

Minutes - eLearning Council Meeting

Thursday, January 21, 2021 | 1:30 PM-3:00 PM

Via Zoom

Attendees: Justin Louder, Kathy Austin, Melanie Hart, Celia Merrill, David Doerfert, Jody Roginson, John R. Thomas, Karissa Greathouse, Leslie DeBusk, Sandra Huston, Teresa Diaz, Suzanne Tapp, Jameshia Granberry, Jongpil Cheon, Liz Beaty, Marcus Tanner, Pat McConnel, Cary Sallee, Dennis Arnett, Lisa Leach, Katie Randolph, Otto Ratheal, Lewis Snell, Degeng Wang, Clay Taylor, Jennifer Hughes, Vickie Sutton,

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. by Dr. Justin Louder
- II. **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:** Dr. David Doerfert made a motion to approve and Dr. Marcus Tanner seconded. Minutes from the previous eLearning Council Meeting, held on 11/19/20, were approved.
- III. **New Distance Program Approvals and Changes**
 - a. **Agricultural Communications Leadership Graduate Certificate:** Dr. Todd Brashears spoke on the Agricultural Communications Leadership Graduate Certificate proposal. Dr. Tanner made a motion to approve and Dr. Lewis Snell seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
 - b. **Agricultural Leadership Minor:** Dr. Brashears spoke on the Agricultural Leadership Minor. Dr. Tanner made a motion to approve and Dr. Snell seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Academic Council Meeting.
 - c. **PhD in Higher Education:** Dr. Stephanie Jones spoke on the PhD in Higher Education. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Ms. Suzanne Tapp seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
 - d. **PhD in Educational Psychology:** Dr. Kamau Siwatu spoke on the PhD in Educational Psychology. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Ms. Tapp seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
 - e. **Master of Education in Educational Psychology:** Dr. Siwatu spoke on the Master of Education in Educational Psychology. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Ms. Tapp seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
 - f. **Education Policy Concentration:** Dr. Siwatu spoke on the Education Policy Concentration. Dr. Tanner made a motion to approve and Dr. Kathy Austin seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Academic Council Meeting.
 - g. **Graduate Certificate in Merchandising:** Dr. Deborah Fowler spoke on the Graduate Certificate in Merchandising. Ms. Jody Roginson made a motion to approve and Dr. Tanner seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
 - h. **Master of Science in Merchandising:** Dr. Fowler spoke on the Master of Science in Merchandising. Ms. Roginson made a motion to approve and Dr. Tanner seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.

- i. **Master's Degree in Language & Literacy Education:*** Dr. Mellinee Lesley spoke on the Master's Degree in Language & Literacy Education. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Ms. Tapp seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
- j. **Master's in Educational Psychology: School of Psychology:*** Mr. Brook Roberts spoke on the Master's in Educational Psychology: School of Psychology. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Ms. Tapp seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Graduate Academic Sub-Committee Meeting.
- k. **Organization Leadership Minor:*** Dr. Tanner spoke on the Organization Leadership Minor. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Dr. Austin seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Academic Council Meeting.
- l. **Bachelor of Science in Wind Energy:*** Dr. Andy Swift spoke on the Bachelor of Science in Wind Energy. Dr. Doerfert made a motion to approve and Dr. Jennifer Hughes seconded. The proposal will be voted on in the next Academic Council Meeting.
- IV. COVID-19 Instruction:** Dr. Louder opened the forum for discussion regarding this matter. No items for discussion were brought forth.
- V. THECB Grant:** Dr. Hart spoke on the THECB Grant. Texas Tech University is a recipient for a Coordinating Board reskilling grants. This was a collaboration between eLearning and University Programs. This grant provides scholarships for students who meet all of the following criteria. Could not have been enrolled in the last previous semester, need to be able to complete their degree within a year of returning, meet the financial need after all others have been applied such as, PELL grants and other scholarships awarded, and had to have been affected by COVID-19. eLearning has been working with the Registrar's Office and Financial Aid to identify students who meet the criteria. This grant must be used by February of 2022. If you know of any students that meet all these qualifications and are interested in returning, let them know eLearning can be of financial assistance towards their tuition and fees. eLearning will send out postcard notifications to encourage students to return and a press release will go out as well.
- VI. TDE Sections:** Dr. Hart spoke on TDE Sections. In the past when the university has an online courses eLearning applies a campus restriction if it is a core course or one that students can take for online degree programs. This is so that our regional site and distance learning students can register for online courses first before all the online courses are registered for by Lubbock campus students. The restriction is removed one month prior to the beginning of the semester. The pandemic has made this process more challenging. Some faculty only have the one online section available and Lubbock students need to be able to get into that section. Upon speaking with the Department Chairs and Associate Deans it has been decided to recommend that faculty divide the online class so that if it has an available 50 student course that 10 seats will have the restriction on it and the other 40, TDE section, will not have the restriction. This has allowed all distance, regional site, and Lubbock campus students to register for online courses. These courses can link in Banner so that when the scheduling platform is implemented it does not show up in the small course portal and can be linked in Blackboard. This provides less work for faculty members and they do not have

