



CONSTRUCTION SCIENCE
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Construction Industry Advisory Council

Construction Industry Advisory Council
Spring 2021 Board Meeting Minutes
Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center
Friday April 9, 2021

Opening Remarks:

Welcome – Matt Summerville, CIAC President 2020-2021. The meeting started promptly at 8:30am with the message from the President of the Construction Industry Advisory Council (CIAC), Mr. Matt Summerville, welcoming everyone in attendance. Mr. Summerville also welcomed those members who attended via Zoom in a similar way as had happened in the Fall meeting. He mentioned how the technology had been flawless in the Fall meeting and everyone had been able to meet both in person and virtually. Mr. Summerville then spoke about the 2021 Construction Science Awards Banquet. He mentioned it had been a special evening, very joyous and authentic. He described the number of scholarships awarded and thanked CIAC members for their support of the program through endowed scholarships. Matt then recognized Mr. Jeremy Stovall, past CIAC president and VP from Brookstone for his contributions during his 2 year tenure. He also recognized the two Constructor Hall of Fame winners: 2020 Marty Garza and 2021 Nelson Mitchell. Matt followed by recognizing Professors Larry Fickel and Jonathan Houston for the awards they also received the night before. For his review the awards banquet, Mr. Summerville finally recognized Shelley Smith for such an amazing event.

Mr. Summerville then recognized Professor Hernan Guerra, who has been on the road all year long during a pandemic year, trying to assure internship students and review their work, and also trying to get companies to join our CIAC. He then recognized Dr. Suermann efforts on the PhD program, the Online MSCM program and the potential future COSC Field Lab.

He then asked all new CIAC members in attendance to get up and be recognized. After this, he went over the day's full agenda and introduced Dean Vanegas, who joined the meeting online through Zoom.

Dean Vanegas started his presentation by apologizing for his voice and health. He then apologized for not attending the scholarship and awards event although he fully supported the event and recognized the importance of its success and said that a huge part is due to industry. Dean Vanegas then mentioned that he is teaching one course given by COSC class. He then mentioned the partnership between the construction program and CIAC is the envy of other colleges and programs, of other universities. He acknowledged that the CIAC believes in our mission and appreciated the CIAC's support for scholarships, involvement in curriculum, internships, etc. He labeled the CIAC's work with our program as a transformational learning experience- in line with Texas A&M vision.

Dean Vanegas then provided the attendees with some updates. He mentioned he would remain Dean by one more year due to searched being put on hold due to the transition on top. He spoke about Texas A&M's new President, COI's Dean Kathy Banks. He mentioned the great relationship that the College of Engineering had with the College of Architecture during both his tenure and the tenure of Dean Banks. He mentioned that President Banks will bring a very strong vision to Texas A&M. He said the College of Engineering had great faculty which helped her succeed, but he mentioned that so does the College of Architecture.



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Dean Vanegas mentioned how Texas A&M had reached 1B worth of research this year. He mentioned how Dr. Suermann's contract had been extended for 5 more years to head the Construction Science Department. The Dean offered his full support for our program and closed by saying that the construction industry leaves a mark in all our futures.

Patrick Suermann, Department Head, Construction Science, opened his remarks with an appreciation of everyone in attendance. He mentioned how he always likes to start any presentation with a quote from Chancellor Sharp about Texas A&M having the best Construction Program in the country. He then thanked all CIAC members and faculty for their hard work last Fall's meeting. Dr. Suermann followed his introductory remarks by diving into his 3 main categories for his presentation: Teaching, Research and Service. Dr. Suermann said we are heading into a time of transition. He said that students were hurting from this one year pandemic; saying that he hoped to see a reverse to the growing trend of less engagement and more entitlement and to revert to more engaged students who were truly learning and earning their education. The Fall semester would show a return to rigor and academic leadership. Dr. Suermann also mentioned about the change of leadership on the university level and reminded our CIAC how Dr. Banks had written a letter in support of our PhD program. Dr. Suermann also shared with our CIAC the news that our instructional classes will return to normal in Fall 2021 and saying we will be at full capacity. He doesn't just want to go back to the way we were in 2019, but learn from this past year to be even better.

