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SCCC/ATS Board Meets

The Seward County Community College/Area Technical School Board of Trustees met Monday, April 5, for its regular board meeting to review the current fee schedule for room rental and receive a report on low enrollment in various instructional programs.

The board reviewed the fee schedule for use of rooms in the Student Activities Building and Area Technical School. The board approved a number of fee changes based on the frequency of use of these particular facilities in correlation to the rising cost of utilities and maintenance personnel. Among the changes was the increase in a custodial fee from $25 to $40 when custodial personnel are required after regular hours of operation. Room rental was increased between $5 and $10 depending on the type and location of room.

The administration presented a review of a number of programs that have consistently had low enrollment in their classes. Among the low-enrollment programs that are being monitored are Art, Journalism, Criminal Justice, Business Administrative Technology, Agriculture, Computer Information Systems, Construction Trades Technology, Automotive Business Management, Machine Tool Technology, Drafting and Design Technology and Truck Driving.

To help boost enrollment, many of those programs are implementing new marketing strategies, developing online courses, seeking 2+2 articulation agreements with four-year colleges and universities, offering classes at different times, or combining different levels of courses into one class time.

The Criminal Justice program attained the largest overall enrollment increase during the 2009-10 school year.

The Agriculture Department is in the process of implementing a Feedlot Management program to help boost enrollment.

Although overall enrollment is up in the Computer Information Systems area, the programming classes consistently have had low enrollment. The CIS instructors are looking at new classes for the area as well as combining teaching and technology services for the college.

Machine Tool Technology and Drafting Technology both had an enrollment increase during the 2009-10 school year. In addition, the two programs, along with Welding Technology, were awarded a Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Solutions grant to align the three programs into a Manufacturing Technology component with Garden City and Dodge City community colleges.

With the exception of Construction Trades Technology, the administration recommended that each program be continued throughout the 2010-11 school year with another review in March 2011 to see if the new strategies are working.

With the retirement of Gary Staiger, the instructor who teaches Construction Trades Technology, and due to additional reductions in state aid for program operations, the program will not be taught during the 2010-11 school year. However, the administration will reinstate as an active program during the 2011-12 school year with modifications to the program as a result of the Kansas Technical Education Authority restructuring of construction trades programs. The program will include drafting, heating and air conditioning, and carpentry as instructional components of the restructured program

The Truck Driving program, a seven-week course, has shown a decrease in numbers over the past year. The program, which has two instructors, will operate with one instructor in September when the second instructor is deployed to Iraq. In addition, the program will be offered five times a year instead of six and the seven-week program will be changed to a six-week program. These changes will allow more time for recruiting between sessions. The instructors are also developing cooperative programs with Pratt and Garden City community colleges and Washburn Technical Institute.

The board approved a recommendation from the Financial Aid Office that the college participate exclusively in the Federal Direct Loan program beginning with the 2010-11 academic year. All SCCC/ATS students seeking federal financial aid will apply for their education loans through the federal financial aid programs rather than a commercial lender. Most of the community colleges in Kansas have either gone to direct lending or will for the fall 2010 semester. The move is a component of new federal regulations for student financial assistance.

This program will be less confusing for parents and the financial aid office because everything will be housed in one area, said Donna Fisher, director of Financial Aid.

The board approved a seven-year contract with Pepsi Cola to supply the vending machines on campus. The contract includes up-front cash, three scholarships per year at $1,500, a Gatorade Sideline Kit used at athletic events at $700 a year and a donation of 100 cases of products per year.

In other action, the board

1.Accepted the resignation of Karen Cress, financial aid officer and Steve Hecox, Allied Health Division chair and director of Nursing;

2.Reviewed the first draft of an Administrative Succession Plan;

3.Approved the acceptance of the proposal from Byron Bird & Associates of Liberal in the amount not to exceed $29,000 to perform the fiscal 2010 independent audit;

4.Approved a request to build a new core network recertified switch with parts of the switch being purchased from different supplies;

5.Accepted the bid from Alexander Open Systems of Kansas City, Kansas, in the amount of $40,235 for a virtual server and storage hardware; and

Celeste Donovan, dean of students, informed the Board of the upcoming alumni phon-a-thon to raise scholarship funds for the SCCC/ATS Foundation. The goal is to raise $20,000 during the phon-a-thon, which will begin Wednesday, April 7 and conclude Sunday, April 11. Post-cards announcing the phone-a-thon were sent to alumni and some responses and pledges have already been received.

Upcoming events at the college include the musical Beauty and the Beast, 7:30 p.m., April 22-24; athletic banquet 6 p.m., April 23; Booster Club golf tournament, 10:30 a.m., April 24; and Spring Fiesta and Car Show, 1-5 p.m., April 25. Commencement will be at 10 a.m., May 8 with GED graduation at 2 p.m.

The next board meeting is Monday, May 3 in the board room.

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