

**Texas Tech University
Academic Council**

**Meeting of August 21, 2018
1:30 PM, Provost Conference Room**

MINUTES

Present: Cindy Akers, Stefanie Borst, Bobbie Brown, Todd Chambers, Mayukh Dass, Lora Deahl, David Doerfert, Cathy Duran, Dottie Durband, Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Kristi Gaines, Maggie Gilchrest, Greg Glaus, Sheila Gray for Jamie Hansard, Annette Hernandez, Sheila Hoover (phone), Lynn Huffman, Patrick Hughes, Jorge Iber, Darryl James, Michelle Kiser, Amy Koerber, Mitzi Lauderdale, Mellinee Lesley, Robin Lock, Pat McConnell, Garrett McKinnon, Jeff Mercer, Alison Myhra, David Roach, Brian Shannon, Emily Skidmore, Brian Steele, Robert Stewart, Carol Sumner, Patricia Vitela, Janessa Walls, Vicki West

Guests: Brian Enderson, Brenda Martinez

Action Items:

1. Associate Deans are asked to remind department chairs and area heads of the deadline for managing small courses;
2. Associate Deans are asked to discuss with departments and areas the proposed academic calendar and return feedback to Garrett McKinnon;
3. Associate Deans are asked to share the information about the newly established Red Raider Food Pantry with department and area heads;
4. Associate Deans are asked to direct department and area heads to the proposal process for new and changes to existing Core and Multicultural courses as deadlines related to such proposals are upcoming. Proposal processes and timelines are detailed on the Core and Multicultural Curriculum website (<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/curriculum/>).

Stewart called the meeting to order and introduced guests and new members. He noted that it was the last Academic Council meeting for the retiring Huffman and said Durband would be taking Huffman's spot on the Council.

Next, Stewart introduced the minutes from July. Hearing no suggestions for correction or clarification, Huffman moved to approve the minutes as submitted, Doerfert seconded, and the motion was approved.

McKinnon introduced the course proposals summary. With nothing extraordinary of note, Huffman moved to approve the courses as proposed, Doerfert seconded, and the motion was approved.

The Council also heard two program proposals. Mercer discussed a proposal to rename the Area of Energy, Economics, and Law within the Rawls College of Business as the Area of Energy Commerce and Business Economics. He noted that the college had decided to move the study of business law within the Area of Management, and that the addition of the word "business" into

the area's name would better differentiate it from the Department of Economics within the College of Arts & Sciences, and likewise the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics in CASNR. Durham DeCesaro noted that, in Rawls, Areas are equivalent to Departments. Chambers moved to approve the name change as proposed, Shannon seconded, and the motion was approved.

Additionally, the Council heard a trio of information items on proposed doctoral tracks within the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction. Proposed tracks include Curriculum Studies and Teacher Education; Language, Diversity, and Literacy Studies; and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Lock said the tracks were generated as specific courses of study within the existing Ph.D. program.

Durham DeCesaro gave a brief rundown on the August commencement ceremony, noting that it was "short and sweet." She mentioned that changes would be coming with the December commencement ceremony, including the use of Marching Order software that will allow more efficient recognition of graduates, since all honors and degrees will be projected onscreen rather than announced orally. She also noted that a student RSVP system will be implemented for the December ceremony, through which students can request mobility assistance for themselves or their families while noting their attendance at the ceremony. She said the university would not yet begin the process of distributing tickets for commencement ceremonies in December, but such a process would begin at some point in the future. Durham DeCesaro added that a unique aspect of the RSVP system was that students will be required to provide permanent contact information, which could prove useful to colleges and departments in the future.

She also said that the commencement speaker recommendation committee would be providing a list of nominated speakers shortly, and that they were working to be considerate of diversity and inclusion. She encouraged colleges to continue efforts to represent the diversity of their student populations with their selections for faculty readers, faculty banner bearers, and mace bearers.

Enderson provided a quick glimpse of the online and more widely accessible academic affairs calendars that the Registrar's office is developing. He noted the calendars utilized the Office 365 platform and would serve as a one-stop shop for academic deadlines and notifications.

West commented on enrollment updates for the Fall 2018 semester, noting that enrollment was up 1.2% year to date for graduate and undergraduate students combined, and that credit hour enrollment was up 1.7% year to date.

Hughes briefly discussed retention efforts, noting that the retention rate for first-year students returning to the university was 85.13%, an increase from 83% for the same time in 2017. He also noted that the retention rate for second-year students was 73.2%, up from 71.5% in 2017. Hughes added that if it held, the first-year retention rate would be the highest in the university's history.

McKinnon distributed a summary of proposed revisions to academic calendars beginning with the 2020-2021 academic year. The most notable change was the proposed adoption of a mid-week start time for the fall semester of each academic year, a trend McKinnon noted that other

universities such as the University of Texas, Sam Houston State, and others had adopted. He said that feedback from the Dean of Student's office, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government Association, and other departments had largely been positive with regard to the change. Stewart noted that the calendar was distributed for departments to consider internally before additional discussion and proposed revisions could be addressed at a future Academic Council meeting.

