

MINUTES

From February 17, 2025
Institutional Relations Committee
Executive Board at the DoubleTree Hotel Dallas

IRC Members Present

Bobby Contreras, Chair
Kenneth Martin
Dustin Slaton
Daniel Tanguma
Flor Soto
Glen Hambrick

IRC Members Not Present

Luis Amario
Gary Singleton

TXB Staff Present

Julio Guarneri, TXB Ex Dir
Craig Christina, TXB Assoc.
Ex Dir
Ward Hayes, TXB CFO
Stephen Stookey

John Litzler

Joshua Minatrea
Maribel Paz
Gabriel Cortez

Guests

Suzie Liner, ExB Vice Chair
Debbie Potter, 1st VP TXB
Ken Camp, TBS
Calli Keener, TBS
Eric Black, TBS
Albert Reyes, Buckner
Steve Vernon, VBMEC
Todd Roberson, CAHM
Gene Wilks, BH Carroll-ETBU
Abe Jaquez, BUA
Brian Gunther, SMBA
Donna Hedgepath, WBU

Adam Wright, DBU

Blair Blackburn, ETBU

Call to Order:

Bobby Contreras, Chair of the Institutional Relations Committee, called the meeting to order. The meeting began with introductions from everyone in the room.

Devotional and Prayer:

Contreras shared a devotional from Galatians 6:9-10; Do not get tired of doing good. God wants to push us to our limit. Let's complete the mission together. Prayer given by Dr. Julio Guarneri.

Minutes:

Contreras acknowledged the Minutes from September 23, 2024. They were approved by the committee as posted.

Theological Education Council:

Stephen Stookey gave Gabriel Cortes, Director, Hispanic Education, Theological Education & Institutional Engagement time to report on the Hispanic Education Council. Their mission is to create opportunities / collaborations and develop resources in order that Hispanic Christians can become effective Christian leaders. He shared five HEI strategic initiatives: 1) Educate about education 2) Leadership Track 3) TX Baptists Promotion Campaign 4) Creating Hispanic Leadership Cohort 5) Funding

Institutional Reports:

Brief reports were given by each of the institution presidents in this order: Adam Wright, DBU; Donna Hedgepath, WBU; Brian Guenther, SMBA; Abe Jaquez, BUA; Gene Wilks, ETBU-BH Carroll; Todd Roberson, CAHM; Steve Vernon, UMHB & VBMEC; Albert Reyes, Buckner Intl.; Eric Black, The Baptist Standard; Blair Blackburn, ETBU.

Chairman Contreras informed the committee that in 2025 the human care institutions would be visited by IRC members. They would be paired to visit one or more institution and report back to the committee later in the year.

Theological Education Council:

Stephen Stookey reported no official business was conducted in their meeting. TEC focused their time on orientation of newest members. Deans did not meet due to their recent retreat where they focused on spiritual formation/missional engagement. Four institutions are in the 5-year rotation for MFA review. Visits will be conducted in the spring and fall at BUA, DBU, Truett and HCU.

Baptist History and Distinctives Council:

Stookey shared a report provided by Dr. W. Pinson and David Mahfouz. They have developed a website baptistdistinctives.org with resources on Baptist identity. They continue their work translating their resources to multiple languages, in addition to creating native language websites. Stookey mentioned Texas Baptists is preparing to work on short video clips on Baptist distinctives.

Stookey gave a PowerPoint recap of the student enrollment numbers in 2024, the Texas Baptist related institution partnerships, teaching sites, online classes and lives impacted last year.

Stookey informed the intuitions of the continuing process followed by the Committee to Nominate Boards of Affiliated Ministries (CNBAM). He informed the institution presidents of an electronic application form that would be used starting this year and offered to assist in the process. In addition, he offered to support with any type of institutional engagement.

Other Reports:

Steve Vernon asked Stookey to speak on the MFA process. Stookey had no changes to report in the process. MFA will remain the same. He reminded deans, at their retreat, there would be no changes in the rules with MFA. He is anticipating an increase of ministry student levels to over 1,000.

Stookey stated Texas Baptists is looking at a Ministry Leadership pipeline. There is a need to create something for ministers from start to finish; (Calling – Education – Equipping – Placement – Support). A Task force is currently examining how Texas Baptists can be a resource.

Other Comments:

TXB Executive Director, Julio Guarneri informed committee members of the unexpected passing of Cade Garrison who rotated off the board after the last September board meeting. He requested prayers for the family.

Closing Prayer/Adjournment:

Bobby Contreras ended the meeting with prayer and thanks to everyone.

Respectfully submitted,
Maribel Paz
Committee Specialist