Present: Cindy Akers, Kathy Austin, Stefanie Borst, Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Cathy Duran, Keith Dye, Stephen Ekwaro-Osire, David Ernst for Audra Morse, Cliff Fedler, Ralph Ferguson, Ryan Gibbs, Melanie Hart, Hayden Hatch, Adrienne Holloway-Carnes, Lynn Huffman, Patrick Hughes, Peggy Johnson, Michelle Kiser, Mitzi Lauderdale, Robin Lock, Ethan Logan, Justin Louder, Andrew Martin, Felicia Martin, Brenda Martinez for Bobbie Brown, Randy McBee, Pat McConnel, Garrett McKinnon, Richard Meek, Ben Montecillo, Alison Myhra, Catherine Parsoneault, David Roach, Brian Shannon, Brian Steele, Rob Stewart chair, Kevin Stoker, Janessa Walls, Marijane Wernsman, Vicki West, Aliza Wong

Guests: Christine Blakney, Jennifer Hughes, Gary Smith, Baleigh Waldrop

McKinnon introduced the minutes from the August Academic Council meeting. After noting a correction to those present, Stoker moved that the minutes be accepted as revised, Fedler seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Blakney presented an update on the course fees process. Under the new process, ADIA fees are set by department and cover a range of courses, with “department” being defined by the course’s subject code. Blakney noted that Student Business Services can no longer assign individual ADIA fees within a subject code. She also noted that fee adjustments for the Spring 2015 semester could be made prior to September 22, and that updates could be emailed to coursefees@ttu.edu. Blakney added that off-campus and distance education courses should not carry ADIA fees, nor should zero-credit-hour courses.

Ernst presented a proposal to merge the Departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) and Construction Engineering and Engineering Technology (CEET) into a new Department of Civil, Environmental, and Construction Engineering. The Whitacre College of Engineering has a targeted date of January 1 for implementation of the merger, which coincides with the phase out of the Engineering Technology program. Ernst noted that the college would move Construction and Engineering Technology faculty to the Civil Engineering building from their current location in the Mechanical Engineering building, a move that would allow Mechanical Engineering faculty to utilize that space. After a brief discussion, Akers moved to approve the proposal as presented, Lauderdale seconded, and the motion was approved.
Louder led discussion on a trio of proposals to which online delivery would be added, the programs being:

- The Bachelor of Applied Arts & Sciences in Applied Leadership degree.
- The Bachelor of Science in Human Sciences.
- The minor in Technical Communication.

He noted that all three programs currently exist, but adding an online delivery option to the three would allow students from outside the Lubbock area to access them, possibly leading to increased enrollment in the programs. Louder also noted that the Distributed Learning Council had approved online delivery for all three programs. Huffman moved to approve all proposals as presented, Locke seconded, and the motion was approved.

Stoker presented a proposal to add an undergraduate certificate in Entertainment Media (but tabled an additional proposal to add an undergraduate certificate in Sports Media pending an investigation into further collaboration with the Department of Health, Exercise, and Sport Sciences). He noted that the College of Media and Communication offers a number of classes dealing with the entertainment industry, and that these classes could be aligned to form the basis of an Entertainment Media certificate, which could assist students pursuing careers in film, video games, and related entertainment industries. After a brief discussion, Akers moved to approve the certificate as proposed, Roach seconded, and the motion was approved.

Carnes presented an information item wherein the Rawls College of Business would change the name of the “Global Supply Chain” concentration to “Supply Chain Management.”

Smith, the chairman of the QEP committee, discussed the ongoing initiative to expand the Writing Intensive requirement of the core curriculum to include additional modalities, resulting in a name change to Communication Intensive requirement. Smith said that writing would still be the basis for most classes, but visual, oral, and other types of communication could be added. The change would be part of the university’s QEP initiative. Some members of the Council expressed concern that the change would diminish the importance of writing in regards to core curriculum courses, but Smith reassured the Council members that the core curriculum would maintain its focus on writing, while adding other types of communication. Parsoneault cited an example of a successful change made by the University of Minnesota, and noted that final details of the change were being worked on by the QEP committee.

DeCesaro led a discussion on the THECB comment period for the Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual. She noted that the Coordinating Board was looking to create more specific descriptions of each course in this manual, as well as a rubric of expected learning outcomes. She asked Council members to solicit faculty members who could offer comments on the proposed descriptions and outcomes by the October 8 deadline.
DeCesaro and Stewart opened a discussion of a change in the prerequisite approval procedure. In an effort to alert students regarding prerequisites prior to enrollment, DeCesaro proposed that a summary of prerequisite changes be presented to the members of Academic Council for consideration. Additionally, the Provost’s Office would work with the Registrar’s Office to formalize the prerequisite change procedure. Roach made a motion to require Academic Council approval of all course prerequisite changes, Akers seconded, and the motion was approved (with Stoker voting against).

Hatch presented a proposal to move the date of spring break for the Spring 2016 semester from its scheduled date (the fourth week of March) to the third week in order to more closely align the Texas Tech spring break with that observed by other major universities in the state of Texas and the Big 12 conference. After some discussion, it was suggested that the Office of Official Publications consult with public school districts in Lubbock County to ensure that such a move would not create any undue hardships for those districts. Stewart proposed that the Council be notified via email when the results of this consultation were known, and that a vote be conducted by email. [Subsequent to this meeting, members of the Council were notified that the change to the spring break dates would not impact surrounding public school districts, and a vote was issued via email in which a quorum of members voted to approve the move of spring break to the proposed dates.]

McKinnon presented the list of course approvals. Walter moved that the course changes be approved as presented, Huffman seconded, and the motion was approved.

Parsonaault provided Council members with an update on SACS-COC reaffirmation and the QEP. The narrative provided to SACS-COC filled a four-inch binder, and was to be reviewed along with narratives from Georgia Tech and the University of Alabama. She indicated that a focused report and the QEP initiative would be submitted by the end of the year.

Stewart announced that the venue for Academic Council would change beginning with the October meeting, as the Council would meet in room 309 of the Library.

With no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.