

## Questions for the 2006 Annual Staff Forum

1. What is being planned for the new Activities Building / renovation and what is the scheduled begin date?

The scheduled start date is the end of September or the first of October 2006. The new construction and initial renovations will be completed by September 2007, with the balance of the renovation being completed by February 2008.

2. Will the Activities building be closed during the renovation? Will the staff have access to some areas for workouts?

The Activities Building expansion/renovation will be completed in two stages. The first stage will involve the expansion of the building (approx. 82,000 sf), the renovation of the Lone Star Auditorium, the blue gym, and the locker rooms. The locker facilities in the PEB will be utilized while the locker rooms in the Activities Building are being renovated. The yellow gym, fitness center, and the racquetball courts will remain open.

The second stage will involve the renovation of the yellow gym, fitness center, corridors, restrooms and racquetball courts. The new square footage, locker rooms and blue gym will be available during this stage.

Campus Recreation will continue to offer programs and services throughout the expansion and renovation.

3. Is the cost of the renovation of the Activities building going to increase the staff membership dues? If so, any idea what the new membership fees will cost? (currently, \$24 per year) **HALL**

Yes.....See Schedule Below.....

Membership Category	Annual Current Amount	Fall 2006 Annual Amount	Fall 2007 Annual Amount	Fall 2008 Annual Amount	Fall 2009 Annual Amount
Faculty/Staff**	\$ 24.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 225.00
Student Domestic Partner/Child	\$ 35.00	\$ 40.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
F/S Domestic Partner/Child	\$ 50.00	\$ 65.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Domestic Partner*	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 275.00

\*No children allowed/Domestic Partner pricing same for all categories

\*\*Payroll deduction will be available for membership fees.

It should be noted, the increase in campus recreation fees was approved via a student referendum in April 2004. Our new fee will be consistent with other universities in the state that also charge between \$70 to \$77 per semester...this includes; Univ. of

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Houston, UNT, TAMU, Sam Houston State, UT Brownsville, W. TAMU and many others...Many universities charge between \$100 to \$125 per semester...this includes; Stephen F. Austin, UT Permian Basin, UT Tyler, TAMU Commerce, Tarleton State, TAMU Corpus Christi, and Texas Tech.

Annual memberships at the YMCA are \$324, at Elize Odom Rec. Center \$408, at 24 Hour Fitness \$432, Fitness Express \$228 and \$348, and LA Fitness \$540 and \$420. Most also charge an Initiation Fee ranging between \$14 to \$299.

4. Will the group exercise classes (QUEST) remain the same price, \$50 per semester?

Yes – for FY 0708

5. Will there be new staff locker rooms available in the Activities building after the renovation?

The Activities Building will have renovated, state-of-the art locker room facilities when the first stage is complete. At this time, there will not be a designated faculty/staff area within the locker rooms. Campus Recreation will review the possibility of this option.

6. The service at the University Club is considerably slow. One cannot go there and expect to be served within the one hour lunchtime that is given to an employee. What are the plans, if any, to speed up the service so that the employee can be back in their office on time?

We have increased our staffing on those days when there is a large group(s) in the meeting rooms. This should address this issue.

7. My son and I purchased memberships to the Activities building; however, when my son comes to campus to work out, it is near impossible to find a place to park. What are the possibilities of having reduced rate of parking for the Activities parking lot (#33) in the evening hours?

Reducing the parking rates in the evening hours will not free up spaces. Generally speaking, there are spaces available in this lot in the afternoon hours and in the evening hours, just not close to the building. One can also use lot #30 by the Tennis Center or lot #34, just east of lot #33. Visitor permits are \$2 per week and \$6 per month.

We will be monitoring this closely though as we will lose approx. 75 spaces for the staging area during the construction project. These will be freed-up once the project is completed.

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8. If an employee has accumulated enough vacation hours so that the employee is in jeopardy of losing vacation time, what is the possibility of the employee receiving a separate check for vacation hours at straight time pay? This could be beneficial to each department that have employees with too many hours of vacation and not enough employees to cover shift.

