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Administrative Notes, June 27th, 1977

University of Texas at Tyler

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To: Board of Regents, Texas Eastern University

From: James H. Stewart, Jr.

Subject: Administrative Notes

I. Coordinating Board "Sunset" Proposal

At a meeting of the Coordinating Board's Program Development Committee last week, action was taken concerning a program policy recommendation which has significant implications for higher education in Texas. The committee approved in principle a "sunset" statement which stipulates that all new degree programs in state institutions of higher learning which are approved after the Coordinating Board's adoption of the "sunset" policy are to be reviewed each five years to determine whether the degrees will be continued or phased out. Under the proposed policy, if a decision is reached to phase out a program, it would be phased out during the sixth year. The burden of providing information supporting continuation of each degree approved after the policy is adopted within an institution's degree inventory will be the responsibility of each institution. During the Program Development Committee meeting last week, a decision was reached to place the "sunset" policy on the agenda for the next committee meeting on July 21, 1977. The proposed "sunset" statement is as follows:

"Each new program will terminate at the end of the sixth academic year following its initiation unless specifically continued by the Coordinating Board based upon a review during the fifth academic year. Upon termination of a program, the Commissioner may permit limited continuation of courses to honor commitments to students enrolled at that time."

In addition to Program Development Committee consideration of the "sunset" recommendation on July 21, 1977, the item will also appear on the agenda of the full board meeting scheduled for the following day, July 22, 1977.
II. Ad Valorem Tax Fund

Although I am sure each of you has read the Texas Research League's proposal and/or the wire reports on the Research League's recommendation that the governor expand the agenda for the July special session of the legislature to include consideration of extending the ad valorem tax fund, I think you will be interested in the attached story from the June 24, 1977 edition of the Tyler Morning Telegraph. The portion of the league's proposal that Texas Eastern and certain other Texas institutions be added to the ad valorem tax fund is very positive. As you are aware, this was one of the recommendations developed by the Hobby-Clayton Commission for action during the 65th legislative session and a matter supported by the Chairman of the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System. Also as you are aware, Representative Bill Clark introduced a bill in the 65th session to add Texas Eastern University to the ad valorem fund.

The process of adding TEU and other institutions to the tax fund is complex and would require a great deal of time. Consequently, it would not be possible for the legislature to simply delete the funds appropriated for our library and at the same moment replace the funding with ad valorem tax funds. Hence, the portion of the league's proposal that all construction funds appropriated by the 65th legislature be revoked is very negative for our program because it would result in an unreasonable delay for our library construction. Therefore, if there is a possibility of the governor including the ad valorem tax matter in the special session, it would be desirable provided the proposition of deleting construction funds appropriated during the 65th session is excluded. Although I expect to have more information on this matter later this week, my initial checking indicates that the governor presently is not inclined to place the ad valorem tax matter on the agenda for the forthcoming special session.

In the event that you would like to refer to the section of the Texas State Constitution pertaining to ad valorem tax fund, I refer you to Article VII, Section 17.

III. Reception for Dr. and Mrs. Donald M. Anthony

Although an invitation to a July 10, 1977 reception for Dr. and Mrs. Anthony has been sent to board members and wives, I mention this activity in Administrative Notes for your information. The reception, planned and funded by several administrative staff members and wives is scheduled between the hours of 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. as a "come-and-go" activity on Sunday, July 10, 1977 in the University Center. All institutional personnel along with wives and husbands are being invited to the reception honoring the Anthonys. Certainly, it is hoped that board members and wives can be present.
IV. Report from Resident Engineer

Attached is a report from the director of physical plant and resident engineer for the week ending June 24, 1977.

JHS:rc

Attachments