Speaking on getting better, the program is now bigger than it's ever been. Dr. Suermann mentioned what we have now 1,176 students enrolled in COSC. The biggest push has been within our master students. He presented the following table for our members to review our student numbers:

	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020 Actual	Spring 2021
BS	1,010	1,043	1,105	1,076
MS	34	48	68	100
Total	1,044	1,091	1,173	1,176



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Dr. Suermann mentioned that the number will only grow. He mentioned the number of new students coming into our program in the Fall of 2021 is the largest we've ever had and that applications to our program are up by 35%. He provided the following breakdown of the incoming class and then provided information on the diversity of the COSC student population:

Freshmen

- 339 Applications
- 252 Admitted
- 138 Accepted to Date

Transfers

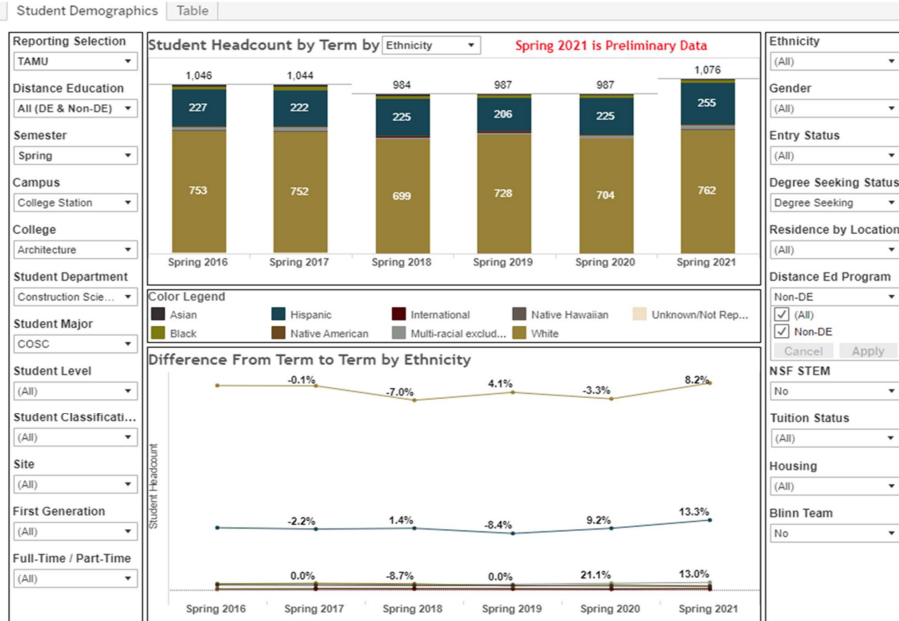
- 237 Applications
- 184 Admitted
- 170 Accepted to date

Change of Majors

- 112 Applications

Decisions made by end of month

Enrollment Profile





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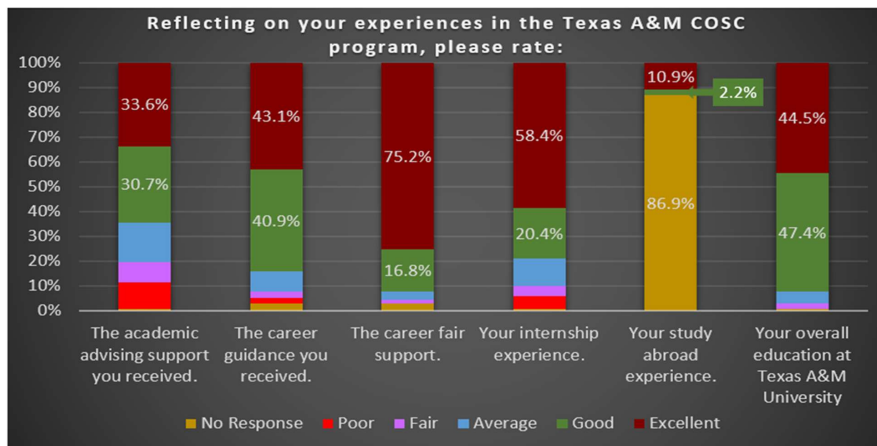
Dr. Suermann continued his presentation by going over the changes in our new degree plan which launched in fall 2020. He described the changes in at least 5 classes and the introduction of more electives for our students. Students in COSC are now able to choose up to 4 elective classes in lieu of only 1 per the previous degree plan. The overall theme in the new degree plan – “Increased Choice.”

