

**Texas Tech University  
Academic Council**

**Meeting of May 19, 2020  
1:30 PM, Skype**

**Attendance**

**Present:** Cindy Akers, Dennis Arnett, Kathy Austin, Jeffrey Belnap, Andrea Bilkey, Cristina Bradatan, Bobbie Brown, Todd Chambers, Hyojung Cho, Warren Conway, Mayukh Dass, David Doerfert, Cathy Duran, Dottie Durband, Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Kristi Gaines, Birgit Green, Lindsay Hallowell, Jamie Hansard, Melanie Hart, Hunter Heck, Bret Hendricks, Sheila Hoover, Patrick Hughes, Jorge Iber, Darryl James, Eileen Johnson, Nikki Kantelis, Michelle Kiser, Amy Koerber, Mitzi Lauderdale, Justin Louder, Brenda Martinez, Pat McConnel, Alison Myhra, Dee Nguyen, Reagan Ribordy, David Roach, Brian Shannon, Brian Steele, Rob Stewart, Carol Sumner, Annette Uddameri, Janessa Walls, Lesley Nall Washington, Dana Weiser, Vicki West, and John Zak.

<b>Action Items: None</b>
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Stewart called the meeting to order by presenting the minutes from the April Council meeting. With no additional discussion, Roach moved to approve the minutes, Weiser seconded, and the minutes were approved.

The Council then moved to the next item of business concerning COVID-19 related updates. Stewart invited Brown to update the Council on grades of CR and NC for the spring 2020 semester. Brown informed the Council that the Registrar's Office staff has completed over 5,000 grade conversions to CR and NC so far and that there are another few hundred either pending or awaiting college approval. Stewart asked the Council if anyone had heard of or seen any issues in offering this option to students. Chambers asked if the advisors and Registrar's Office staff could receive extra compensation for the added process of changing grades to CR/NC. Stewart thanked Chambers for the recommendation.

Hughes asked if the final grade deadline could be pushed back to allow colleges and the Registrar's Office time to catch up, but Brown clarified that final grades are not the problem. On the contrary, Brown pointed out that there were fewer missing final grades this semester than ever before. The problem is that each grade change must be made manually, so the process takes a long time. In addition, they have to wait for the students to tell their advisors that they want their grades changed, and then the college deans must approve those requests before the Registrar's Office staff can begin making those manual changes. Brown reminded Council members that the deadline for students to request grade changes is Wednesday, May 20 at 5 p.m.

Martinez noted that Academic Standing must be done, as well as other outside strains. In addition, students are pressuring the Registrar's Office for transcripts, which cannot be released until all grades are finalized and Academic Standing is complete. Stewart, echoing sentiments expressed by many during this discussion, thanked the Registrar's Office staff for their hard work during this unique semester and in general.

Stewart then asked for Duran to give an update on RRO. Duran explained that RRO will begin on May 28<sup>th</sup>. RRO will be broken into three parts, including both asynchronous and synchronous sections. The first asynchronous part has modules that will be completed by every student and includes the President's welcome, the mayor's welcome, and SGA welcome, as well as information from the RRO crew and transfer ambassadors. These modules will also give the students the opportunity to verify and change their majors to avoid major changes later in the orientation process. Additional modules will have financial resources, academic and support services, campus safety, health and wellness, student conduct, eRaider and Raiderlink resources, registration, and academic advising, among others. Duran also pointed out that Student Affairs follows up with every student about the Federally and State mandated trainings on Title IX, alcohol and drugs, and anti-hazing. This first part will be released on May 26<sup>th</sup> and will be sent to every registered RRO student.

In addition, various divisions are hosting events throughout the summer, including parent webinars, student org fairs, and resource fairs. The synchronous part will include the college welcomes and info-sessions and the academic advising. There will also be synchronous online sessions for hold removals, but the synchronous part is mainly focused on college interactions and advising. Links will be sent to all students 48 hours before the sessions will take place.

With no questions, the Council moved to the next item. Durham DeCesaro revisited a question posted in the chat box by Hughes about how grade changes to CR/NC should be processed after the deadline passes, and she asked Brown to respond. Brown confirmed that the deadline for these changes is tomorrow, Wednesday, May 20, at 5 p.m. and that while the Registrar's Office staff will likely accept requests submitted after 5, the deadline should be adhered to as much as possible. Durham DeCesaro urged associate deans to communicate the time-sensitive nature of this situation and asked that the colleges respect that deadline.

Durham DeCesaro then moved on to give an update on commencement, stating that there should be a memo released by the Commencement Office tomorrow about how to access the links for commencement. Durham DeCesaro thanked the colleges for their hard work in making this program something students can be excited about and also confirmed that Mr. Patrick Mahomes will be featured as our speaker. Then Durham DeCesaro explained that once a decision has been made about the August ceremony, her office will let the university community know.

