



To: Faculty and Staff

From: Steve Kinslow

Date: August 18, 2005

Subject: INFORMATION UPDATES

In an effort to keep folks informed, please note these general updates:

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

...it's going to be informative and fun; please come; Friday, August 26th at 8:30 a.m. at the Red Lion Hotel.

FRAUD & ETHICS HOTLINE

As you may recall, in response to concerns expressed by several employee organizations, Dr. Aguero changed implementation of the Fraud and Ethics Hotline to a "pilot" project and indicated he would appoint an ad-hoc committee to review it and to make recommendations on whether to continue or cancel it before the July 31 renewal date for the service.

I asked Imad Mouchayleh, Internal Auditor, to appoint a committee of employee organizations' presidents and I later also met with this group. On July 28 the committee presented its report and agreed that it is not in the best interest of the college to renew the EthicsPoint contract for the hot line service. The report also noted that communication or mis-communication problems, and lack of timeliness or responsiveness from some supervisors, have contributed to some of the issues which have constituted grievances or reports to the hot line.

The contract with EthicsPoint was not renewed, as recommended. There were not large number of concerns registered via this service, and the majority were issues that had also been expressed and addressed through other venues. None of the concerns registered via the hotline were of a nature related to institutional risk or institutional fraud.

In the report, and also through another employee group, I have been asked to create a college ombudsman position to address employee concerns. I am respectfully declining this request for several reasons. I believe that ACC has multiple venues for concerns to be expressed and addressed, and for employee anonymity to be protected if desired by expressing complaints through employee or affiliate organizations. I also believe that our faculty, staff, and administration want to have (and largely do have) productive and good relationships. I further believe that communication will be enhanced via the training program which will be implemented in FY06 for all supervisors.

RIO GRANDE ABATEMENT

Starting this week, rooms 317, 318, 318.1 and 221 at the Rio Grande Campus will be closed for an asbestos and lead abatement project, and room 221 will be closed for cleaning and maintenance.

The abatement of the third floor rooms is necessary to precede remodeling of that area, and will be performed by a licensed company and all regulatory requirements for asbestos/lead removal will be met. The Texas Department of State Health Services will also inspect the project to ensure regulatory compliance.

As with any work of this kind, RGC employees should anticipate noise and odors from non-hazardous chemicals. This project is expected to be completed before students return for fall semester on August 29.

For more information, please visit the Environmental Health and Safety website at www.austincc.edu/ehs or call EHS Manager, Becky Cole at 223-1015.

SKILL CENTER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION UPHOLSTERY CLASSES

Our Skill Center facility is primarily used for storage and for buildings and grounds maintenance storage and activities. We also have used the basement area of the building to conduct a small number of Continuing Education classes, including upholstery classes and for Drama Department scene building construction.

In response to a student complaint, we recently inspected the area and determined the best course was to close the basement use for CE classes and to begin looking for a new location for the CE classes. The building is safe for current occupants and neighbors.

We have notified the 29 students enrolled in the four CE Upholstery classes that they will receive a full refund, and that we expect to resume the CE upholstery classes in a new location next spring.

MEDIA

Recent media coverage has focused on an individual service member's residency. Absent from most discussions was (1) this was not an issue applicable to all service members, (2) the student in question had moved to Louisiana with his family and entered the military from there and listed Louisiana as his residence, and (3) ACC can not pick and choose which laws it will follow.

The student has been allowed to register for classes, subject to existing law regarding residency. The College worked diligently with this student to explain the law and to explore options. In Spring, he is eligible for in-state tuition, when he will satisfy the legal requirements of residency (determined by State law). Please see the message that has been posted on ACC's web site concerning this matter:

<http://www.austincc.edu/pres/Message.htm>

RRHEC

There will be a Dedication Event of the Round Rock Higher Education Center on August 24th at 3:00 p.m. There will be a formal Open House scheduled at some time in the future should you wish to attend that event as well.

SBK/pws