

## Eyes On the Board

Eyes on the Board (EOB) continues to be your eyes and ears on what is happening around ACC. EOB is concerned about the values of Board members and some administrators in regard to employees' and students' worth. We believe some are more concerned with building empires and legacies than in serving students that are focused on learning.

Case in point is the latest memo from president Kinslow regarding student success initiative—update November 11, 2010. In the memo president Kinslow states “While some may question the why and the how, which is fine, the reality is that the culture of ACC is evolving to one in which student performance is the primary focus of all we do (students first, us second).”<sup>(1)</sup> EOB would like to know when this change occurred. It is our opinion that the culture of our fine college employees has always been one of students first. Faculty and staff have always maintained the primacy of student learning. The administration seems to claim that the culture of the college is focused elsewhere and needs re-directing in ways that are more pleasing to the Board and administration. EOB hopes this new direction of students first will filter through to the Board and administration as they consider tuition hikes. At the latest Board meeting, trustees are considering a policy change: “...staff believe it prudent for ACC to address this reality by developing a policy for In-District Tuition that more reliably supports ACC’s Master Plan goals.”<sup>(2)</sup> In other words students should get their wallets out. We need to pay for new campuses in Kyle and Elgin to build bigger empires and legacies. Of course all the while putting students first as we reach around and empty their wallets.

Anyone in doubt need only attend a Board meeting. Trustee Allen Kaplan at the November 14, 2010 Board Session stated “My personal preference... is that students are going to have to pick up more. They are just going to have to pick up more of the tab.” He goes on to say that even a five cent increase in property tax income “...will not pay for our growth.” And as heads nodded around the dais, he continued “Students are going to have to pick up more of the burden here, because the State is not.”<sup>(3)</sup> Trustee McGuffee later comments “We are going to have to raise tuition.” Clearly the Board and administration’s agenda is to have current

students fund ACC growth into annexed areas.

On another note, EOB is glad to see that the administration is once again making an effort to fill the EVP/Provost position that has been vacant for over two years. That position is designed to focus on the student success initiative. We are dismayed that a position that is so important to instruction has been neglected for so long. The administration seems to indicate that while it says that it puts students first, it has been over two years and no one has been hired to oversee that priority. With such an important priority one would think that ACC’s administration might have hired someone to participate in the process.

In summary EOB knows the commitment and dedication of faculty and staff in putting students first but questions the Board and administration’s commitment. Raising tuition on low income students to fund growth in annexed areas is not putting students first.

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## NEWS & NOTES:

### Zoomorphic Representations of Institutional Values:

#### *A Semiotic Analysis of Totemic Hybridization*

If you’ve been seeking a herald of ACC’s creeping de-evolution into a glorified high school, look no further. Just a couple of weeks ago the new mascot was unveiled. Named R.B. Bbhoggawact (a nod to a losing mascot nominee whose name was derived from all of the counties that the administration wishes to annex), the mascot looks like a cross between preschool TV fave Barney and preschool breakfast cereal celebrity Count Chocula, topped off with a fluffy toupee of mucous-hued moss, something you might find in the basement of the Rio Grande campus. It wasn’t enough to buy an obsolete high school building—though at least its hot water is lead free (because RGC doesn’t have hot water, ha ha ha!)—we are now subjected to a mascot, an anthropomorphization of “school spirit,” a totem for mindless worship.

This mascot signifies something else at ACC. Fabrication. Make believe elements are juxtaposed to dupe the witless into unthinking subservience. Yes, we have the permanently gleeful though dentally challenged lovechild of Barney and Count Chocula here, and what are Barney and Count Chocula themselves but fabrications by

master manipulators? We need look no further for fabrications at ACC than the Ministry of Propaganda’s copy for R.B. Bbhoggawact: “Wait a second. What’s a Riverbat? A Riverbat is ACC’s very own kind of bat. The “River” component speaks to the many rivers that run throughout our region, and bats are synonymous with Central Texas. They’re intelligent and resourceful; bats also provide important services to the community and have the ability to soar high, just like our students and graduates” ([www.austincc.edu/riverbat/about.php](http://www.austincc.edu/riverbat/about.php)). Granted, Central Texas is a potamologist’s dream, and bats are indeed synonymous with our river-riddled region. Recall the times you’ve hopped on a steamboat to a distant foreign land—Oklahoma, for example. Despite huge cultural differences and their sketchy knowledge of Central Texas, the Oklahomans you would run across on vacation would always know that bats are simply another name for your motherland. But how on earth could they ever know that? Perhaps it was all those classic Westerns that take place in Central Texas. These movies always have establishing shots of “batboys” herding and lassoing bats or branding them with red-hot irons. And the stereotyping that you had to endure while trying to enjoy the exotic hinterlands of Oklahoma—always being asked how many “head o’ bats” you have on your ranch! How about truth instead of fabrications? For the past two years, the administration has bellowed that it’s a dark and stormy budget, yet ACC is rolling in dough. As AAUP President Cary Nelson noted in *No University Is an Island*, “The 2008-2010 recession gave administrators the opportunity to claim that their institutions were in financial crisis whether or not it was true” (p. 59). Last year the college had a budget surplus of \$5 million dollars. Yet it was supposedly so

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### ACC Employee Survey

All ACC employees should go to the website below and fill out an ACC Employee Survey.

