

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
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Dr. Austin A. Lane
President

August 29, 2016

Dear TSU Faculty & Staff:

As the fall semester gets underway, I want to thank each of you for your unwavering commitment, dedication, and contributions to Texas Southern University! We are so fortunate to have such a long history of employing some of the greatest minds in academia who are committed to serving students, teaching and learning, research, and community service.

Our reputation for educating students from diverse backgrounds garnered the attention of over 14 thousand applicants this fall who were interested in learning and researching with our best and brightest faculty members. To date, we have enrolled over 9,000 new and returning students who stand ready to be educated and prepared for the future. This number represents a 1.7% increase over last fall (8965). Contrary to what local media outlets may publish, no one can tell our stories better than we can because no one knows our students better than we do. With varying degrees of secondary education successes and/or preparedness opportunities, each of you does an incredible job of meeting our students where they are without lowering the expectations.

We are proud of our “special purpose” designation for urban programming and take great pride in educating first generation students that are the first in their families to ever attend college. Our mix of incoming high-achieving students, along with those who merely needed an institution willing to give them a chance, create the fabric of our student body. Additionally, our students are landing impressive internships, scholarships, awards and jobs – even while still in school and post-graduation. Moreover, our T.F. Freeman Honors College has attracted some of the brightest minds in the country, enrolling students with an average GPA of 3.72 and SAT/ACT of 1190/25. We will continue to be a leader in providing a first-class education for students seeking a diverse HBCU experience.

In creating this experience, it is critically important that we continuously assess our administrative structure and make the necessary changes in key positions that allow us to better support students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community. During my initial 30-60 days, I have assessed this structure and made some critical changes to key positions. Included in those changes was the immediate need to fill vacant and interim dean positions. We are currently in the process of launching a national search to fill six (6) dean positions. We are investing in scouting for the best and brightest talent to lead our colleges and schools. The selection of the deans will be done in accordance with the guidelines as outlined in section 2.8 of the Faculty Manual. While the dean’s searches are ongoing, I have made interim appointments to fill two (2) current vacancies. Dr. James Douglas has been appointed to serve as Interim Dean of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law and Dr. Michael Adams to serve as Interim Dean of the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs. Drs. Taylor, Brown-Guillory, Poudeh and Williams have done a great job in their interim roles and will be eligible to apply for the permanent positions. Drs. Holley and Bullard have also given a great deal of service and support to their respective schools and will continue educating our students in the classroom.

In addition to the deans’ searches that are underway, changes were also made to other critical roles that support faculty, staff and students. The following personnel will be working closely with me: Remon Green, Executive Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police; Luis Villarreal, Chief Information Technology Officer; Keisha David, Associate Vice President of Human Resources & Payroll Services; and Raijanel Crockem, Executive Director of Institutional Assessment Planning & Effectiveness. These changes will give me a chance to better understand the operations that serve to support our safety, technology infrastructure, institutional data and personnel.

We are also in the process of searching for top-talent in the leadership roles of Vice President of Student Services/Dean of

Students, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and Vice President of Administration & Finance. While the vice president searches are in process, I have made interim appointments to fill the vacancies. Wendell Williams will serve as Interim Vice President for Student Services/Dean of Students and Dr. Bobby Wilson as Interim Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. Management of the Administration & Finance Division will be shared between Louis Edwards, Associate Vice President for Finance and Christina Odonez-Campos, Controller. All searches will be conducted in accordance with University policies and procedures.

Please thank Dean Saunders, Provost Ward and CFO Craig Ness for their commitment and leadership over the last several years. Although Craig will be leaving us and headed to Lamar University, we are fortunate to have Drs. Ward and Saunders teaching in the School of Communications and Business. Dr. Ward will also be working with me on special projects that impact the University and Third Ward community.

I am optimistic about the positive effects that these changes will yield. I look forward to having your continued support in our collaborative effort of promoting the efficiency and advancement of Texas Southern University.

In an effort to retain the talent we have within our faculty and staff ranks, I want to make you aware of the two percent raise for eligible faculty and staff, which will be effective September 1, 2016 and reflected on the October 1, 2016 payroll. Our Board of Regents approved this increase during their last meeting. Salary increases will be distributed for all eligible employees meeting the guidelines as detailed below.

I. Employees eligible to receive a two (2%) percent increase:

- **All benefits eligible employees with continuous service whose employment with Texas Southern University commenced on or before December 31, 2015, subject to the exclusions noted in section II of this memo;**
- **All full-time faculty (including visiting faculty);**
 - * **EXCEPTION: for faculty with split appointments (i.e. Dean, Asst. /Assoc. Dean, Program Directors, etc.), if the total salary is greater than or equal to \$100,000, your salary is excluded from receiving the two (2%) percent increases.**
 - Any exceptions will be reviewed and determined by the President and Associate Vice President of Human Resources & Payroll Services.**
- **All staff whose annual salary is less than \$100,000.**

II. Employees excluded from the two percent increase:

- **All benefits eligible employees hired on or after January 1, 2016 (new salaries were vetted properly at the time of hire);**
- **All staff employees whose total annual salary is \$100,000.00 or above;**
- **Any employee who received a salary increase (to their base salary) between March 1, 2016 and August 31, 2016;**
- **Any employee who received an interim appointment (with monetary compensation attached) between March 1, 2016 and August 31, 2016.**

In our efforts to streamline the process for salary increases, the Office of Human Resources & Payroll Services will manage the two (2%) percent increases internally through a mass upload in accordance with the eligibility guidelines as noted above. This mass update process does not require ePAFs for all employees on the state budget; however, **ePAFs are required for all employees on grants or Title III funds.** For areas paid on grants or Title III funds, **ePAFs must be submitted August 29 - September 2, 2016.** We are working against a very tight schedule in order to meet the state payroll deadline for all increases to be effective as of September 1, 2016 and paid on the October 1, 2016 pay date. Your cooperation and assistance is required to meet these deadlines and ensure successful completion on target. Thank you in advance for your efforts.

Finally, the prospective greatness of the 2016-2017 academic year depends largely on how well we work together to make this the best experience for our incoming and returning students. All 9,000 plus are counting on us to guide them down the pathway of success. Let's make this the best year yet, both for you personally, and for Texas Southern University.

Better Together,



Austin A. Lane
President