UT Arlington vacation policy is mandated by the Texas Government Code 661.062. It stipulates that vacation may only be paid if an employee "resigns, is dismissed, or otherwise separates from state employment" or if that employee moves from a position that accrues vacation to a position that does not accrue vacation, i.e., an employee in an administrative position who moves to a faculty position.

9. Please explain the fairness of employee evaluations. Example: An employee receives 'meets or exceeds expectations' on the majority of their evaluation; however, the final summary is rated as 'below expectations'. Please explain how a director can override a 'meets or exceeds expectation' with a 'below expectation' without any flags or questions being raised by upper management. Human Resources and a Vice President stated that the decision cannot be challenged. The concern is not to attain mutinous power, but to have the ability of having the evaluation fairly reviewed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

Any Performance Evaluation, regardless of the format, is only as good as the supervisor and the employee makes it. In an ideal world, "Performance reviews are a way to document and communicate what all good supervisors do anyway - - provide employees with positive reinforcement for areas of effective performance and constructive criticism in areas that need improvement so that overall performance will be enhanced and increased job satisfaction will result for the employee." Preface to Performance Review Implementation Guide that is available on the web. The employee has the opportunity to address the evaluation and there is an opportunity for both the supervisor and the employee to come to an understanding of the expectations of the other. The performance evaluation should occur throughout the year in an informal manner, so that no one is surprised when the formal evaluation occurs.

But it is only the supervisor who has knowledge of the employee's performance. Human Resources does not have knowledge of the employee's performance and that is why Human Resources does not review Performance Evaluations. The Performance Evaluations are sent to Human Resources for the purpose of including the Evaluation in the employee's personnel file.

If the employee is not in agreement with the evaluation or feels that it is unfair, the employee has several options. On the evaluation, the employee has the opportunity in the Comments section to agree with the evaluation or to dispute the evaluation. The employee also has the opportunity to make comments about what the supervisor can do to help make the employee successful in his job. These comments would be part of the final document and would be included in the employee's personnel file.

Another option available to the employee is the grievance process. Policy 3-28, Employee Grievance Procedure, includes complaints about Performance Evaluation.

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That policy outlines specific steps that allow the employee to take his/her concerns through the administrative up to the Vice President level.

Human Resources does understand how difficult a Performance Evaluation can be yet how important they are. That is why we provide training to supervisors on how to make an evaluation a useful, meaningful tool. We provide that training on a scheduled basis or we will, upon request, go to a department to provide training.

10. What is the possibility of installing a card reader access to Faculty 9 parking lot, east side? The continuous parking problem still exists with student parking in the faculty areas. The police guard is no longer able to leave the guard shack to write tickets which is creating a bigger problem. There has also been several students seen parking in the visitor section on a daily basis and attending class.

We are considering converting these spaces to visitor parking only to address this problem.

11. In Faculty 10 parking lot, the card reader gates are automatically set to open at 5pm so that students can have the opportunity to park in that lot during the evening classes. Can the time be changed to 5:30pm or 5:45pm? Students are trying to enter the lot and find parking spaces at the same time the employees are trying to leave. Staff members are having difficulty not only exiting the parking lot but the reversing out of spaces as well due to students blocking the lanes attempting to get a parking space.

We will monitor this lot closely at the beginning of the fall semester with an officer present to direct traffic, and consider opening the gate at 5:30 instead of at 5:00 to ease the congestion, if necessary.

12. Are they reducing the available parking spaces in Faculty Lot 10, in order to place a temporary building for the School of Nursing? If so, what are the plans to address the parking issue in an already overcrowded lot?

No....the Smart Hospital will use the existing Pahl Buildings.

13. Do you see UT Arlington becoming a more family oriented university? It would be nice to have an on-campus day care facility for those staff members with underage children. KinderCare offers a child care program to companies with a discount provided to employees. The only requirement is that the company provides space.

