

**Texas Tech University  
Academic Council**

**Meeting of December 18, 2018  
1:30 PM, Library Room 309**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cindy Akers, Dennis Arnett, Todd Chambers, Mayukh Dass, Lora Deahl, David Doerfert, Cathy Duran, Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Kristi Gaines, Greg Glaus, Melanie Hart, Saif Haq, Patrick Hughes, Jorge Iber, Michelle Kiser, Amy Koerber, Mitzi Lauderdale, Mellinee Lesley, Justin Louder, Garrett McKinnon, Alison Myhra, David Roach, Brian Shannon, Emily Skidmore, Robert Stewart, Carol Sumner, Patricia Vitela, Janessa Walls, Vicki West, Aliza Wong

**Guests:** Michael Giesselmann, Brenda Martinez

Stewart called the meeting to order. He and Durham DeCesaro relayed the events pertaining to the Alma Mater singer in the last of the December 2018 commencement ceremonies.

Next, Stewart presented the minutes from the November Academic Council meeting. Haq moved to approve the minutes as presented, Dass seconded, and the motion was approved.

Durham DeCesaro presented a debrief on the commencement ceremony. She noted that an automated update on the computer being used to run the Marching Orders software meant that most of the doctoral students' names were not displayed on screen, but that the issue had been noted and would not occur in the future. She also said the software and presentation of degrees and awards onscreen had saved an estimated 30 to 40 minutes per ceremony. She added that the President's Office had already issued an invitation for a speaker for the May 2019 ceremony.

Martinez provided an update on missing grades. She said that as of the meeting time, the university only had 854 grades outstanding out of approximately 40,000 grades to be issued. Stewart urged associate deans to work with faculty to see to any missing grades.

Martinez also presented a proposal to extend the period for filing "Intent to Graduate" forms, and moving the process online. The proposal, to be implemented in the Fall 2019 semester, would move the deadline closer to graduation, and making the process electronic would reduce paperwork and make the overall filing more efficient and convenient. Chambers moved to approve the proposal, Akers seconded, and the motion was approved.

McKinnon presented the summary of course proposals. Doerfert moved to approve the courses as presented, Lauderdale seconded, and the motion was approved.

Durham DeCesaro presented a summary of program proposals:

- She noted that the Undergraduate Certificate in Commercial Banking proposal had been pulled from the agenda at the request of the Rawls College of Business Administration.

- Deahl noted the name change for the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Arts to the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Arts Studies had been initiated at the request of the college's accrediting agencies.
- The Council saw proposals for delivery modality changes for the B.A. in Sociology (to be offered at the university's Waco campus), the M.S. in Computer Science (to be offered online), the Master of Business Administration (to be offered online), and the Master of Art Education (to be offered online).
- The College of Human Sciences put forth a proposal to create an accelerated B.S.-to-M.S. in Human Development and Family Studies by combining the existing degree programs.
- Finally, the College of Media & Communication submitted a request to change the required credit hours for the Graduate Certificate in Communication for Center Directors at Institutions of Higher Education.

After a brief discussion, Doerfert moved to approve the programs as presented, Chambers seconded, and the motion was approved.

The Council also heard a pair of information-only items:

- A curricular change to the Professional M.B.A.
- A curricular change to the B.S. in Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics.

Durham DeCesaro next presented an update to core and multicultural courses. She noted the Core and Multicultural Committee had reviewed a number of proposals during the preceding six to eight weeks and had opted to submit five courses to THECB for addition to the university's core curriculum: ENGL 2305 (Introduction to Poetry), VPA 2310 (Introduction to Interdisciplinarity in the Arts), AAEC 1301 (Economics, Ecology, and Ethics), VPA 1302 (Global Dialogues: Connections through the Arts), and SPAN 2300 (Social Change in the Hispanic World through Cultural Expressions). Additionally, the committee had opted to add five courses to the university's list of multicultural courses (a move not requiring THECB approval): ENGL 3382 (Gender, Race, and Identity), SPAN 2300 (Social Change in the Hispanic World through Cultural Expressions), ENGL 2322 (Global Lit II), SOC 3357 (Sociology of Globalization), and ENGL 2310 (Literature, Social Justice, and the Environment). She said if approved by THECB, the additions to the core curriculum would be effective with the Fall 2019 semester. She also said the Provost's Office would continue to work to inform faculty regarding the deadlines and procedure for adding courses to the Core and Multicultural lists.

Durham DeCesaro noted that the THECB had approved the proposed name change for the Department of Advertising (within the College of Media & Communication) to the Department of Advertising and Brand Strategy.

Deahl inquired about the timely submission of medical excuses, noting that a student in the Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts had submitted medical excuses on the day of no classes before finals, even though some of the medical incidences dated back to mid-September. She asked about the development of a policy regarding timely submission of medical excuses. Duran noted that the university was hesitant to create a formal policy because situational variances might preclude a student's ability to provide such notification. Duran said each faculty member's syllabus should reflect the timeline for submitting such requests, as relevant to that class, and the decision to accept such late notifications was at the discretion of the faculty. She

noted that the Dean of Students office could resolve such incidents in cases where faculty members were reticent to make a definitive decision. Stewart added that a broad policy might also force faculty to accept situations and excuses against their own course policies or for which they were not comfortable. Durham DeCesaro said that a working group could be formed to develop draft language that faculty could copy from the Office of the Provost faculty resources page into their own syllabi.

Stewart provided an update on SmartEvals training, noting that the aim was still to conduct faculty training on the system during the middle of the spring semester. West said the university was considering the creation of a “question bank” of preapproved questions from which faculty could draw on to add questions to their course evaluations, and that once her staff was fully trained on the capability such an option would be explored more fully.

Stewart asked for volunteers to review books for the President’s Book Award. He said the goal was to have two reviewers per book, and the topics of books needing one additional reviewer each were in the areas of dietetics, human biological development, and particle physics.

In other business:

- Sumner announced information the McNair Scholars Program, a post-baccalaureate program that aimed to improve the ability of underrepresented segments of society to attain Ph.D. degrees.
- Sumner also noted that deans and staff leaders would be invited to attend faculty search committee training in March, a program based on Purdue University’s ADVANCE program, that would expand to all faculty involved with search committees at a later date.
- Wong announced that Dr. Gary Elbow, a professor in the Honors College and former Vice Provost, was retiring after 48 years of serving the university.

With no other business raised, Stewart adjourned the meeting.