The Council then heard an update on Summer II and August Intersession courses. A small number of academic units requested to retain courses face-to-face in Summer II and in the August Intersession, but many of those courses are not taught on the Lubbock campus. The number of requests was so small that it was determined that we could safely offer those courses on campus as a pilot for a larger group of face-to-face offerings in the fall 2020 term. Academic units that will be offering courses face-to-face have been asked to develop health and safety guidelines using existing resources. Durham DeCesaro noted that they are anticipating a memo from the President's Office stating that the majority of courses taught in Summer II and the August Intersession will be moved from face-to-face to online to make students enrolled in summer courses aware of that decision. With that, Durham DeCesaro turned the Council's attention to fall 2020.

Stewart reiterated that Summer II will give us an idea of how fall might go in terms of face-to-face instruction. There have been ongoing discussions about the academic aspect of how courses will be taught, and the President's planning groups have given recommendations on how the colleges' fall planning reports will be utilized. As yet, there is not a decision as to what social

distancing protocols will be for face-to-face courses, but every possibility to accommodate original schedules to the extent possible will be considered within the social distancing protocols that are determined. There is currently a balance of courses to be offered online and face-to-face, which will give students options. The Office of the Provost will consider the health and safety methods academic units intend to use in the summer as it develops guidelines for the university as a whole for the fall semester. The university is also working on health and safety protocols for faculty and staff who will be moving back to campus.

In addition there have been questions about how to handle faculty and student illness due to COVID-19, and Stewart explained that the Office of the Provost is working on a syllabus insert that will speak to COVID-19 related absences that they will ask faculty to use in the fall as a supplement to their standard syllabi. Stewart then gave the floor back to Durham DeCesaro.

Durham DeCesaro thanked the colleges for sending in the proposals for face-to-face courses for fall 2020 and told the Council that her office is looking at those proposals and specifically considering the rooms the courses are proposed to be offered in and the maximum enrollment for the courses to determine what kind of space might be necessary to offer the courses face-to-face if the maximum enrollment makes. The office is also looking into hybrid plans and attendance strategies to meet any social distancing guidelines.

Durham DeCesaro reminded Council members that there is a temporary hold on colleges and academic advisors being able to make changes to course enrollment caps until May 28<sup>th</sup> when the Registrar's Office completes all administrative changes to the fall schedule. Durham DeCesaro also noted that if it is determined that we cannot accommodate particular face-to-face courses, based on enrollment and available space, we will ask the affected academic units for alternate plans. There will be advice on the MyTech tab in Raiderlink to inform students that there may be changes in delivery modality for their fall 2020 courses.

The Council then heard an update from eLearning. Hart explained that starting this summer, all courses must meet ADA requirements, and that while we had a reprieve in the spring due to the emergency fashion in which we went remote, that reprieve expires June 1. It has been decided that Proctorio will be made available to all students in all courses, whether online or face-to-face. Proctorio is a remote proctoring software, and additional information about Proctorio can be found on the eLearning website. Hart emphasized that as colleges move courses to an online modality, we need to make sure there is regular and substantive interaction with students, as required by SACSCOC, and eLearning will continue providing guidelines on how to achieve that in online courses. Uddameri asked if students could opt out of using Proctorio, and Hart explained that if a faculty member chooses to use Proctorio, then students must use it in that course. Austin added that there have been stringent data security and privacy standards put into the contract with Proctorio; therefore, Proctorio will serve as a contracted agent of TTU. If a faculty member chooses to use Proctorio for a course, students will be made aware of that decision in advance and in the course syllabus so they have time to decide to remain in the course or choose a different section or a different course. Hart clarified that it is required that students be informed ahead of time that a proctoring service will be used and that they will need a webcam and a microphone for the course. Faculty members can email this information out in addition to adding it to the syllabus, but the students need to know as soon as possible.

Louder shared with the Council that the approved syllabus statement for using proctoring services is available on the eLearning site under Proctorio and recommended for any faculty member using Proctorio or Respondus to use this approved statement in their syllabus and in their Blackboard course shell. Stewart clarified that emailing the information should not be done in

lieu of putting the information in the course syllabi. Hart also explained that they are working with Brandon Hennington and IT to offer mobile carts for faculty planning to offer an alternative hybrid model. In such cases, if half the students attend face-to-face on one day and the other half attend on another day, the mobile cart will allow for synchronous learning for the half not in attendance on a particular day.

Louder then added that there have been concerns that some programs were already close to hybrid status before the COVID-19 situation. The university had been offered a reprieve in the spring and summer, but that expires in the fall. Therefore, Louder asked for those academic units who have programs that are close to hybrid level, which is when more than 51% of the program is offered online, to contact him to discuss their options.

Next on the agenda, Stewart introduced the opportunities for service learning, especially through TrUE and Engaged Scholarship. James added that COVID-related opportunities may exist that we would like to take advantage of. We have funding through TrUE to support undergraduate research and creative activities related to COVID-19, and interested people should contact Levi Johnson. The funds are limited, so it would be ideal for colleges to partner with TrUE to expand that funding. In addition, James mentioned that Outreach and Engagement is also interested in making connections between the university and the community for service learning opportunities and that people should contact Birgit Green for additional information.