These are the New or Altered Courses:

- Introduction to the Construction Industry (COSC 153)
- Construction Graphics and Communication (COSC 175)
- Safety I (From COSC 364 to COSC 184)
- Cultural Discourse (COSC 222)
- COSC 301 (Surveying to Practices Course)

Dr. Suermann then went over the launch of the McAllen program expansion, and how within 6 months of its birth, the expansion program had companies gave us 100K in donations to increase applications from local students. One way to increase such applications is through the construction academies. Dr. Suermann explained the construction academies and how we use them to recruit students to come to COSC. The construction academies are held in multiple cities within Texas each summer.

Dr. Suermann then mentioned the results from the latest exit surveys and how the career fair support and internships are the most favorable. He thanked Melissa Sodolak and Professor Hernán Guerra for being flexible and adaptable during Covid. Dr. Suermann mentioned the department used the experience gained from Brandt's experience on other schools to include online applications to our Career Fairs very successfully.





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Dr. Suermann then went to explain the research success the department has had in the last 3 years which went from 3% from the college in 2017 to 30% in 2020. He mentioned that this success could not have been done without the efforts of our faculty. He then mentioned the top 5 researchers in our program: Dr. Amir Behzadan, Dr. Manish Dixit, Dr. Ryan Ahn, Dr. David Jeong and Dr. Youngjib Ham. He explained how Dr. Ahn was leaving our program this Fall to work for the Harvard equivalent in South Korea, Seoul National University.

Dr. Suermann then mentioned the new degree updates. The Master's of Science in Construction Management already has a thesis and non-thesis option. In 2022 we are expecting on having a 3rd option which is an all online master degree program. Our PhD program is to also begin in 2022 with the THECB approval date now known as Fall of 2021.

Dr. Suermann then reminded our CIAC about our current goal for 12 endowments per year matched by CIAC funds. So far in 2021 we have 9 committed and we could be in the summer having 12 already committed. In total, there are 119 matching scholarships for a total of over 3 million dollars donated by over 100 individuals and companies. The largest one from a single donor is over \$400,000. Dr. Suermann thanked our CIAC members for their commitment to our program and their generosity.

Dr. Suermann then talked about the new brick campaign. This new campaign was created to raise funds for the maintenance and updating of Francis Hall. Bricks cost between \$500 to \$1,000 and so far, we have around 10 donations. This bricks include one for Luke Armstrong, COSC senior who was part of our winning ASC Regions 6&7 Mechanical competition in 2020 and recently survived a plane crash where he tragically lost his girlfriend and her parents. He gave a status on his health and Professor Fickel mentioned how Luke had just received a new drivers license and was doing well. Dr. Suermann then mentioned that anyone interested in buying a Francis Hall brick should contact Mrs. Melissa Sodolak at the Industry Relations Office for more information. (msodolak@tamu.edu).

Dr. Suermann then spoke about our potential Construction Field Lab to be done at RELLIS Campus. He mentioned how Skanska helped us in creating a visual for the initial vision we see for that field lab. The construction science department now has 8 acres of land for this construction field lab. He showed some examples from other school and said that while our may not be the first, it will certainly be the best. He thanked Jerry Hoog from Bartlett Cocke for donating our first trailer so we can start immediately with some classes.

Dr. Suermann then concluded his presentation by introducing Mr. Hernan Guerra.

Professor Hernan Guerra, Industry Relations Coordinator, started his remarks by expressing his appreciation for everyone in attendance, especially those new CIAC members who were able to participate in their first ever CIAC Board meeting and to those joining us online. Mr. Guerra then proceeded to welcome the new CIAC members who joined in 2021.

