Introduction of NESC and ESC members and Welcome followed by the blessing.

Mark Dienhart – Welcome and talked about some of the history of UST as well as our challenges regarding enrollment and costs. There are many changes these days including demographics. We are an enrollment driven institution. Less than 10% of our spending comes from our endowments. The construction on campus is ahead of schedule due to the lack of rain over the summer. There are 3 years remaining on the current capital campaign. Freshman enrollment goal was slightly exceeded, other enrollments varied, some declined. Overall costs did have some increase. We were able to have a pay plan in great part due to the enrollment, even though it wasn’t what we hoped for. The plan does benefit the majority of our employees though and to also thank our employees for their hard work, there are additional vacation days being given during the holidays. H1N1 is still an issue, about 100 new cases which brings us up to about 400 cases total but most cases showing recovery within 3-5 days. There is now a mobile unit on campus.

Mark Vangsgard (Finance) – talked about the financial status of UST. It is strong because of our employees as well as our involvements in the community and how we have planned things. We had an outside consulting firm look at our status and they also believe that we are in a strong situation even with our construction, etc. on campus. We will be issuing new bonds for the new student center but even with that will leave us in a strong state. There is always “uncertainty” though so keep that in mind. CPI current trend for Midwest Urban Areas has decreased from 3% in Oct 2008 to -1.8% Sept 2009. Unemployment rate is increasing and is at 7.3% today. Stock Market still shows negative numbers from 3 years ago but has still made tremendous gains in the past several months. Enrollment drives the institution. Fall enrollment was on budget. Retention remains a concern. Pressure on tuition increases going forward.

Fr. Malone (Mission) – H1N1 issues, but only to certain ages. Story of Constantine. Board of Trustees changed bylaw that local bishop would not be chairman of the board. Present chairman was Harry Flynn. If you have people on a board that were not voted on the board, the board may be weakened. Harry Flynn was then elected on the board. Basically he explained how the events came to be of how Harry retained his position on the board. There was a flyer about this and information from someone unhappy with the situation. Mission at UST – read the UST mission statement. There are different approaches to mission and depending what you emphasize reflects your institution. A mission flows out of your identity. We educate people not because they are Catholic, but because “we” are Catholic.

Sue Huber (Academic) – good news of enrollment. Each college is accredited by its own accrediting institution. So it is an ongoing process overall because one college may just get accredited while another college just starting the process. We have a school that is nationally ranked. We have approx 450 faculty members. Class sizes are small which is a plus for the students. Students have many opportunities to study abroad. We also have many partnerships with other faculty, organizations, schools, community members. CILCE (Center for Intercultural Learning and Community Engagement) has come to be and was put together out of need for all that we do in the community. Enrollments are steady, freshman enrollment at an all time high. Less overall students this year but they are taking more credits. We provide access to 90% of our students through financial aid. Catholic identity is vital to what we do. We have a number of Centers and Institutes across campus that support what we do as well. If Sue were to have a goal, it would be to be as academically robust as UST.
Edna Comedy (HR) – She has been asked to talk about a number of topics. Pay for performance is a part of who we are and will help us live out our mission and vision. Telling an employee how they have done in the past year is only part of it. We are reevaluating our current system to see if it is effective. Edna will be discussing with a number of groups including NESC and ESC. What ought to be the objective of our performance assessment program? What should the rating scheme be? There is no perfect system. There will always be varying opinions so you can’t please everyone. Employee paid leave time – there is a new program for leave time for non-exempt staff where they can purchase time off. There is also a voluntary time off with no pay program that has been put in place. There have been 15 people that have requested time off with 14 being approved. Up to 8 weeks off can be requested. EPLT (Employee Purchased Leave Time) program is “paid” time off but employees purchase that time off. Application period runs concurrently with benefits open enrollment period. The question had been raised: Why do hourly employees receive 4.7 weeks of PLT after 4 years? This is accrued. This has been in place for many years. Exempt employees receive 5 years after 12 years of employment, 4 years to start with. There are also differences in sick leave. Leadership Academy brochures are available and there are many programs being offered.

Questions:

Opus Prize and what is that about. A: 1 million dollar prize offered to an entrepreneur. It is an honor for UST to host it. Doug Hennes explained more about the event next Tuesday night. There are also sessions to meet the candidates.

Q: What happens to the students after they leave UST? Further education? Work? A: Many do go on to graduate school, some at UST grad school. Many are in career fields. We have alumni surveys that do go out to find out more about where our graduates are at and what they are doing. But it is a challenge to get responses from them or accurate answers to what we want to know.

Q: Any plans for the McPhail building. A: Short answer is no. It will require major renovation to be usable. We did approach one organization to see if some partnership could happen but nothing yet. They will continue to look for options for it. The economic downturn has not helped the situation.

Q: Will there be a formal response to the flyer that Fr. Malone mentioned? A: Dr. Huber is the only person who has received communication on the booklet and that person was offended. Many don’t do anything with the information they receive. Ignoring it may be smart in a broader way, but if confronted about the situation it would be good to have a response. We are more Catholic now than we were years ago.

Q: Comment about Larson Allen study and UST trying to do too much work, any comment on a strategic level? A: The study was on “back of the house” operations, not directly student based. Based on Excellence which requires effectiveness.

Edna – Comments on the study abroad and VISION programs. President’s staff approved a new policy. VISION trips and study abroad can now be accompanied by staff where the staff member can get approval to have paid leave for these programs up to 3 weeks, once every 3 years. Background checks must be passed and there will be training involved specific to the role you will play.

Respectfully submitted,
Nate Rolloff