Lauderdale asked if there will be social distancing and safety guidelines for service learning student activities in the community. Stewart added that this question could be addressed by guidance already provided for internships and practicums. James stated that we do not know exactly what those guidelines would look like for community activities and that we would look to the health professionals to guide us, but on campus activities would follow the guidelines that will be set for the university for the fall.

Durham DeCesaro mentioned that there is information available on the TLPDC website and then added that units interested in participating in service learning need to begin working on that so faculty members have adequate time to prepare.

Stewart then turned the Council's attention to small course reporting due to COVID-19. Stewart stated that we will continue as usual with our small course reporting but will take into consideration any course that falls under the small course threshold because of the required social distancing guidelines. This consideration would be in addition to the normal justifications we have for allowing under-enrolled courses to continue as scheduled. Stewart told Council members to expect an announcement regarding the small course reporting dates within the next few days. With no other COVID-19 related business, the Council moved to the next item on the agenda.

Stewart asked Brown if there were any additional comments on the missing grade reports that were touched on earlier. Brown thanked the Council members for their hard work in getting their grades submitted on time. Stewart also thanked the Council members and remarked on the significance of the few number of grades that are missing this semester compared to other semesters.

Stewart then turned the floor over to Hughes to discuss re-enrollment and a Strive.TTU.edu update. Hughes pointed out that the first-year FTIC rate as of now is 82.7%, which is slightly down from this time last year at 83.6%. Overall enrollment of students expected to re-enroll is roughly 12% less than last year. A significant number of students who were contacted said they

are simply waiting to re-enroll, but they report that they do intend to re-enroll for the fall. Our goal is around 87% for fall 2020 and we are about 200 students away from that goal. Hughes expects to see some changes in these rates in all retention cohorts after both the May and August graduations.

Hughes then explained that the EAB system that has been behind Strive.TTU.edu is expiring this summer, and the new system will be Hobsons Starfish, which is the leader in the field of retention software. Hughes noted that his division is ready to implement this new application and to train current and new users. They anticipate that users will find the new application much improved and more intuitive compared to the current system. Starfish has many more options and is more flexible for students, faculty, and other users in reporting on students and other matters. Training will be available to users at their convenience all summer, starting next week.

Stewart thanked the colleges for their work in retention and getting students re-enrolled for the fall. The reports for first and full summer terms are encouraging, and the hope is that we will be on target for the second summer term as well. Stewart noted that the Provost expects Strive.TTU.edu to be used widely throughout the university to track our students and their academic development. Stewart also reminded that we are moving into a counting season with the State so these retention efforts are especially important during this time.

The next item of business concerned the course and program proposals. Hallowell explained that many of the effective dates for course proposals have been moved to Spring 2021 to avoid making changes to courses in which students are enrolled. She clarified that these new terms appear in green font in the document attached to the agenda. Stewart called for a motion for the course proposals. Chambers moved to accept, Durband seconded, and the course proposals were approved.

Durham DeCesaro then introduced the program proposals. Voting items included new accelerated degree programs, new certificates, a new graduate track, a degree modality addition, and a title change for a minor in the Honors College. Durham DeCesaro pointed out that effective terms in green, as with the course proposals, had been moved forward. With no questions or concerns about the program proposals, Durham DeCesaro asked for Stewart to call for a vote. Doerfert moved to accept the proposals, Akers seconded, and the program proposals were approved as presented.

Then Durham DeCesaro discussed the informational items, which were largely curricular changes, and encouraged associate deans to share the curricular changes with their areas in case their students may be affected by those changes.

The Council then moved on to other business. Sumner expressed her appreciation for Durham DeCesaro and the Commencement team for their work and asked to make an announcement on the various special commencement ceremonies that are taking place. The Division is working to send stoles to students eligible for Black Convocation, and working to provide lapel pins for students eligible for Hispanic Convocation. In addition, stoles have been sent to the MVP students, and special patches are being developed for current students' and former graduates' service dogs.

Sumner then noted that the *INSIGHT into Diversity* magazine is doing a special recognition for STEM programs that promote STEM education to underrepresented and minority groups. The Office of Institutional Diversity is working with TrUE and the VPR to identify programs that we want to recognize. Sumner asked for Council members to contact Ashley Gonzales to highlight

programs that are exceptional in promoting STEM education to underrepresented individuals, minority groups, and women.

Stewart then asked Durham DeCesaro to respond to the question posed by Hughes in the chat regarding deans viewing the commencement footage before its release. Durham DeCesaro explained that deans can reach out to Amiee Dixon but to expect a delay as Amiee organizes the marching order slides for college readers to use in their videos.

Sumner added that she wanted to expand on an email she sent last week about summer camps. She requested for Council members to respond to the survey in that email so her Division knows what programs will be offered so they can provide guidance on offering those programs. Institutional Diversity wants to create a website for those who will be administering these programs with resources and any liabilities that might exist when conducting these programs.

With no other business or announcements, Stewart thanked the Council members again for all their work during this semester and then adjourned the meeting.