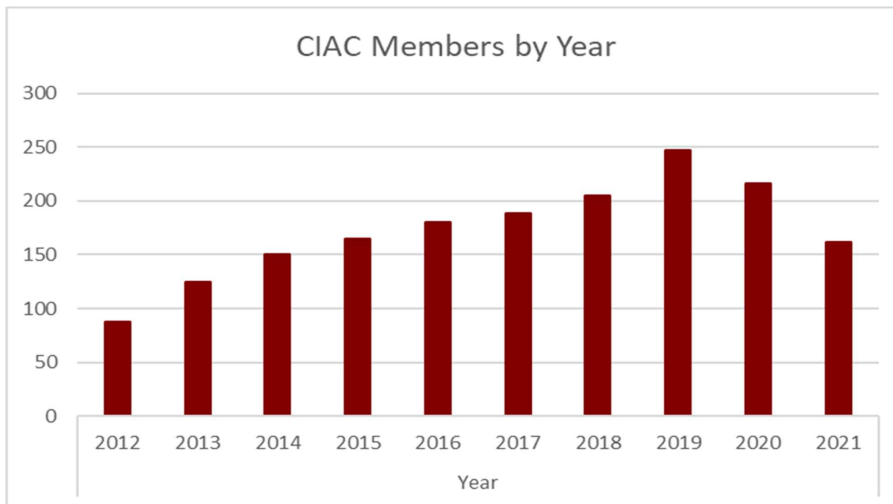


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A Brush Above Services, LLC	Marksmen General Contractors, LLC
Birch Construction	R Construction Civil
Hackney Paving & Construction	Sodexo
Litecrete USA	SteelFab Texas, Inc.
Infrastructure & Energy Alternatives	Reliance Mechanical Contractors
KAI Alliance LLC	Alliance Residential Builders
CSA Construction Inc.	Metalink, LLC

Mentioned new members including 2 construction material suppliers, an architectural firm and a general contractor who joined the CIAC and within one week of being a member created an endowed scholarship. Professor Guerra informed our CIAC members that membership is lower than in past years, as it was expected due to the current pandemic. Nevertheless, he mentioned that it was higher than what was predicted in the Fall of 2020. The current CIAC has 165 members, compared to 150 which we budgeted for in October.



Professor Guerra mentioned he has been on the road since early March visiting companies to get membership enrollment back to its previous years. He said he was confident 2021 could finish with over 180 companies and back to the members we had in 2017 or 2018.



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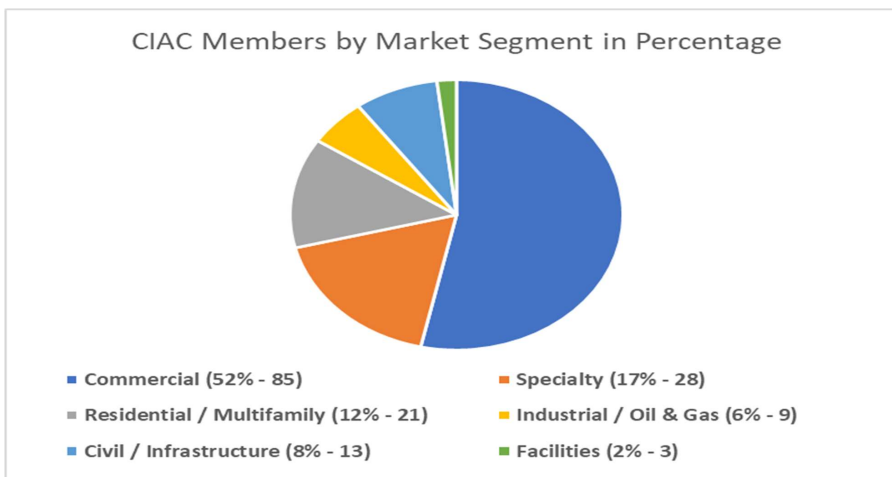
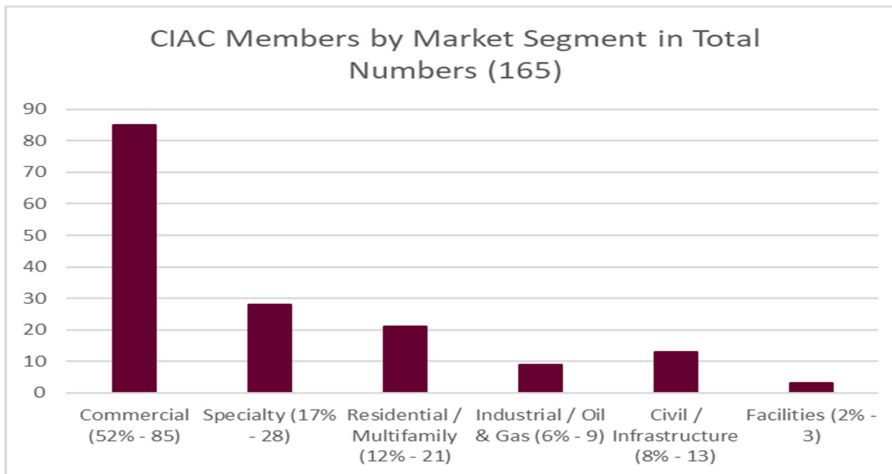
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Professor Guerra then spoke about the diversity of companies within our CIAC. He said we are still at around 50% of commercial general contractors but residential builders and specialty contractor number have increased.