to worry about two different sections. This has been a good solution so far and will be continued. On the first day of classes for each semester all courses will become available so any leftover seats can be filled.

VII. *Academic Partnerships & CEU Updates:* Dr. Clay Taylor spoke on Academic Partnerships & CEU Updates. In the office of Academic Agreements, there has been a heavy focus on community colleges. They now have contracting with three new community colleges. Laredo College, Odessa College, and Dallas College. They are getting closer to completing their goal of having an MOU with all 50 community colleges. The Office of Continuing and Professional Education is excited to launch Campus CE, with the help of Dr. Hart, Dr. Louder and Dr. Austin. This is a new registration system to help faculty and staff with noncredit registration and management needs and will allow them to serve the university better. The new registration system will also allow the user to connect to the university's Blackboard instance directly. If anyone has or knows of any noncredit programs that have happened previously in your department and you would like the Office of Continuing Education to consider taking that over, please contact Dr. Clay Taylor.

VIII. *Blackboard Updates:* Dr. Austin, Mr. John R. Thomas, and Dr. Louder spoke on the Blackboard Updates. IT will be conducting a faculty survey about faculty preferences and use of Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Skype. Some of the features in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra pose some challenges from an accessibility standpoint. The goal for this survey is to select a couple of technologies to support in the Blackboard environment, rather than having all four. IT will reach out to all faculty, request that they complete a short survey, and will then inform the eLearning Council of the results. In general, Collaborate Ultra is accessible, but eLearning has learned that students who are deaf or hard of hearing and use a sign language interpreter are having difficulty. Because of the way Collaborate Ultra conducts its video portion, sometimes words get lost in the screen or appear very small. The students are having to run two screens, one with Collaborate Ultra featuring the course and one with Zoom to view the sign language interpreter. All the other tools and features are accessible, hence the reason why eLearning and IT would like to test the amount of usage. The transition to a managed hosted SAS environment went smoothly. IT will be publishing additional information on how new features and updates will roll out. They are working alongside eLearning to create a process to introduce new features so that faculty and staff are aware before they appear on the Blackboard. IT is looking at a timeline for unveiling the new Ultra Nav environment. This environment will change the Blackboard environment to look more tile based, the way other applications are moving. The goal is to eventually move to the Ultimate Course view, which is an entirely different environment. It will be an updated environment to show how they are presenting courses and course information to keep up with the new technology.

IX. *Open Discussion:* Dr. Louder opened the forum for open discussion. Dr. Louder received an email from the College of Media and Communication who were trying to clarify their proposal for the Digital Media and Professional Communications online bachelor's degree program. The Council previously approved this program the TTU regional site. Between the eLearning Council approval and the Coordinating Board approval the program did not

include hill country. Dr. Louder will be updating this over the next several weeks with the Registrar's Office and the Coordinating Board to offer this program at all regional sites.

X. ***Adjourn:*** Meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.