We have a YWCA Child Development Care Center on campus currently that is available for our faculty, staff and students. The Center is located at 106 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Aid is also available for families that qualify. Otherwise, rates are competitive with other child care programs.

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14. Are salaries for staff employees going to be looked at and reviewed? Maybe an area wage survey comparable pay for comparable jobs can be done. What types of plans are in place to ensure UT Arlington is an employer of choice in the future?

Human Resources Compensation is involved in a continuous, ongoing review. We subscribe, as well as participate, in external surveys that target comparable institutions of higher education to determine our market competitiveness. This information is routinely provided to management.

As far as being the employer of choice in the future, we plan to continue to offer the same things that we offer today that makes us an employer of choice today. We offer a highly competitive total compensation package when you consider the salary and benefits offered to our employees. In addition, there are intangible things such as a safe work environment and employer stability that are very important to an employee but it would be very difficult to quantify that.

15. What are the considerations for more than the standard 3% percent annual merit increase? With the cost of living going up, 3% does not begin to cover the increases employees see at the gas pump or supermarket.

The merit policy is not intended to be a cost of living adjustment. The merit policy is designed to reward those who perform at levels the supervisors feel are deserving. If the question is really why isn't there more money in the merit pool, the answer is that we place as much money in the pool as our projected revenue will cover.

16. What types of plans does the University have to strategically compete in the retention of high performing staff employees?

We always want to retain our high performing staff employees. We have matched some offers that our employees receive. However, we recognize that there are times when our best performers receive job offers that we are simply not able to match.

17. Do you foresee UT Arlington reinstating the football program? If so, what is the status?

18. Given that salary was not a factor, please explain the loss of 9 campus police officers in this current fiscal year alone. (All officers were with the university for several years.) Is there a retention policy for officers? If so, what is it?

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Here is why the employees left the department: to open an automobile transmission repair shop, to attend law school, to open a motorcycle customizing shop, to move to Minnesota to be with her family, three left due to salary (one to Cedar Hill PD, one to Hurst PD, and another to join the Dallas County Constable's Department). One employee was terminated for cause, another employee left for an undisclosed reason, and another employee retired.

19. With the advent of the flat fee tuition next fall, staff members will no longer be able to afford to take a single course. When will we be allowed to take one course per semester for free like staff at other UT universities? (UT Austin, for example) We strongly encourage the administration to stop considering it and do it!

No UT university can legally provide free tuition. Some may offer to pay the tuition for the employee, but it isn't free. Base tuition can not be waived under Texas law. The value of the fees waived under the old tuition and fee will be used to reduce the flat rate tuition plan for employees. For fall, an employee will pay \$551.26 for a 3 hour course. The regular price is \$840.

20. Can a department make an employee sign a form regarding dress code?

Yes. But it is important to note that the signature indicates that the employee has received a copy of the dress code and understands it. It is the UT Arlington Standards of Conduct that provides that a supervisor may require a dress code that is appropriate to the job function.

21. During the summer, certain areas in the Watson building on Main Street are hot, reaching 80 degrees; while other parts of the building are cold and the employees complain about freezing temperatures. Is there anything that can be done to regulate the temperature in this building? Does the building have zoned areas that be regulated? Management says nothing can be done about the situation.

22. Since every department has so much paper with confidential information that must be shredded daily, could UT Arlington purchase an industrial size shredder that is accessible to everyone?

The university does have a shredding program. Central Receiving has contracted with a shredding service for the university. There is a form on-line that a department can complete. Central Receiving will pick up the documents to be shredded, will house those documents in a safe environment until there are enough documents to be shredded to call the contractor. The contractor comes to the Central Receiving loading

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dock and the documents are shredded on site. There is a minimal fee charged to the department for that service.

23. Why are all entrances to all buildings not marked above the door over the door jams? Having several entrances to a building can get not only visitors, but staff and students confused if they are new to the campus. For example, an entrance in Davis Hall is marked "ENTERING BASEMENT"; however this is not marked on all basement entrances to Davis Hall.