Professor Guerra then described the number of companies who attended our last 2 virtual career fairs. He mentioned how 2020 started with the largest career fair ever held, and then



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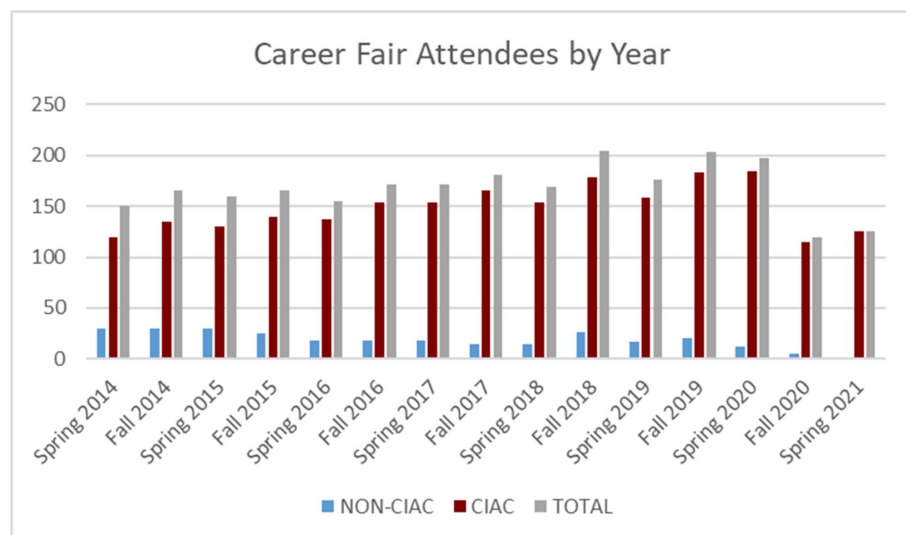
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went on to have the smallest career fair in the last 5 years. The Fall 2020 and the Spring 2021 Career Fairs were virtual and only for CIAC members. Professor Guerra said that some companies who joined CIAC literally said they had needs for hiring interns but they would not participate in online career fairs.



Professor Guerra gave then gave the numbers for the most recent career fair spring 2021. In total we had 128 employers, 560 students (429 COSC) and 2922 interviews. He mentioned how unfortunately we were not able to host our brothers and sisters from Prairie View A&M because our virtual environment did not allow them to join.

Professor Guerra then mentioned how we had 136 internship students this spring semester compared to only 90 in the Fall of 2020. He then provided information on salaries for our intern students:

COMPARISONS OF FALL 2020 VS SPRING 2021

80 Students in Fall 2020 – 136 in Spring 2021

Average Salaries - \$17.85/hr. – (down from \$17.94)

Most Common hourly salary - \$17.50/hr.

Highest Salary (within the US) - \$25/hr. (Up from \$23)

Lowest Salary - \$15/hr. (up from \$13.50)



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Professor Guerra then explained how the internship program is not only great for our students, but also provides an avenue for exposure for our program and CIAC company members. He showed a few examples from pictures taken during internship visits in 2021.

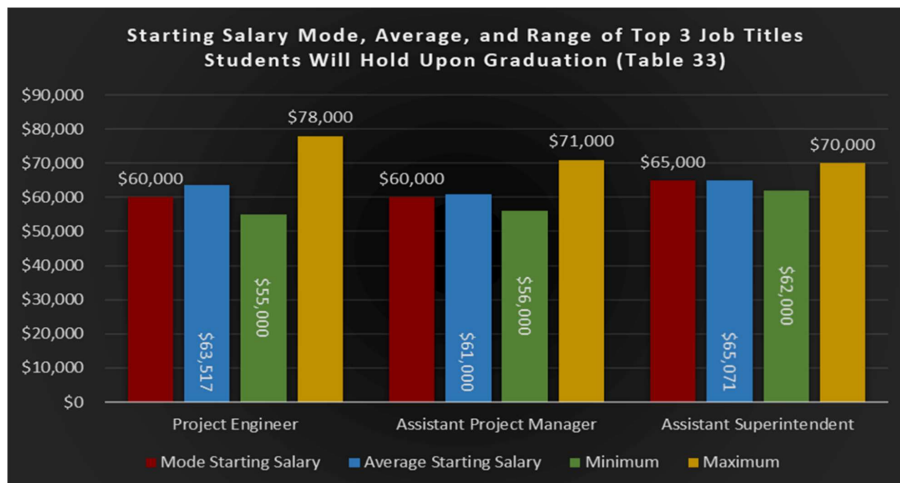
After talking about internships, Professor Guerra started talking about the results from our senior exit survey. Giving some very interesting numbers as shown below. In summary, salaries went down for the first time in 5 years, and Austin took over for Dallas and Houston for our largest geographical location for our students who graduated this past Fall. Information from the Senior Exit Survey"

