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TEXAS EASTERN UNIVERSITY

TYLER, TEXAS 75701

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 11, 1976

To: Board of Regents, Texas Eastern University
From: James H. Stewart, Jr.
Subject: Administrative Notes

I. Off-Campus Instruction

The matter of off-campus instruction received more attention a few days ago by Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives Bill Clayton. Although each of you probably obtained some information through one of the news sources on this matter last week, I am sure you will be interested in reading the enclosed copy of the complete news release which Speaker Clayton sent to all university presidents at the time it was released to the press. The Speaker's position relative to curtailment of off-campus instruction is essentially the same position taken by the Coordinating Board several months ago. His position relative to off-campus courses being self-supporting is one which has been advocated by some. In fact, Coordinating Board Member Jack Arthur of Stephenville made a motion to this effect at the July 16, 1976 meeting of the Coordinating Board. Mr. Arthur's motion was voted down although several board members indicated they agreed with this position.

As you may recall, I was appointed by former commissioner of higher education, Dr. Bevington Reed, about two years ago to serve on the Off-Campus Advisory Committee for the Coordinating Board. From the beginning of my service on that committee, as reported to you, I along with Dr. Kenneth H. Ashworth, present commissioner of higher education who was also on the committee before being appointed commissioner, pursued a policy of off-campus instruction curtailment. Moreover, we attempted to advance the policy of making off-campus instruction self-supporting. Frankly, I did not then, nor do I now, see any other feasible, viable or equitable method of resolving the issue. Although Dr. Ashworth and I were advocating a minority view initially, the curtailment and self-supporting concepts have gained a great deal of momentum during the last few months; and I am very pleased that Speaker Clayton is taking a positive stand on this significant matter. I should point out that the off-campus instruction situation will receive, I am sure, a

great deal of attention during the next legislative session. Further, I should remind you that there are strong sentiments in some quarters for continuing off-campus instruction on a wholesale basis, fully supported by state funding. Some of these arguments sound very positive, but most of them are, in my opinion, superficial and avoid the fundamental concerns of sound educational practice.

II. Higher Education Committee Action

At a meeting of the Texas House of Representatives Higher Education Committee in Dallas last Friday, approval was given to a report recommending establishment of three new medical schools in Texas. As is indicated by the enclosed Sunday, Dallas Morning News story, "FW medical school, two others proposed," the recommended sites for the new medical schools are Ft. Worth, Tyler and the Rio Grande Valley. Although Representative Bill Clark is on the Higher Education Committee, and I understand attended the Dallas committee meeting, I have not had the opportunity to discuss the matter with him. Of course, as each of you is aware, Representative Fred Head is chairman of the Higher Education Committee and has been in recent weeks interested in the shortage of physicians in Texas, particularly in rural areas. Another article from the same edition of the Dallas Morning News, "House unit OK's higher tuition funds," specifying other items considered by the Higher Education Committee as well as elaborating on the medical recommendations is also enclosed for your information.

III. Meeting with Community/Junior College Presidents

As the board is aware, I host the East Texas community and junior college presidents on our campus at least once during each year. The meeting for the current year has been scheduled for October 25, 1976. The focus of our gathering will be a tour of Texas Eastern University's new facilities and continuing discussion of articulation and coordination between the community and junior college organizations and TEU.

IV. Report from Resident Engineer

Attached is a report from our director of physical plant and resident engineer for the week ending October 8, 1976.

JHS:mp

Enclosures and Attachment

Texas House of Representatives

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE---Tuesday, October 5, 1976

Contact: George Works
512-475-3311

AUSTIN---House Speaker Bill Clayton said Monday he has asked for a full report of the cost of off-campus college courses from the College Coordinating Board.

"I am surprised that the cost of these courses to the taxpayers of Texas is not readily available. I want the Legislative Budget Board to have the figures. Furthermore, I don't think we should continue to pay for courses without knowing what it's costing us," Clayton said.

Clayton said he was startled to learn that more than 4,000 courses at the graduate, senior and junior levels are being taught. Added to that number are more than 2,000 at sophomore and freshman year levels.

"I had no idea we were supporting this magnitude of teaching off our campuses as well as the teaching job that goes on at the campus. I believe some off-campus courses may be necessary, but it would appear the program has gotten out of hand. I know that the Coordinating Board must approve all courses, but it appears this type of teaching has proliferated beyond reason. Only a few years ago this wasn't going on," Clayton said.

The Speaker said he was genuinely concerned with such activity since colleges and universities are asking for over a 50 per cent increase in appropriations.

"We're going to have enough trouble trying to pay for what's going on at the campus without trying to fund off-campus, too. I want the Legislative Budget Board staff to see if we can't make self-supporting the courses that are taught. I think the people who have the courses brought to them should be willing to pay for them," the Speaker said.