

Trauth speaks on DACA, Hurricane Harvey and student graduate programs at Faculty Senate meeting

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University President Denise Trauth made an appearance at Wednesday's Faculty Senate meeting to discuss topics pertaining to enrollment, the federal repeal of the DACA program and Hurricane Harvey.

1) The meeting started with the topic of enrollment, particularly within graduate programs, in the sense that the university's enrollment rate has "fallen flat" from last year's enrollment numbers.

"Via the master planning process, we decided for the next ten years, we want the undergraduate population to grow by one and a half percent and the graduate population to grow by three percent," Trauth said. "11 percent of our students are graduate students, and the average for the area is 21 percent, so we need to increase the number of graduate students at the university."

The primary criteria for creating new master programs are generally prioritized based on the job market's demand. Since taxpayer money is spent on creating new degrees, the proposal for new programs has to include proof that there is a marketable need for a particular degree.

Funding masters and PhD programs are a costly to implement and can take years to establish as a competitive force with rival university programs.

2) Next, the senate discussed the federal repeal of the DACA program and how the university would handle the issue moving forward.

"We're talking about young people that for all intents and purposes, this is the only country they know," Trauth said. "At the national level, I think we need to confront what it is we are talking about doing. There's about 800,000 people who fall into the DACA category and about 124,000 of those people are in Texas."

Trauth then referred to a [report from the Cato Institute](#) claiming that repealing the DACA program would eliminate 700,000 people from the U.S. workforce and cost the nation approximately 460 billion dollars in national GDP over the next decade.

Trauth mentioned a campus service initiative for a variety of groups including ethnic minorities, DACA students, LGBTQIA and veterans, called Diversity Connections. According to the university website, the initiative is a directory of supportive faculty and staff members as well as a connection to on-campus resources for specific groups.

In response to a question by a Faculty Senate member of how many DACA students the university currently has, Trauth said, “We do not ask, therefore, we do not know how many DACA students are currently at Texas State.”

When prompted if the university will take any further measures to protect DACA students, Trauth said, “There really isn’t any action the university can do, because it’s in front of Congress right now. But as individuals, there is a lot we can do, and I say this everywhere I go, we need to vote.”

3) The discussion then transitioned to the topic of Hurricane Harvey, concerning the number of students the hurricane affected as well as the storm’s cost in damages to the university.

“We have about a hundred fewer students that we can directly attribute to Hurricane Harvey,” Trauth said. “We know we had 67 students in the National Guard who dropped immediately, and we think we have at least 100 students who dropped directly due to Harvey.”

Approximately \$110,000 in overall damage was caused by the storm, mostly due to high winds and broken trees, as well as water leaks in the Graduate College.

Following Trauth’s speech, the senate heard a report from University Arts Committee and evaluated progress on Faculty Senate liaison appointments. The full agenda is available on the Faculty Senate’s [website](#).