Sectors in which students will be employed

68% Commercial (same as 68%)
8% Residential – Single Family (Up from 4%)
6% Industrial (down from 11%)
4% Heavy Civil (down from 14%)
4% Specialty Trade (up from 2%)

Top 4 major Texas cities in which students will work upon graduation

24% Austin (up from 16%)
22% Houston (up from 16%)
20% Dallas/Fort Worth (up from 19%)
11% San Antonio (similar to Summer 2020)
15% Outside of TX (down from 38%)





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- OVERALL SALARY AVERAGE – \$64,206 down from \$65,140
- AVERAGE HIRING BONUS - \$3,900 down from \$6,000
- Highest Starting Salary – \$78K (down from \$120K – Summer 2020)
- Lowest Starting Salary –\$43K (up from \$40K– Summer 2020)

Professor Guerra then gave a summary of the student competition status for 2020 and 2021. So far, we have increased our student participation in national construction competition and events by around 60%, going from 5 per year to around 8 or 9 per year. We were very successful in both years winning national acclaimed competitions in both years.

Organization	Description	Faculty Advisor - Assisting CIAC Company	Attended in 2020	Award	Attending (ed) in 2021	Award
ASC Region 5	Commercial	Gary Boldt - Joeris	Yes	3rd	Yes	1st
ASC Region 5	Heavy Civil	X	No	NA	No	NA
ACCE	Ethics	Hernan Guerra	Cancelled	NA	Yes	2nd
MECA	Mechanical	Bryant/Houston	Cancelled	NA	Will Register	NA
NAHB	Residential	Randy Birdwell	Yes	4th	Yes	5th
The Roofing Alliance	Roofing	Lance Simms - King of Texas Roofing	Yes	1st	Yes	Finalist
ABC	Commercial	Gary Boldt - Joeris	Cancelled	NA	Yes	Waiting on Results
ASC Regions 6,7 in RENO, NV	Mechanical	Jonathan Houston- Brandt Mechanical	Yes	1st	Yes	Not Placed
ASC Regions 6,7 in RENO, NV	Project Management	Hernan Guerra - DPR	Yes	Not Placed	Yes	Not Placed
ASC Regions 6,7 in RENO, NV	Alternate Competition	Hernan Guerra	Yes	1st	Cancelled	NA

Commented [SPC1]:
The tailgate is not TBD for fall of 2021 – it is October 9th

Professor Guerra concluded his presentation by informing all present on the important dates for the CIAC for the next three years and thanking everyone in attendance once again.



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CIAC Important Dates	2021	2022	2023
CIAC Career Fair			
Spring	Thurs and Fri, Feb 18-19	Thurs and Fri, Feb 17-18	Thurs and Fri, Feb 16-17
Fall	Thurs and Fri, Sept 16-17	Thurs and Fri, Sept 15-16	Thurs and Fri, Sept 14-15
Fall Virtual Career Fair			
CIAC Board Meeting			
Spring	Friday April 9, 2021	Friday April 29, 2022	Friday April 7, 2023
Fall	Friday October 29, 2021	*Friday October 28, 2022	*Friday October 27, 2023
Scholarship and Awards Banquet			
Spring	Thursday April 8, 2021	Thursday April 28, 2022	Thursday April 6, 2023
Summer Luncheons			
Austin	Wednesday, July 7	Wednesday, July 13	Wednesday, July 12
San Antonio	Thursday, July 8	Thursday, July 14	Thursday, July 13
Houston	Wednesday, July 14	Wednesday, July 20	Wednesday, July 19
Dallas	Thursday, July 15	Thursday, July 21	Thursday, July 20
Harlingen	Tuesday, July 20	Tuesday, July 26	Tuesday, July 25
Tailgate	Saturday Oct. 9, 2021	TBD	TBD
* Dates for Tailgates may change depending on SEC schedules			

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Following Mr. Guerra's presentation, Associate Dean Leslie Feigenbaum provided an update on the expansion of our College of Architecture and the college vision for the next decade 2020-2030 – Decade of Excellence.

