SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

Core and Multicultural Data Collection Changes

As our office continues to work on the 2025 The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) reaffirmation, we have identified two additions to the Core and Multicultural Curriculum (CMC) data collection: Communication Literacy (CL) and specialized reporting for courses at TTU Costa Rica (TTUCR).

We will be combining the previous CL data collection into the CMC collection at the end of the spring and fall semesters. Reporting requirements will mirror the CMC method, asking faculty to place students into four categories based on their assessed performance. We will use the existing CL rubric but will review the rubric for changes before the fall 2024 data collection. We hope to make the CL process as seamless as possible, and combining CMC and CL surveys allows for a more consolidated reporting procedure for faculty.

We are also making changes for TTU Costa Rica by identifying faculty who are teaching CMC or CL courses, automatically transferring them into a similar reporting page, and adding required questions for assessment methods, reflections for improvement and general comments. Dean Belnap requested these changes, and they will provide TTUCR with better disaggregated data for their courses. OPA will also work with TTUCR on explaining the new process and expectations to faculty while answering questions or concerns as they arise.

These changes are scheduled for the spring 2024 reporting cycle.

Reaffirmation Planning

OPA has met regularly with the Office of Campus Events (OCE) to coordinate logistics for our 2025 Reaffirmation on-site visit from the SACSCOC committee. In January 2024 we began meeting once per month. In addition to visiting the main Lubbock campus, there will be off-site visits to the School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) in Amarillo and the Costa Rica campus.

To better understand how we can support the off-site visit to the SVM, we plan to visit the school in Amarillo. This trip will include members of OPA and OCE, as well as our IT support personnel. We hope to conduct this in early June 2024.

We have confirmed ground transportation and the reservation of the McKenzie-Merket Alumni Center. Top Tier will be available to cater. OCE has provided a list of local restaurants that will be given to the committee for dinner options. We have also been able to clarify the workflow for how dinner reservations will be made and expenses reconciled via PCard.

Negotiations are ongoing for our agreement with the Cotton Court Hotel to secure the necessary guest rooms as well as the working room for the on-site committee members. Once this document is complete, we will proceed with submission to TechBuy and begin the contract approval process to finalize a purchase order. We anticipate final approval by the end of March 2024.

It is a joy collaborating with Amiee Dixon, Abby Walton and Evelyn McCune from the newly established Office of Campus Events. We look forward to their continued support as we approach our 2025 Reaffirmation event.

Work Requests in Faculty Success

This year, Faculty Success (FS) went through many changes that began with some functionality transitions for our newly purchased software modules and sweeping changes to how Texas Tech uses the software. First, Texas Tech added graduate students, vastly increasing the number of users who can report in the system, which directly improves our ability to report on research involving graduate students.

Some users experienced issues in relation to this new increase in reporting and in the ability to import research. Namely, the Faculty Success platform could crash when searching for faculty publications imported from third-party applications. Watermark, the company that owns FS, improved functionality by lifting some of the limitations on importing, and users have not reported issues since the update.

The Office of Planning and Assessment (OPA) is working simultaneously through some changes that have come about in FS due to institutional changes at Texas Tech. OPA is working with colleges to improve Annual Faculty Report information. This includes:

- Better differentiation between in-progress scholarly contributions, like working papers, papers in revision and continuing awards
- Improvements in the connection with Cayuse and Faculty Success to provide clarity prior to Annual Faculty Report deadlines
- Additional screens to provide a landing page for new Promotion and Tenure procedures in Faculty Success
- Updated Grants options to better categorize incoming data from ORS
- Added functionality to import academic rank separately from employment title
- Additional API frameworks to import evaluations more quickly and to import Cayuse grant information

Over the year OPA submitted over 45 work requests that improved site functionality or reporting output.

OPA is working on the Reviews, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) software module to bring the Promotion and Tenure processes to a digital format. OPA has created three new reports that will directly tie into this system and is working on a pilot project to develop this digital format. This project is intended to be the first iteration which will open to the university in 2025. OPA will demonstrate and discuss the state of the RPT module at the upcoming March 27 OPALS session.

Institution-Level Student Learning Outcomes

The Office of Planning and Assessment (OPA) initiated a conversation during the January 2024 Institutional Effectiveness Committee regarding the development of institution-level student learning outcomes. We asked committee members to provide feedback on what they consider to be important learning components and areas of emphasis at Texas Tech. Committee members put key learning concepts onto notecards, and the findings from notecards were presented in a Word Cloud format. The committee will discuss these findings at its April 2024 meeting.

Annual Review Update

OPA conducts annual Program Assessment Reviews (PAR) of academic and non-academic programs. Academic programs include all undergraduate and graduate degree programs and non-degree-seeking certificates. Non-academic programs include student support services and administrative services. We work with faculty and staff to help organize their assessment plans in Nuventive Improve, our assessment platform where data is stored. We use Nuventive Improve to run program reports and use a detailed rubric to evaluate all degrees, student support services and administrative services.

The rubric evaluates programs in the following categories: student learning outcomes, assessment methods, results and analysis, and program reflections. We look to see that assessment plans are manageable and measurable. Through the PAR process, we provide feedback to departments. In addition to the OPA reviews, we have Texas Tech faculty review degree programs to provide valuable feedback. All reviews and comments are included in a report shared with department chairs.

OPA is currently reviewing programs through the PAR process, and our faculty committee will soon provide feedback on degree programs. We are thankful for the Texas Tech faculty who have volunteered to help with degree program reviews. Reviewing these programs also informs us of the excellent work faculty and staff do for our students and campus.

TechQuest

TechQuest is a locally developed instrument created by the Office of the Provost, Core Curriculum Steering Committee, and the OPA at Texas Tech University. TechQuest is designed to measure student learning in Foundational Component Areas (FCA) and general Student Learning Outcome objectives between a student's first year in college and upon graduation as a senior. The FCAs under the current Texas Core Curriculum are Communication; Mathematics; Life and Physical Sciences; Language, Philosophy, and Culture; Creative Arts; American History; Government/Political Sciences; Social and Behavioral Sciences.

TechQuest is being administered to senior students during the spring 2024 semester, from March 5 to March 31, 2024. Texas Tech's Institutional Research provided OPA with a list of eligible seniors, which totaled 14,078 students. The definition of senior student was expanded to include students who were at a

distance campus, such as Costa Rica, as well as students who are classified as juniors, but are attempting enough credit hours this semester to push them over the senior threshold at the end of the semester. OPA sent students a Qualtrics email invitation to participate in the assessment followed by weekly reminders throughout the month-long testing period. As an incentive for participating in the assessment, two seniors will be randomly selected to win a $500 scholarship toward tuition and fees and will be notified of the award by April 9.

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