatively brief. The new Uniform Recruitment and Retention Plan from THECB (link at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/pdf/0231.pdf>) provides a mandate for colleges to keep doing what they are doing, but it also provides an additional reporting burden. So far, the IR offices represented in STCIR were not too concerned about the burden of any new reporting, but not all of the institutions had addressed the requirements of the plan.

Evaluation of Core Curricula and Field of Study Curricula

The THECB recently approved several field of study curricula, and the Board indicated that THECB staff should continue to develop additional curricula. In light of this new direction from THECB and the requirements for core curriculum evaluation (see <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/divisions/ctc/ip/core/main.htm>), the discussion focused on the assessments used by various institutions. Ken shared the model that is being used at CBC. CBC took the SCANS and DACUM standards to aid in the development of various matrices that show how each core curriculum course contributes to the requirements laid out by THECB. The CBC plan was referenced by THECB staff at a recent STARLINK conference on core curriculum evaluation.

Members discussed various other approaches and philosophies about the assessment of core competencies. Capstone courses and the strategy of embedding testing and evaluation into course sequences were referenced by several members. DMC has used faculty committees that are focusing on the different intellectual competencies and developing assessment methods for each. Some schools were using the portfolio method to assess competencies in reading, writing and speaking. There was some additional discussion of integrating assessment activities to fit with SACS criteria, although the THECB guidelines encompass the basic SACS criteria.

General Discussion

Paul (TAMUCC) presented a software tool called Decision Time. He highlighted some time-series analysis techniques that were possible with the software. He gave several examples of student flow tracking models and pointed out that the software makes using one of the dozen or so forecasting techniques (e.g. ARIMA) very easy.

David (TAMUCC) led a brief discussion of analyzing financial aid data to determine how best to spend scholarship dollars. Several members were interested in the research question, but there were also many questions on how to set up the measurement to evaluate student performance and how well their need was met.

Towards the end of the meeting, the members discussed future data-sharing projects or collaborative studies. Christopher (STCC) requested that Paul present the space analysis model used at TAMUCC for facilities planning. There was not much consensus on future projects, and the members agreed to consider some projects and come back to the next meeting with additional ideas. With no further business, the meeting closed at 2:00 pm.

Future 2000-2001 Meeting Dates

Friday, February 16	TAIR, Clear Lake (Houston)
Friday, April 27	The Victoria College
Friday, July 13	The University of Texas – Pan American

SOUTH TEXAS CONSORTIUM FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Minutes of Meeting

February 16, 2001

The South Texas Consortium for Institutional Research met at the 2001 TAIR Conference in Clear Lake on Friday, February 16, 2001, from 11:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

Evelyn Cook – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Jennifer Crosby – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Eleazar Gonzalez – Laredo Community College (LCC)
Carol LaRue – Del Mar College (DMC)
Jane Leask – The Victoria College (VC)
Cindy Lerma – The University of Texas at Brownsville/TSC (UTBTSC)
Joyce Miller – The Victoria College (VC)
Bill Morris – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Lynn Sanders – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Ken Stevenson – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Deborah Suzzane – The University of Texas at Brownsville/TSC (UTBTSC)
Alan Tipton – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Christopher Vinger – South Texas Community College (STCC)
Tong-Ai Zhang – University of Houston – Victoria (UHV)

The meeting was opened shortly after 11:15 a.m. The following is a summary of the major presentations and discussion items.

General Discussion

After a brief reintroduction of old and new members, the next meeting dates were reviewed (see below). The discussion then turned to identifying future research projects and meeting topics.

Transfer Success – several institutions are already doing this collaboratively, although the THECB fracas over FERPA heard at the conference worried some. Some issues were discussed, but it appeared this would remain a priority for some members and less of an issue for others.

Space Utilization – Christopher (STCC) again mentioned sharing information on space planning and the models used by each institution. Paul Orser (TAMUCC) was not in attendance, but he was mentioned for a meeting presentation on this topic in the near future.

Costs of Instruction – Deborah (UTBTSC) mentioned this was an area of interest for her institution. Several members expressed interest, although some university members thought the funding structures were too disparate for community colleges and universities. This item will be discussed at future meetings to determine if there is enough common ground for a joint study.

The meeting went very quickly and wrapped up early to accommodate everyone's travel schedules. The members were again urged to consider potential joint projects and bring those to the next meeting. With no further business, the meeting closed at 12:00 pm.

Future 2000-2001 Meeting Dates

Friday, April 27	The Victoria College (date later changed to April 25)
Friday, July 13	The University of Texas – Pan American

SOUTH TEXAS CONSORTIUM FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Minutes of Meeting

April 25, 2001

The South Texas Consortium for Institutional Research met at The Victoria College on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

David Andrus – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Ray Botello – St. Philip's College (SPC)
Mitchel Burchfield – Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC)
Evelyn Cook – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Ruth Creekmore – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Ed de la Garza – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Jane Leask – The Victoria College (VC)
Teresa Le Sage – University of Houston – Victoria (UHV)
Joyce Miller – The Victoria College (VC)
Paul Orser – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Lynn Sanders – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Jerry Scheerer – The Victoria College (VC)
Gale Stuart – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Alan Tipton – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Christopher Vinger – South Texas Community College (STCC)
Tong-Ai Zhang – University of Houston – Victoria (UHV)

The meeting was opened shortly after 10:00 a.m. The following is a summary of the major presentations and discussion items.

