**Administrative Council Meeting Minutes**

**December 20, 2021**

Attendees: Dr. Cindy Akers (Interim Dean), Dr. Christy Bratcher, Dr. Robert Cox (Interim Assoc. Dean), Alex Yack, Norman Martin, Laci Hardman, Dr. Phil Johnson, Dr. Scott Burris, Dr. Chance Brooks (Interim AFS Chair), Prof. Eric Bernard, Dr. Glen Ritchie, and Dr. Michael Ballou

1. Minutes from the November 15, 2021, meeting were approved as distributed.
2. The Department Chairs gave updates on where they were in the process of completing their departmental strategic/tactical plans. Vet Sciences (VS) currently has a strong working document in progress; AFS is currently working through strategic plans for the units; LA is currently working to have some strategic plans in place for a new department chair; AEC has done strategic planning over 4 sessions and then during their faculty retreat had a tactical planning session; AAEC has about 80% of a document completed and will work on it over the holidays; PSS is in good shape – currently has a document they will make a few modifications to in order to be in line with the university strategic plan.
3. Dr Cox gave an update on the scholarship awarding process. He wanted the Chairs to be aware of the new requirements of a “competitive” scholarship before they can check the out-of-state waiver box in STS. In order for an out-of-state student to qualify for in-state tuition, **a scholarship must be at least $1,000.00 (multiple scholarships cannot be combined to meet this minimum; the individual scholarship MUST be $1,000.00 or higher).** They also discussed about the thank you letter process and how it needs to be simplified and requirements on all levels better communicated to students. There will be a rollout of a new scholarship awarding software soon, so they will see what that entails before making any changes.
4. Dr. Akers reported the Dean’s office currently has two open positions: a Technician III IT person to help with teaching classrooms, and a Business Coordinator. Vet Sciences has a part-time Business Coordinator position and AEC has an Administrative Assistant position. Karissa Greathouse will be retiring effective January 31st and will return part time in March to continue helping with distance education.
5. Dr. Bratcher gave an update on college research. CASNR currently has $5.8M in grant funding, which puts us at 51.1% of where we were last year at this time. We are hoping to add more with some new hires. Please let your faculty know they have done an outstanding job so far this year submitting and receiving funding.
6. Dr. Cox stated that they have not heard much yet in regards to summer funding, and he asked the Chairs to please continue thinking/planning for the fall. He also reported that USDA has announced they are accepting applications for 2022 Hispanic-Serving Institutions Fellows. These fellowships would introduce faculty and staff from Hispanic-Serving Institutions to the vast array of USDA resources available to them. Participants would attend a one-week program (July 11-15, 2022) in Washington, DC. <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/12/16/usda-announces-2022-hispanic-serving-institutions-faculty-and-staff>.
7. Alex Yack indicated that the development office is currently working through a tactical/strategic plan as they would like to have someone in their office specifically dedicated to each department. He noted there will be a Ranch Management Council meeting in January.
8. Norman Martin has the December newsletter ready to go. He noted AFS has had 5 national champions this year, an outstanding year for the department! He also stated University Communications has been spread pretty thin as they have several vacancies, but George Watson has continued to do a great job for us.
9. Laci Hardman noted she is currently working with department business managers dispersing the money that was offered to the departments. She also stated she has sent a list of underutilized endowments to the Chairs.
10. Dr. Akers would like to host an Administrative Council get-together at her house sometime after the New Year. She will look at dates and see what works for everyone.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

AAEC: The annual Water College will be held at the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center on January 20th. They will have their southern section meetings later in the month.

PSS: Dr. Mendu has taken an endowed chair position at Montana State University and will be leaving effective December 31st. They will post his position in order to replace him as soon as possible.

AFS: Dr. Brooks reported that he is currently on a Task Force to look at summer enrollment. They are anticipating a large rollout in January, as incentives for students to enroll will be offered. Dr. Brooks noted he has access to a dashboard to run programs for each department to see what classes currently enrolled students need to take. He will send the results to the Department Chairs.

AEC: Dr. Burris noted that this past semester they had several issues related to student mental health in their department. He has found someone to come in and talk to his faculty regarding help available for students. They will also take a field trip over to the Student Wellness Center so they will know where to take students if needed. Dr. Cox noted that Stephanie Legako has put together and will be launching a monthly series of meetings regarding student mental health beginning in January. More information on this will be sent out soon.

LA: Professor Bernard noted that Dr. Daniel Phillips has been working internationally and would like to continue doing so, and asked if we could address Faculty International Programs in our Faculty Fellows program to help them learn the process for this. Dr. Bratcher stated that topic would be covered in the March Faculty Fellows program.

Pertaining to the Faculty Evaluation Process, Dr. Akers asked the chairs if they could all agree that faculty evaluations should be centered on whether the faculty member is meeting expectations, based on their appointment. The chairs agreed, and the attached document outlines the clarification on faculty appointments and how they are to be used in the evaluation process:

**Clarification on Faculty Appointments for Administrative Council**

**Faculty Appointment** – Should outline the percentage of effort that should be allocated to research/teaching/service for the specific faculty member. This agreed/assigned appointment does not change from year to year. The faculty appointment should vary amongst faculty in terms of designated assignments depending on the appointment percentage. For example, a department might have two faculty members, one could be 80% teaching and 20% research while the other might be 90% research and 10% teaching. Though both of these faculty members are not assigned in the same way, the balance of the two allows the department to meet its instructional obligations and generate research funding by taking advantage of the different talents of each faculty member. Rather than have these faculty members spend a portion of their time working in an area that is not their strength, a differential appointment allows both to work in the area that will likely bring the highest return.

Historically, faculty hired more than four years ago did not have an assigned/agreed upon appointment. The individual faculty and the department chair have worked to place each faculty member on a percentage appointment. (Faculty hired in the past three years should have a faculty appointment in their offer letter.) All requests to change these appointments after the agreed upon appointment must be approved by the dean based on the chairperson’s strategic reasoning for the request.

**Yearly Faculty Evaluation** – The purpose of the faculty evaluation is to review with the faculty member whether they are meeting expectations, based on their appointment. The evaluation process is an opportunity to explain if the workload percentages have changed to meet the needs of the unit. However, the appointment doesn’t change yearly based on the workload.

All faculty members of all titles are to complete a report of their professional activities each calendar year, January through December. Department chairs will review the report, and submit their administrators review along with the faculty’s report to the dean. The department chair’s review should evaluate the faculty’s performance against the standard set by the appointment: are the faculty’s efforts appropriately distributed according to the appointment percentages (i.e research, teaching, service). The review should clearly state whether the faculty member is meeting or exceeding expectations in these areas. Where successes are achieved these should be noted, and where improvement is needed this should also be clearly discussed.

Dr. Bratcher noted she has created a spreadsheet with a formula to use that will help distribute merit raises, based on performance. Please let her know if you would like her to send it to you.