Leslie Feigenbaum thanked everyone in attendance. He then mentioned that last night was one of the best banquets he ever attended and mentioned how it felt special due to 3 things; all the young people, watching the Mitchell family - the joy of father and son interaction, and watching Marty and Jerry last night get emotional with Marty's HOF award. He once again thanked everyone for making last night special.

Associate Dean Feigenbaum then mentioned how the College of Architecture is working on 2 separate program requirements at this time; the replacement of Langford Building and the Construction Field Lab (CFL). He mentioned how has held over 40 meetings with over 100 people to complete the POR for the Langford replacement first. He said it all begins for POR and he hoped to have the first one wrapped up in 60 days. He mentioned how the space list is not the most extensive but it is the longest in the college history, and the company working on the POR also did the POR for Zachry building for the College of Engineering. Once the POR is done, the COA will go and meet with the provost to get money and then start a fund raising campaign to get the rest of the money.

Leslie mentioned that the 2nd project is the CFL at Rellis. He mentioned how the college is lucky enough to have 2 sites at Rellis. He then mentioned how we already have the COA Fabrication Lab and we do not wish to duplicate any efforts nor buildings. The contract for the CFL POR is sitting on his desk, and he will get it signed after new COA POR is done. He mentioned how the CFL is a facility for getting students hands dirty and it is important for students to have appreciation for any skilled craft labor. He also said he wants students to learn how to do things safely.

Leslie mentioned how FPC is the company doing the POR - Facility Program Consulting. This is not an aggie led company but is composed and owned by Rice graduates and they are doing a great job.

After Leslie Feigenbaum's presentation concluded at 10:30, there was a 20-minute break.

Following the break, the meeting resumed at 10:50 am with meetings of the various CIAC committees meeting in separate rooms for around 60 minutes. Then these same committees then met with students of various levels to review our program and listen to their suggestions. The committee meetings concluded shortly before noon and all members came back to the main room for lunch.

Immediately following the lunch break, the meeting continued at 1:20 pm with the updates provided by each of the committees.

BUDGET COMMITTEE:



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Dr. Leland Rocchio, CIAC vice president and Jordan Foster's President of Commercial Construction gave an update on the approved 2021 budget. He mentioned that as an organization we do not want to have income and therefore the budget was created to always have a surplus, but also to try to spend as much as possible on multiple needs.

He mentioned how the CIAC budgeted for 150 full members and 10 part time members for an income of 426K for income and as of April 1st, we have 420K to date, therefore we expected an income of around 460K. The CIAC had budget for expenses for 418K and we had spent 132K to date, projecting expenses up to 370K for the year. That gives us a surplus of around 90K extra for 2021. The CIAC is not a profit organization so we need to find ways to use this money to fill multiple needs. Dr. Rocchio also mentioned that we have a carryover of 260K from last year and 107K from interest from the rainy day fund which is not in the account yet. That means we have around 360K for our use currently.

Dr. Rocchio mentioned how we are a healthy organization. The previous challenge is that we only meeting twice a year, but for the last 2 years, the executive board meets 4 times per year so we can better plan and organize for the future.

Dr. Rocchio mentioned how we needed to create a process between the development and the budget committees to be able to spend this money. Dr. Rocchio mentioned how he would draft a procedure for spending money and discuss with the current executive board for approval. Then we can all make recommendations at fall board meeting for its final approval because we need to be where we have a KPI on 5% savings - we should budget to spend 95% of income.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Kendall Pouland, head of the curriculum committee and Director of Tech & Innovation for Tellepsen, gave an update on what her committee talked about. Mrs. Pouland mentioned how the conversation on the committee under her lead was mainly about the things that could be accomplished in the construction field lab. She mentioned how the committee believed our faculty could re-imagine our surveying and safety classes, how new classes on quality control testing (concrete, ductwork, soils, piping, masonry, etc.) and certifications could be provided and on how other items could be accomplished outside of classwork, such as mock-up creations, constructionarium type of events or competitions etc.

Mrs. Pouland said how the committee was very excited about the possibility of having our students learn while getting their hands dirty but how there could be a need for additional faculty members to be able to maximize this new opportunities.

Mrs. Pouland mentioned that after the committee meeting, they met with our current Seniors. She said our CIAC members were impressed with their clear communication skills and how they all had jobs lined up. All seniors said they enjoyed their internships the most and how the overall theme is they like having something to be in charge of, and having companies



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trusting them. They like running meetings and the flexibility to see other areas of the project. Our seniors said they would have liked to be assigned trades and visit multiple jobs to see different stages of work.