SAO Community College Database – Jerry Scheerer (VC) presented several examples of the ratio reports that are available in the State Auditor's Office (SAO) Community College Database. The members discussed the benefits of the system (which is also available for universities) in establishing benchmarks and making peer group comparisons. There was also discussion of the institution's Annual Financial Report (AFR), which provides the foundation of the financial data available in the system. You can locate information on the database at <http://www.sao.state.tx.us/educate.cfm> or you may contact Tony Rose at the SAO via e-mail at trose@sao.state.tx.us (passwords are required, but you simply need to request them).

Space Utilization and Planning – Paul Orser (TAMUCC) provided a thorough presentation on the space utilization and planning model used at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. He indicated several components were crucial for a successful model. A good facilities inventory was at the heart of the model. An institution also needs to determine the space standards to use considering there are national standards as well as those used by THECB. The modeling process also brings up questions of effective as well as efficient use of space. Paul pointed out that like restaurants, colleges and universities have peak service times and non-peak service times. There was also discussion and explanation regarding the methodologies used for projecting future needs. Enrollment data is very important for this process, especially with breakdowns by major area. Paul also gave an overview of the THECB facility inventory that universities are required to submit. Jerry Scheerer also contributed some examples of time-demand reports that he had developed at the Victoria College.

Reporting Student Performance to High Schools & ISDs – Christopher Vinger (STCC) provided some examples of a report he developed to provide feedback to local independent school districts on the college preparedness of their recent high school graduates. Members discussed their own experience with reporting such information from their institution. Discussion focused on the practical uses of the information as well as the difficult political issues involved.

General Discussion – Other general discussions touched on measuring instructional costs. Mitchel Burchfield agreed to present at the July meeting on an approach used by Southwest Texas Junior College. Other discussions ranged across the recurring issues of transfer and the new uniform recruitment and retention strategy. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm. The next meeting is listed below.

Last 2000-2001 Meeting Dates

Friday, July 13

The University of Texas – Pan American

SOUTH TEXAS CONSORTIUM FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Minutes of Meeting

July 13, 2001

The South Texas Consortium for Institutional Research met in Edinburg at The University of Texas – Pan American Friday, July 13, 2001, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

David Andrus – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Blanca Bauer – Texas State Technical College – Harlingen (TSTC)
Mitchel Burchfield – Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC)
Brenda Cole – South Texas Community College (STCC)
Ruth Creekmore – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Ed de la Garza – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Celina Hernandez – Texas State Technical College – Harlingen
Carol LaRue – Del Mar College (DMC)
Bill Morris – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Paul Orser – Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
Andy Rios – The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)
Ken Stevenson – Coastal Bend College (CBC)
Alan Tipton – Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK)
Christopher Vinger – Austin Community College (ACC)

The meeting was opened shortly after 10:00 a.m. The following is a summary of the major presentations and discussion items.

Discussion of Recent Legislation and TASP Changes – Members reviewed legislation that was passed this past spring and commented on how they felt the changes might affect their institution. Overall, the members were not alarmed or exceedingly pleased with any specific changes. There was some concern regarding additional TASP law changes, although changes are often expected in this area. The exemption for students completing a specific high school curriculum with a 3.5 GPA or higher was viewed as the most problematic. Members commented that even TACRAO could not provide much guidance on normalizing the numerous grading scales used by high schools so as to arrive at a consistent 4.0 scale.

Discussion of Census 2000 – There was limited discussion on this topic. Most members had at least viewed summary population totals for their region or service area, but most had not begun to incorporate the new data. There was some interest on detailed data that the Census Bureau will release in the future.

Transfer Study from Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi – David Andrus (TAMUCC) presented some findings of the transfer study he has been working on with Del Mar College. His report covered questions such as the source of TAMU-CC transfers; how well transfers perform compared to all undergraduates; how transfers compare in terms of GPA, retention and graduation; and finally, asking other schools what information can be shared to better serve these students together. Paul Orser requested that both the community college members and the university members apply some thought to what would be a good standardized format to receive this kind of report. There was some additional discussion regarding the current climate at the THECB regarding FERPA and data sharing agreements.

Instructional Cost Analysis – Mitch Burchfield (SWTJC) demonstrated an online scheduling and cost analysis tool used at his institution. The tool was developed in MS Access and posted on the web in ASP format. The application was developed to aid registration, but it also contains calculated cost and revenue information at the section level based on the number of section enrollments, tuition and fees for the course, and faculty salary data.

General Discussion – Other general discussions touched on the state’s “Closing the Gaps” plan. These discussions were mostly about the goals and targets for the plan and how those affect resource allocation (or lack thereof). Agenda items for the September meeting were discussed. The following topics or issues were considered: fall enrollment (as usual), establishing a transfer reporting protocol (for a report from universities to community colleges), and a TAIR 2002 update (from Gale Stuart).

Meeting Dates and STCIR Business – Since Christopher Vinger has left STCC for Austin Community College, he has turned over management of the STCIR listserv to Jane Leask at The Victoria College. The secretary position was also eliminated and it was decided to handle these duties informally between the chair and the local host of each specific meeting. Ken Stevenson was selected as chair for 2001-02, although he will not be able to chair the July 2002 summer meeting. The members decided that when needed the host institution will provide this support when the chair is unable to attend. Bill Morris was selected as a back up (or at least threatened with the responsibility:). The meeting dates and locations were decided following past patterns. The host institutions will post exact meeting dates at a later time.

2001-2002 Meeting Locations and Tentative Dates

Friday, September 21	Del Mar College
Friday, November 9	Texas A&M University – Kingsville
February	TAIR in Corpus Christi
April (TBA)	Southwest Texas Junior College
July (TBA)	Texas State Technical College – Harlingen