

Administrative Council Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2021

Attendees: Dr. Cindy Akers (Acting Dean), Dr. Christy Bratcher, Jane Piercy, Laci Hardman, Norman Martin, Dr. Phil Johnson, Dr. Scott Burris, Dr. Mike Orth, Prof. Eric Bernard, Dr. Warren Conway, and Dr. Glen Ritchie

Presentations from Dr. Kelly Lange (Pantex), Tangi Irwin (Texas Tech Therapeutic Riding Center), and Stephanie Legako (Retention, Dr. Bill Bennett Student Success Center) were made to the Administrative Council prior to the business portion of the meeting.

1. Minutes from the February 22, 2021 meeting were approved as distributed.
2. Sandra Addo, Administrator for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Graduate Student Recruiter, gave a presentation regarding a draft of a strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusion for the college. Dr. Akers indicated that she would like to have a committee composed of faculty, staff and students to work on the strategic plan. Dr. Burris suggested that this be a permanent committee with a direct charge so that once the strategic plan is completed this committee will continue to help the college move forward in this area. Dr. Akers noted this request and will revisit this at the next Administrative Council meeting to further the discussion of the committee members and the charge to the committee.
3. Dr. Akers stated that the college will reduce the amount of differential tuition (16K funds) the dean's office keeps by \$3 per SCH, thus increasing each department's amount by \$3 per SCH (minus the 9% charge). During budget prep the departments will get \$33 per SCH (minus 9% charge). The additional \$3 (new funding) will be added based on actual enrollment each semester.
4. Dr. Akers reported that department chairs need to attend academic council on 3/16/2021. It might be good for departments to prepare for possible adjustments to the occupancy for fall course offerings. If a change in occupancy is made, the adjustments will have a quick turnaround. The reason for the quick turnaround is that registration for fall begins on April 1st.
5. Jane Piercy announced that Dr. Heidi Brady received a research grant for equipment from the James A. "Buddy" Davidson Foundation and has ongoing support from the CH Foundation. Thanks to the support of The 1687 Foundation and private donations, the TTTC was able to complete their new facilities. She also asked the department chairs if they had or knew of people that could give a compelling statement as to why people should donate towards student scholarships. Jane and Dr. Akers have looked at the number of Dean's Gold and Silver scholarships that have been given recently, and over the last several years the number of those scholarships have almost quadrupled. It is imperative to get the word out how impactful these scholarships are to students so that others might be motivated to give as well. In order for this number of scholarships to continue, more donations are needed.
6. Norman Martin stated that he is currently working on trying to start a Red Raider Orientation (RRO) webpage project, but they have encountered some technical issues. He is hopeful they will get those figured out soon. Everything else is going well.

7. Department Updates:

PSS – Dr. Ritchie noted their candidate for the Thornton Chair position was in town last Thursday and Friday and they had a good visit. They still have a few things to work out before it is final. He also noted the faculty are working on updating their strategic plan. Dr. Ritchie reported PSS had a very successful 2020, as grant funding was up, publications were up, student numbers were up, etc. He said the faculty are focusing on how to maintain this momentum and turn it into a culture instead of letting it slide backwards. He stated the faculty are very optimistic about where the department is headed right now.

NRM – Dr. Conway noted his faculty have currently embarked on the task of trying to update their curriculum. He also reported they are moving forward on trying to hire a new central lead advisor to help with the advising load. Dr. Conway said one of their vehicles along with some equipment was stolen recently from the Range Barn facility on Erskine. New keys, access codes, etc. will be needed as there was little evidence of forced entry. He noted NRM is moving forward towards summer and trying to figure out how Maymester and summer classes at Junction are going to work out as well as field trip logistics.

LA – Prof. Bernard indicated they are currently looking at their curriculum and assessments. They have run into a problem with the Grad School in their 4 + 1 program, and asked the other chairs if they had any issues with theirs. They are currently trying to work these issues out with the Grad School. He stated that construction on the green infrastructure lab is ongoing and construction at the Pavilion is currently on hold and not sure why. He did note that with this last rain over the weekend they still had roof leaks.

AFS – Dr. Orth indicated the renovations (down drafts for the lab tables) in the anatomy lab will happen. He also reported the Horse Judging Team has won two (2) contests this spring and is very proud of this accomplishment. They are under the direction of Dr. Kelly Riccitelli. He announced Raider Red Meats is close to being able to offer online sales.

AEC – Dr. Burris gave a shout out to his faculty (Dr. Lindsey Kennedy, Dr. Courtney Meyers, Dr. Courtney Gibson and Dr. Erica Irlbeck) for recently being awarded the President's Exemplary Program Award for their project, "The ACOM Block: An Innovative Course Structure to Engage Students with Industry." Dr. Burris also reported that Dr. John Rayfield will be recognized with a Distinguished Alumni award from the Auburn University College of Agriculture this spring. He also was very proud that 85% of the AEC faculty had received at least one (1) dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and about 50% of the entire department were fully vaccinated.

AAEC – Dr. Johnson thanked Dr. Bratcher for the list of publications she sent. She had gone through and deleted those that were listed more than once. He noted they did not have any leaks in the Ag Sciences Building after the rains on Friday night. Dr. Johnson indicated that AAEC is moving right along and there was not much to report as everything was going very well.