The students also talked about their courses, both the good and bad. They said how sometimes the bad ones turn good and Vice versa. They all said they don't like when guest speakers talk more about the company and not about the topic. They also said they don't like the inconsistency of different professors teaching the same class, and how they want more exposure to other areas of construction, not only commercial.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Mr. Timothy Ross, head of the Development committee and partner with Andrews Myers provided an update on the Development committee. Mr. Ross said they had a very spirited discussion in the committee. The committee talked briefly about the vehicles on the past - outreach and money like linked-in and maroon envelope but then switched gears towards the construction field lab.

Mr. Ross said the main topic of the discussion was not on how to get funding, but on creating a clear vision of what the CFL could be first and they ask for money. The current vision has not been landed and is not clear enough. The idea of the committee is to get the past CIAC presidents involved in developing a clear vision for the CFL and use this to create a Program of Requirements. The past CIAC presidents have the resources and the experience to be able to lead us into a good plan for e CFL. They all agreed that the most important things for our program at this time, if the CFL at Rellis. They said the CFL would help counter our stigma of being the most white collar construction program in the country.

After the committee meeting ended, the ciac members attending the development committee met with our current Juniors. They all said that our juniors are very well spoken. Our juniors felt Covid was bad for them. They are hungry for hands on experiences and they love our professors. They truly believe that our faculty truly cares about them. Therefore, their covid experience made them realize how many things they have lost during the year.

Mr. Ross then introduced Professor Debra Ellis who gave the update on the membership committee on behalf of Mrs. Lauren Collins.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Professor Debra Ellis gave an update on the work done by the Membership committee. The committee under the leadership of Lauren Collins (who attended the meeting online), Senior Business Partner at Kiewitt, worked mainly on innovative ways for engagement between our program and our partner companies. Their main idea was to create more value for our members. They believe we can help our company partners have better communication across disciplines and trades possibly by having new networking opportunities. These could



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be planning during our summer luncheons, or be stand-alone events such as happy hours, golf tournaments, etc.

Their conversation then changed to our current and future Hall of famers, more specifically into how to recognize them? We already provide a yearly scholarship under their name, but the committee discussed on possibly having some screens in the entrance to our building and/or having some stickers on the glass walls also on the entrance to our building.

The committee also spoke about new initiatives such as a Texas abroad trip. This could be a credit course where students travel during the summer sessions and visit companies to mirror their employees during a specific time frame and learn about that these individuals do for their companies. These could be a year prior to their internship and treated as a study abroad program, but locally.

The curriculum committee met with our freshmen and sophomore students but due to Professor Ellis being a faculty member, she did not attend this portion of the meeting and there was no update given during the meeting. Professor Ellis said she would send an email to Dr. Suermann with the comments from this student group.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE:

Mr. Brent Ballard, CIAC leader of our Research Committee and Division President of the Marek Company provided an update on two presentations from updates given by our faculty on CIAC paid work taking place: One on Robotics and the second one on the science of lean construction - Including metrics. Both presentations were very good and provided a good update on where this CIAC funded research is going. One CIAC member mentioned how they would like to see the proposals prior to the Fall meeting so they can read them ahead of time and have a better vote on their proposals.

After the update from both faculty members, the CIAC research committee met with our Graduate students. Mr. Ballard mentioned how the students were very willing to give feedback and how they were overall proud of program and being Aggies.

Mr. Ballard said that our graduate students have a big hunger to have closer connection to industry, like undergraduates have. Tom Owens, CRO for Hines stood up at this time to mentioned how he was very impressed with how these students have changed majors from many different disciplines and now getting into construction.

Our CIAC members believe that our graduate students are an untapped resource which needs to be exploited more.



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Mr. Ballard then re-introduced Matt Summerville.

Matt gave an overview of meeting and how RELLIS is the main theme, including how the students are hungry for hands on experience. Great things are happening right now, including internships, enrollment, the 75th anniversary, etc. 2022 will be a great year and we need to start the conversations now.

Matt mentioned about how to honor and recognize Joe Horlen. Pat mentioned that something is in the works already. Matt mentioned how Joe worked never looking for the spotlight, and he is the reason we have Francis Hall and the program is in such good shape.

Matt then adjourned the meeting at 1:30pm.