As part of the Campus Master Plan Update, we will be improving the signage and way-finding system campus wide. This will include vehicular signage, pedestrian circulation way-finding signage, as well as new signs for our buildings. We have not included signage above every building entrance as the cost/benefit of doing so is questionable at best.

24. What is the University's policy regarding the daily shut down of individual computer systems? In some offices, computers and peripherals must be turned off every day; however in other departments, staff simply log out and leave the computers on during the night and weekend hours. This seems like a waste of energy.

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) recommends that all UT Arlington faculty and staff take the following steps to help reduce energy costs:

- Do not turn on computers, monitors, printers, and other peripheral devices until they are needed each day.
- Turn off all non-critical computers, monitors, printers, and other peripheral devices at the end of each work day.
- Configure monitors to go into "sleep mode" each day during periods of inactivity.

We estimate that it costs over \$187,000 per year to run 5,000+ computers for 8 hours per day. Running them 24 hours a day triples this number. With the cost of electricity on the rise, it is even more important to follow these guidelines to reduce energy costs. To learn more, please visit the OIT HelpDesk web page and click on Hardware.

25. As of mid-April, I have not seen any advertising or marketing push of UT Arlington. Is this being done in areas that I may not have seen nor has UT Arlington changed its plans?

UT Arlington is at the beginning of a long-term commitment to promoting its new brand through an integrated mix of advertising, marketing, media relations, public relations and other communications tools. And as you know, there are many compelling reasons for UT Arlington to reach out to its many constituents – to recruit new students (and their parents) both at the undergraduate and graduate levels; to recruit and retain outstanding faculty and staff; to educate the general community about all of our

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outstanding research, academic, community service, leadership and co-curricular programs; to re-engage our alumni in their alma mater; to cultivate legislative interest; to attract corporate and civic partnerships.

You've asked specifically about advertising, so I'll concentrate on that. Since the first of March, the new 'Be A Maverick' messaging has been utilized in print – which includes newspaper and magazine - online advertisements, radio, cinema, and billboard, in both the Metroplex and Houston. We chose Houston to support the efforts of our Undergraduate Admissions staff who are concentrating recruiting in that area. In the Metroplex, we advertised regularly in the *Star Telegram* and during key recruitment times in the education section. We also advertise during key times in the *Dallas Morning News*. We will continue to do so. Next year we also plan to advertise in *D Magazine* at least once. We advertised in three issues of *Texas Monthly* – two issues are of particular importance because of their editorial focus on education. We appear in the *Dallas Business Journal's* and *Fort Worth Business Journal's Book of Lists*, and several area Chamber and Newcomer Guides. Our Fort Worth campus runs targeted ads in the *Fort Worth Business Press* throughout the year.

Online, we advertise on the Alloy Network, FastWeb, Yahoo!, and the Dallas Morning News.com, and we plan to expand our web presence next year because this is such an important way to reach our prospective students. We featured cinema advertisements in 7 local theatres this spring and will upgrade our presence this winter. Our radio ads run on ClearChannel stations throughout the metroplex although not this summer; they'll pick up again this fall. However, our EMBA ads are still running on KERA. We always have a billboard on I-30 and from time to time will feature spot billboards for 2-3 months throughout the metroplex. Next fall we'll add a second in Fort Worth. Since our Fort Worth Center is opening in its new location in the Rail Market in January, we're looking carefully at our advertising mix in Fort Worth. In fact, we have the back inside cover of the Bass Hall program for the entire performance season.

Advertising comes in all shapes and forms, so in addition to our banner program on campus, we'll be adding large welcome banners to the north and south bridges on Cooper to add even more of a sense of demarcation to the campus. Speaking of banners, we're also going to advertise our fall planetarium show – Stars of the Pharaohs - with a banner program at the DFW airport from September through November.