Duran gave a recap of Red Raider Orientation, noting that the final one for the summer season had just wrapped, and stated that the university would be admitting and orienting students through the fourth day of class. She said overall enrollment rates for students who attended an RRO session was more than 98%.

Duran also briefly discussed the Red Raider Food Pantry, a trial program open to currently enrolled Texas Tech University students that provides non-perishable food items to students in need. She said the Food Pantry grew out of an informal one that had been set up in the Graduate Student center. Duran said the Food Pantry would hold its grand opening on Aug. 29 in Doak Hall. She also noted that any announcements about the RRFPP should also note the existence of the South Plains Food Bank, which provides more comprehensive support and resources.

Stewart reviewed a discussion from the August Associate Deans meeting in which the topics of RRO advising and enrollment/retention campaigns were discussed. He said the takeaways from the discussion included careful consideration of increasing the number of advisors, especially during peak enrollment times, and sharing best practices for advising efforts in the colleges and departments. He said a proposal had been made to form a working group to further examine the issues, and that he hoped the group would be formed during the next month.

Doerfert discussed the recently launched Tandem Course Portal (TCP), noting that due to technical and other challenges, some departments had expressed concerns with using the platform. He reminded Council members that SACSCOC requirements for tandem courses require that the graduate courses demonstrate more advance learning objectives and assignments than the undergraduate courses, and that the TCP had been launched in order to allow a review of both the undergraduate and graduate components of courses taught in tandem. He also noted that because syllabi could change from semester to semester depending on the instructor teaching the course the TCP was set up to review courses on a routine basis. Roach said the College of Arts & Sciences supported some sort of review process, but he expressed concern about the timing of the current system, noting that the final deadline for submitting syllabi actually fell after classes had already started for the fall semester. Martinez noted that the Registrar's office was working with IT and the Graduate School to resolve the early issues that had been reported and reiterated that the system was designed to review tandem courses on a section by section basis; further discussion on this point clarified that review at the course (rather than section) level should be sufficient. Stewart noted that some process for ensuring sufficient academic differentiation for graduate portions of tandem courses was needed and proposed that the current portal continue to be utilized as a trial so that improvements and additional features could be added as needed over a period of two to three terms until such time as the portal was ready for formal adoption. In response to a question about the capabilities of the Curriculog portal to review tandem courses,

Durham DeCesaro noted that the Curriculog system was developed to allow for review of new tandem courses, but not existing ones, hence the need for the Tandem Course Portal.

Stewart reminded those in attendance that August 30 was the deadline for managing small courses and stressed that courses not resolved by the deadline were not technically authorized by the university.

Stewart also touched on textbook orders, noting that as of Monday, Aug. 20, 98% of required textbooks for the Fall 2018 semester had been ordered, which was the highest percentage yet for a fall semester. He encouraged departments to reach out to faculty, noting that the final 2% of textbooks could be ordered in the final week before the start of classes.

Stewart announced that a number of faculty-related Operating Policies/Procedures are under review or recently finalized. This list includes the new OP 32.38, Third-Year Review of Tenure-Track Faculty, which had recently been finalized and published. Other OPs under review include 32.02, Faculty Non-reappointment, Dismissal, and Tenure Review (to which he said the Faculty Senate is reviewing additions advised by the Office of the General Counsel be included); OP 32.03, Academic Deans, Associate or Assistant Deans, and Department Chairpersons (which he noted was being revised to include policies and procedures for appointing interim and acting chairpersons); OP 32.16, Faculty Recruitment Procedure; and 32.18, Academic Workload Calculation (which was being revisited to update some of the teaching load equivalencies and to consider tying to percent allocation of faculty time). Stewart added that OP 32.27, Review of Vitae of Prospective Faculty, might be eliminated since its precepts are covered already in the more comprehensive OP 32.16.

Stewart noted that the 2018-2019 Faculty Handbook had been published and was available via the Office of Official Publications website (http://www.depts.ttu.edu/officialpublications/facultyhb/hb_viewcat.php). He also requested that Council members and departments review the Academic Council roster (https://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/councilscmtes/academic_council.php) to ensure that their representation is verified and accurate.

Durham DeCesaro noted that THECB had approved the proposed M.S. in Library and Information sciences, as well as the proposed Ph.D. in Addiction Disorders and Recovery Studies. She also announced that Stefanie Borst had been appointed to represent the university on the UEAC committee at THECB.

In other business:

- Stewart noted that summer teaching evaluations were available, and that the response rate for Summer II and Full Summer terms was 53%, some 13 percentage points higher than the same terms in 2017. He noted that evaluation response rates had not yet reached those accomplished via the traditional paper/pencil evaluations, but that the university was seeing increases in electronic course evaluation response rates term by term.

- Durham DeCesaro noted that the action items for the meeting's minutes would include an announcement that submissions for addition to the core course roster for the 2019-2020 academic year would need to be started promptly.

With no other business raised, Stewart adjourned the meeting.