

Office of the Vice President for Student Services  
Sam Houston State University  
Mr. Frank Parker

**Vice President for Student Services Information Exchange Luncheon**

with Dr. James Gaertner, Dr. David Payne, and Dr. Richard Eglsaer

Wednesday, September 30, 2009

Lowman Student Center, Room 304

Discussion Notes:

Students were asked to share their experiences at SHSU, explain why they chose SHSU, and discuss those things about the University that they would change or improve.

**Reasons why students came to SHSU:**

- Transfer student from Lone Star College with Associate's Degree selected SHSU over the University of Houston because SHSU offered more money in transfer scholarships, and the campus' beauty offered a change of scenery not seen in Houston.
- Student transferred from University of St. Thomas in Houston to enroll in SHSU Mass Communications program. The hands-on experience working at SHSU Channel 7 and the opportunity to report on a variety of intercollegiate sports attracted the student to SHSU. Upon applying for admission, the student received a response from SHSU within one week, while other universities took months.
- A transfer student from a university in Florida explained his experience transitioning to SHSU strictly by e-mail, telephone, and by utilizing SHSU website features. He did not anticipate being able to apply, enroll, acquire advisement, and register at SHSU from Florida, but the transition experience was very smooth, allowing him to arrive in Huntsville a few days before the beginning of the semester ready to start class.
- Transfer from Tyler Junior College selected SHSU over SFA based on advice from others that SHSU College of Education offered a pretty good program. The transition was very smooth, and in reflection student indicated choosing SHSU was the best decision he could have made.
- A transfer from Blinn College praised the dual-enrollment program, indicating the transfer was as easy as it could be. The online features offered no trouble, and SHSU is well promoted at Blinn by SHSU alum.

**Changes students would make at SHSU:**

- Public speaking is not required for all students, but it should be.
- Parking at the gym (Recreational Sports Center/Health Kinesiology Center) is only reserved for freshman.
- Citations from UPD did not include enough information to determine how or where to make payment. (*Follow up: citation includes UPD contact information.*)
- Price of residence halls is very similar although some are significantly older and should cost much less than the newer facilities.

- If SHSU wants to keep up with attracting students to events, it needs to use creative and memorable video clips as publicity. A student media team could create student-oriented video clips to advertise current SHSU events.
- SHSU and the Huntsville community should work together to create programs and events on the weekend to encourage students to stay in Huntsville on weekends. Student organizations are hesitant to plan weekend programs based on anticipated low attendance.
- Parking entrances/exits should be changed to prevent low clearance vehicles from hitting the pavement.

**What is the best way to contact students with event publicity?**

- Post video clips on home page.
- Use monitors all over campus for displaying video clips.
- Use Mass Communications course assignments to generate videos.
- Include faces of students on campus to advertise events and personalize videos.

**Safety at SHSU**

- A student heard SHSU is ranked the #10 safest campus in Texas. Texas A&M scored at #23.
- A student shared his opinion that in general Huntsville is not safe.
- A student explained his opinion that Huntsville is safe compared to taking night classes in Florida. The close buildings are good.
- A student shared not only does he believe he is safe, but more important his mother knows he is safe at SHSU.
- A student stated if an inmate escapes, heavy security is around immediately and is very thorough.
- A student who saw police in action responding to a call made her feel very secure in the ability of the police to do their job. In her opinion, crime at Blinn College was fairly high.

## **VPSS Luncheon Follow-up Questionnaire Results**

A total of 17 students attended the luncheon, and 17 responded to the anonymous questionnaire. The group was comprised of freshman, sophomore, junior, senior and graduate students who participate in social and academic organizations on campus.

### Scale

- 1 – Completely Agree
- 2 – Somewhat Agree
- 3 – Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4 – Somewhat Disagree
- 5 – Completely Disagree

### Statements

*A. My questions and concerns were addressed OR I was provided information to follow up with an appropriate faculty/staff member or department to resolve an issue.*

**Response:** Completely Agree – 11  
Somewhat Agree – 6

*B. The topics discussed at the luncheon were relevant to me and/or my student organization.*

**Response:** Completely Agree – 13  
Somewhat Agree – 4

*C. I was able to share my opinions openly and thoroughly with students and the administrator(s) at the luncheon.*

**Response:** Completely Agree – 16  
Somewhat Agree – 1

*D. I believe the opportunity to meet Sam Houston State University administrators is a benefit to students.*

**Response:** Completely Agree – 17

*E. I would attend another student/administrator luncheon.*

**Response:** Completely Agree – 16  
Somewhat Agree – 1

Guest Comments: *Students were asked to complete the following sentences and offer any additional comments. In general, the student comments are typed below as they were written.*

### **AT THIS LUNCHEON, I LEARNED**

...of the many ways Sam Houston is improving life on campus.

...about future expansion. It was good to know where the university is headed.

...about many learning opportunities and how Sam Houston is continuing to improve in different aspects, as far as academics, safety, and service.

...about the man behind the title "President." I really was humbled to be a part of this luncheon and look forward to meeting with the administration again in the near future.

...the future of Sam. I learned the President's background. New projects.

...more about SHSU and where it is headed.

...more about different topics that affect students, how everything is intertwined, how to be able to do a better job in public speaking.

...that Sam Houston is expanding, which is an amazing opportunity. The open and honest banter is beneficial and interesting.

...students problems and some of their solutions. Some of the ideas of the students.

...how caring the faculty is. They are open and honest and ready to help each and every student. I am a graduating senior and to be able to meet the president and VP and other caring faculty members is such a pleasure!

...about small faculty to student ratios.

...the personalities of our top staff. Very personable.

### **TO IMPROVE THIS PROGRAM, I WOULD**

The VP's should intermingle with the students.

I appreciate the fact that Sam Houston gives students the opportunity to have lunch with the staff.

...continue doing what we're doing and learn as you grow.

...publicize it more.

...make it longer, have more people answer or ask questions and make suggestions.  
(understanding the faculty plans)

...allow a larger population to get the opportunity. Keep the smaller group, but offer more sessions.

...have them go longer. Half the time was spent eating.

...more people showed up much earlier. Possibly require dress up.