Summary of Minutes from the 16 February Faculty Assembly
“A Conversation on Advancement”

Andy Fort, Chair of the Faculty Senate, brought the meeting to order at 3:35. He welcomed those in attendance. 17 were in attendance, 10 of whom were TCU faculty. Chancellor Boschinni, Don Whelan (Vice Chancellor for University Advancement), Adam Baggs (Assistant Vice Chancellor for University Advancement), and David Nolan (University Advancement), were among the non-faculty members in attendance.

Don Whelan addressed the assembly and introduced the other attendees from the University Advancement Office. Mr. Whelan began by addressing what advancement is. Advancement falls into two main categories: 1) fund raising, and 2) alumni relations. In the past 6 months at TCU, there has been a re-allocation of resources in the Advancement office. In addition, there has been an increase in resources available to the Advancement office. The main shift has been to increase emphasis on potential major donors.

Mr. Whelan affirmed that each college has its own advancement officer. He emphasized that this fact was not widely known, something the Advancement Office is trying to change. He stated that more interaction between the Advancement Office and individual faculty is critical for high levels of success. Mr. Whelan stated that interaction between faculty and the Advancement Office should be viewed as a 2-way street, i.e. a win-win situation. Having faculty input and active participation, for example, is quite a sell for most donors. Identifying new donors is another important role for faculty. The fear for some faculty may be that the Advancement Office will siphon off donors to other areas. Mr. Whelan assured the assembly that the Advancement Office honors the donor’s original intent. He did, however, warn about the failure to speak with one voice. If a donor is solicited from several uncoordinated TCU entities, the donor may become fatigued. While the Advancement Office wishes to encourage individual faculty efforts, it is important that faculty communicate with the Advancement Office regarding their donor activities.

A surprising amount of TCU’s fund raising, about 60%, comes from what are small, individual donors. Faculty, in many cases, are well suited for identifying these donors.

David Nolan spoke about the changes the Advancement Office has seen since Don Whelan came on board. In particular, Mr. Nolan has seen the Advancement Office establish a closer, more collegial relationship with faculty. David Nolan stated that one of his goals was to have each college’s development officer meet with faculty. Senator Fort added that department meetings are good time to address all those in a department at the same time.

Don Whelan, talked about the relative decline of non-targeted gifts and the rise of gifts given for a particular purpose. He also stated that the capital campaign is well above its targets for the year. Senator Fort asked whether VIA was stimulating added donations. Don Whelan stated that the main
reason for increased gift giving seems to be that TCU is perceived as on the way up. Athletics, while a part, are not the primary reason. The School of Education project also resulted in several major gifts.

Scott Sullivan (Dean of Fine Arts Dean) asked whether or not the Advancement Office was planning on a faculty/staff campaign, separate from the Annual Fund drive. Don Whelan responded that this was likely, but the Advancement Office had not yet decided on the proper format. Dr. Sullivan suggested that having a project for each college, then having the college campaign for that project, might be a good idea.

Steve Quinn (Economics) asked about whether faculty might think about former students that come from families with large gift potential. Don Whelan stated that TCU’s student base is more conducive to this type of fund raising than most Universities. Among the ways faculty can contribute to alumni, and alumni family gift giving, is giving the students a great learning and life experience while at TCU. In addition, any time a faculty member has an idea regarding a potential donor, the Advancement Office is happy to listen. Chancellor Boschinni mentioned that the largest single gift to TCU came from the family of a former student. Senator Fort asked for some clarification regarding the nature of timing of the solicitation. Mr. Whelan stated that the Advancement Office is, and has to be, very professional in its relationships. High pressure techniques are neither professional nor productive.

Adam Baggs stated that possible faculty functions might include communicating individual school projects to donors, and letting potential donors know how to contact the Advancement office.

David Gunn (Religion) asked about the appropriateness and effectiveness of faculty involvement. Mr. Whelan reiterated that effective fund raising demands a professional, relationship approach. Donors also thrive on personal input from faculty.

Don Whelan spoke again about the new capital campaign. All money raised under the auspices of the capital fund go toward capital fund goals. These goals fall into 6 major categories.

1. Scholarships
2. Academic Programs
3. Faculty
4. Facilities
5. Athletics
6. Annual Fund

David Gunn stated that the new capital campaign is more public than the vast majority of capital campaigns. Chancellor Boschini stated that VIA, in part, paved the way for the capital campaign. The VIA grants generated many more good ideas than were possible to fund at the time.

The assembly was adjourned at 4:36.

John Lovett
Secretary
TCU Faculty Senate