Present: Cindy Akers, Kathy Austin, Bobbie Brown, Adrienne Carnes, Cathy Duran, Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Keith Dye, Stephen Ekwaro-Osire, Clifton Ellis, Cliff Fedler, Paul Goebel, Sheila Gray for Ethan Logan, Sheila Hoover, Lynn Huffman, Jorge Iber, Peggy Johnson, Michelle Kiser, Robin Lock, Justin Louder, Andrew Martin, Randy McBee, Pat McConnel, Garrett McKinnon, Richard Meek, Ben Montecillo, Audra Morse, Alison Myhra, Catherine Parsonaeult, William Pasewark, David Roach, Brian Shannon, Brian Steele, Rob Stewart chair, Kevin Stoker, Janessa Walls, Vicki West, Aliza Wong

Guests: Jennifer Bard, Coy Callison, Todd Chambers, Angela Lumpkin, Brenda Martinez, and Nicci Price

Stewart called the meeting to order. The minutes from the November Academic Council meeting were presented. Huffman moved to approve as presented, Akers seconded, and the motion was carried by acclamation.

Durham DeCesaro introduced a proposal to modify the Writing Intensive language in the official catalog. An update of a proposal first broached during the November meeting, the proposal broadened the language to include any interdisciplinary program. Morse moved to approve the new language, Iber seconded, and the motion was approved.

Durham DeCesaro also introduced a proposal to implement a policy change for course change approval, as well as implementing a formal timeline for acceptance of course and prerequisite changes. She presented a table featuring specific deadlines for various actions. In conjunction with this timeline, Martinez presented an update of the course review site, and explained that colleges would soon be able to log on and review specific course requirements, such as prerequisites, and make changes via the new site. After some discussion, the Council agreed via voice consensus to implement the changes.

Durham DeCesaro introduced a policy change to the College of Education teacher certification process, whereby students would use a primary catalog relative to their individual major, and a secondary catalog relative to their acceptance into the teacher education program. Huffman suggested a minor textual change to the policy, whereupon Morse moved to approve the policy change as amended. Johnson seconded, and the motion was approved.
Durham DeCesaro updated the Council members on the activities of the Section Uniformity Working Group, and solicited volunteers to assist the group.

Stoker presented a proposal for an MA in Strategic Communication and Innovation. The 30-hour program would start in Fall 2015 and feature online delivery. Stoker added that current Communication Studies faculty would be tabbed to teach the courses, which could possibly be cross-listed as MCOM and COMS. Morse moved to approve the degree as presented, Huffman seconded, and the motion was approved.

McKinnon presented the course approvals summary. Akers requested that items 64 and 65 (MCOM 5326 Risk Communication/Management and MCOM 5328 Crisis Communication) be tabled pending discussions between the Colleges of Agriculture Sciences and Natural Resources and Media and Communication regarding possible commonality between existing courses in CASNR. Chambers requested that item 9 (ESS 3373 Sport Communication) be tabled pending additional discussions between the College of Media and Communication and the College of Arts and Sciences. After discussion regarding a disagreement regarding that proposed course, as well as disagreement between Arts and Sciences and the College of Human Sciences regarding item 25 (NS 2330 Nutrition for Health, Fitness and Sport), Stewart mandated removal of both courses from consideration pending a final solution. Following a brief follow-on discussion, Meek moved to approve the courses that had not been tabled, Morse seconded, and the motion was approved.

Roach presented an informational item regarding an online minor in Public Health. He noted the College of Arts and Sciences believes the minor to be a good lead-in to a master’s degree in public health, serving as a feeder program of sorts.

Johnson followed with an informational item regarding a minor in Quantitative Methods, applicable specifically to education. She noted that all the courses required for the minor already existed.

Parsoneault presented an update on the SACSCOC Focused Report, as well as results from the onsite visit with the chair of Texas Tech University’s reaffirmation committee at SACSCOC. She noted that Texas Tech was among the first universities to complete a QEP, and would be one of the first to develop a second such initiative while maintaining the first. Parsoneault said the Focused Report was being prepared to address any perceived gaps or insufficiencies in compliance certification, and that the final Focused Report and QEP were expected to be sent the week of January 16.

Stewart gave a debrief of the fall commencement ceremonies, and commended faculty attendance at the events.

In other business:
• The Department of Communication Studies presented a notification that the MA in Communication Studies would see a reduction in the required credit hours to 33 from 36.

• Rawls College of Business presented a notification that the MS in Business Administration (Statistics Option) would see a reduction in the required credit hours to 30 from 36. The reduction would be accomplished by deleting the leveling courses requirement.

• Rawls College of Business also presented a notification that the Essentials of Business graduate certificate would see a reduction in the required credit hours to 12 from 15.

• Stewart noted that in the future all such program hour change requests should be presented via appropriate THECB forms in an effort to streamline the process.

• Finally, Stewart commended the Council for the amount of business accomplished during meetings in the fall semester, specifically citing the Council’s greater critique and analysis of academic changes.

With no other business on the agenda, Stewart adjourned the meeting.