<http://tinyurl.com/34lvf8b>  
and enter the password: ACCAFT.

We want to hear your opinions (whether you are a member of ACC/AFT or not) on the Board of Trustees, the Administration, health benefits, social security, shared governance and other issues. Seize this opportunity to voice your opinion! Please respond by January 20, 2011.

broke that it couldn't even afford a salary increase. And that \$5 million surplus accumulated despite the \$4.38 million in cash paid to buy Dillard's. Nor did it include an extra \$1.6 million that came to light in late spring because property tax revenues were higher than the administration's conveniently conservative estimates.

The administration's mantra that it couldn't give us a raise because it would then be obligated with that additional expense for subsequent years is not only ridiculous, but also hypocritical. After all, debt service on bonds for district expansion obligates the college for decades.

Budget projections through FY2018 anticipate healthy revenue growth (www.austincc.edu/board/agendas/2010/8727.pdf). Already this fiscal year the district is projecting a budget surplus of \$2.5 million. But, you ask, what about all the state budget cuts? A 10% reduction in state funding would cost ACC an estimated \$4.65 million. While this isn't pocket change, it's not the financial meltdown that the administration would have

people believe. To put this number in perspective, this year ACC is anticipating \$7.9 million dollars in tuition waivers (www.austincc.edu/board/agendas/2011/FinRpt110110.pdf). Eliminate waivers for financially able high school students and the state shortfall is more than covered.

It all makes you think that a more appropriate mascot would be a Golden Calf. As the district adds every living soul in Central Texas to its tax rolls, G.C. Bbhoggawact will become ACC—A Cash Cow. As we employees sink into destitution, we might well find ourselves sleeping under a bridge someday. But hey, what would you expect of a "river bat"?

EOB cont from front

- 1 See <http://www.austincc.edu/pres/communications/SSIUpdate11-08-10.pdf> for the full text from the Office of the President/CEO.
- 2 See Board agenda item 8783 Discussion of Tuition Policy <http://www.austincc.edu/board/agendas/2011/8783.pdf>
- 3 See Board of Trustees video session 32:00 minute mark and following. <http://irtflash.austincc.edu/bflvplayer/index.html?noninstructional/board/111510&id=8783>

### Full Time Faculty Salary Update

By John Cise

The average salary increase this year for FT Faculty at the other 8 metro CCs in Texas was 1.75%. If nine month salaries were properly compared, no ACC FT Faculty would have the biggest 9 month salary in Texas. In fact, this year with most other metro CCs obtaining 2-3% raises and ACC zero, we will see ACC falling out of the top three best paid nine month salary rankings in this FY 2011. ACCAFT requested a raise this past summer and are pushing for a raise for all employees in January.

These were the employee raises at the metro colleges this year compared to last year:

Collin	.....	3 %
San Jacinto CC.	.....	3 %
El Paso CC.	.....	2 %
Tarrant CC.	.....	2 %
Alamo CC	.....	2 %
Houston CC.	.....	.2%
Dallas CC.	.....	0%
Lone Star	.....	0%
ACC	.....	0%

### ACC/AFT Local 6249 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Austin Community College AFT  
 Affiliated with the Texas AFT, A.F.T., AFL-CIO  
 3000 South I.H. 35, Suite 175, Austin, Texas, 78704, Phone 448-0130, Fax 448-0678

NAME	E-MAIL	ACC CAMPUS
HOME ADDRESS	CITY	ZIP CODE
HOME PHONE	WORK PHONE	CELL PHONE

ACC Position (check one):

- Full-Time Faculty     
  Adjunct Faculty     
  Professional/Technical     
  Classified     
  Hourly

The ACC/AFT dues are based upon classes of membership defined in the national AFT constitution and by-laws. The dues levels are based upon your estimated current annual calendar year income. Please check your income category below and note the **monthly dues** amount associated with it.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$12,000 annual income<br>\$18.83 monthly | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25,000, annual income<br>\$23.71 monthly | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000, or more annual income<br>\$39.75 monthly (\$29.88 if Classified or Prof-Tech) |
|--|---|--|

Fill out the form below for dues payable through payroll deduction or send annual dues check payable to "ACC/AFT". Send this form to ACC/AFT, 3000 S. IH 35, Suite 175, Austin, TX 78704. Authorization for payroll deduction ACC/AFT dues

NAME: (LAST, FIRST)	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$18.83 (under \$12,000 at 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23.71 (under \$25,000, at 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39.75 (\$25,000, or more at 12 months)
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.11 (under \$12,000 at 9 months)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$31.61 (under \$25,000, at 9 months)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$53.00 (\$25,000, or more at 9 months)
<input type="checkbox"/> Classified or Prof-Tech \$29.88 (\$25,000, or more at 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/> Classified or Prof-Tech \$39.84 (\$25,000, or more at 9 months)	

I voluntarily authorize and request that my monthly membership dues and fees be deducted from my payroll checks by Austin Community College and remitted to the organization indicated above. I further authorize my membership in the organization to be considered continuing for this and future years until written notification or dissolution of this agreement is given by me. I further authorize that any increase in these dues and fees be automatically applied to my monthly payroll deduction. I understand these increases will be communicated to the ACC payroll office in writing by the organization's authorized representative.

NEW MEMBER'S SIGNATURE	DATE
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