

**Texas Tech University
Academic Council**

**Meeting of August 18, 2020
1:30 PM, Skype**

Attendance

Present: Cindy Akers, Dennis Arnett, Kathy Austin, Jeffrey Belnap, Andrea Bilkey, Bobbie Brown, Jaclyn Cañas-Carrell, Todd Chambers, Hyojung Cho, Mayukh Dass, David Doerfert, Cathy Duran, Dottie Durband, Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, Kristi Gaines, Greg Glaus, Lindsay Hallowell, Jamie Hansard, Kaelene Hansen, Melanie Hart, Stephanie Hart, Hunter Heck, Sheila Hoover, Patrick Hughes, Wendy-Adele Humphrey, Jorge Iber, Darryl James, Michelle Kiser, Amy Koerber, Mitzi Lauderdale, Justin Louder, Dave Louis, Brenda Martinez, Shirley Matteson, Pat McConnel, Sukant Misra, Reagan Ribordy, David Roach, Sam Segrán, Brian Shannon, Rob Stewart, Stacy Stockard, Carol Sumner, Annette Udamerri, Patricia Vitela, Janessa Walls, Lesley Nall Washington, Vicki West, and Aliza Wong.

Action Items:

1. Associate deans are asked to review the Administrator's Handbook for any necessary updates or corrections.
2. Associate deans are asked to share the attached Provost Planning Calendar for 2020-2021 with their faculty.

Durham DeCesaro called the meeting to order and presented the minutes from the July Council meeting. With no revisions needed, Akers moved to approve the minutes, Chambers seconded, and the minutes were approved.

For the next item of business, Durham DeCesaro introduced two new interim vice provosts. Jaclyn Cañas-Carrell will be taking point on academic and curricular policy matters, such as transfer equivalency and academic standing. Mitzi Lauderdale will be assisting in student academic issues, such as grade appeals or student-initiated course equivalency concerns.

The Council then heard an update on the new TTU COVID-19 Management System. Segrán explained that IT and the Office of the Vice President for Research have been working on an application for temperature screening and COVID-19 contact tracing. Several departments have come together to help create this new management system, which was demonstrated during the meeting. Austin showed Council members how to navigate the management system and explained how each of the four applications included in the management system function.

Chambers asked if this application is required effective August 24th, and Segrán clarified that the application will be effective today when the President's memo is released. Akers then asked if the application is designed for students to show faculty members the quick

assessment results before they enter classrooms, and Segran further clarified that faculty members and event managers will decide whether or not they will require the quick assessments before entry.

Akers then asked what the process should be if students show up to class and tell faculty members that they have tested positive and if faculty members should report the students. Austin explained that because of privacy regulations, everyone must report their own test results, and faculty members can refer students to this application to do so.

After the conclusion of the demonstration, Durham DeCesaro introduced the summary of course proposals. Hallowell explained that the effective dates in green have been moved forward. With no further discussion, Chambers motioned to approve the courses, Akers seconded, and the courses were approved.

Durham DeCesaro then introduced the program proposals, beginning with the proposal to add an academic minor to the Costa Rica campus. Because Curriculog does not have a proposal set up to offer minors at other campuses, Dean Williams was asked to write a memo giving context about and background for the creation of the undergraduate Business minor at TTU Costa Rica. Dean Belnap offered to answer any questions.

Chambers asked if CoMC will need to go through the process to get PCOM 3373 approved at the Costa Rica campus. Dean Belnap explained that since this request is only for the minor, that should not be necessary at this time. Dean Belnap further explained that they plan to use the same process to teach PCOM 3373 at the Costa Rica campus as they use to teach a current CoMC course there.

Louder expressed a concern that this proposal did not go through the eLearning Council. Durham DeCesaro explained that there will only be a handful of courses being offered at the Costa Rica campus in the fall term and that the full program will not be offered until a future term. Because offering a minor rather than a full program is a new process, Durham DeCesaro proposed allowing individual courses to be built for the fall term and then sending the full program to the eLearning Council for review once it is proposed. Louder clarified that the eLearning Council is to review all academic programs offered off campus, regardless of the type of program but agreed to look at the minor when the entire program is proposed in the future. Dean Belnap explained that Costa Rica intends to work closely with the eLearning Council as it prepares to offer a full Business program at the campus. This minor is intended to allow first-year students to take one course in their first semester that would count toward a Business major or a Business minor if the major does not come along. The goal is to broaden the options for Math majors, who are required to have a minor.

Durham DeCesaro called for a vote to offer the undergraduate minor in Business at TTU Costa Rica. Arnett motioned to approve, Louis seconded, and the proposal was approved.

Durham DeCesaro then introduced the program deletion in the Law School and asked for a Law School representative to give further details on the proposed deletion. Walls explained that the proposal is for a master's program that has not been offered for the last five years, and the faculty have decided to fully remove the program from the curriculum. Durham DeCesaro then asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Lauderdale motioned, Shannon seconded, and the proposal was approved.

Durham DeCesaro then explained that the remaining program proposals were curricular changes and urged associate deans to review these changes which may affect students in their areas.

The next item of business was the Administrator's Handbook. This new guide was first introduced last year at this time and is a consolidation of already existing resources designed to support the roles of department chairs, school directors, and area coordinators. Dr. Hyojung Cho spent the spring and summer expanding this resource and made it much more comprehensive. Durham DeCesaro requested that associate deans share and reference this guide as needed and that support staff review the guide and submit any needed updates or corrections. The guide will be housed on the Provost Office website under the Faculty Resources tab.

The Council then heard an update from Hughes on Strive. Hughes explained that the new update to Strive includes flags that can be assigned to students. One specific flag is the kudos flag, which is positive reinforcement for students who are doing well. Another new function is that students can now raise flags on themselves should they need a generic kind of help. Hughes requested that associate deans encourage their faculty to complete the trainings to become familiar with the new Strive environment. Hughes sent the link to the trainings in the chat box.

The next item of business was the Provost Planning Calendar for 2020-2021. As the calendar was not attached to the agenda, Durham DeCesaro offered for the calendar to be attached to the minutes and action items for this meeting. Stewart pointed out a few key deadlines on the calendar that associate deans should be aware of, including the deadlines for faculty awards.

Durham DeCesaro then turned the floor over to Stewart to discuss the COVID-19 related matters. Stewart began with an update on course modality changes. These changes reflect courses which were originally scheduled as face-to-face or hybrid courses and are now being moved to online instruction. The deadline for course modality changes is August 19th.

Stewart moved on to a discussion of the 6-Drop rule for summer and fall 2020 courses. This rule had been excused in the spring, and the question is whether it should be excused in the summer and fall terms. Brown explained that in the spring, we allowed all drops between the 13th class day and the last day to drop to be drop exceptions, meaning they did not count against the state drop limit. New Coordinating Board guidelines have expressed that institutions should show leniency in excusing drops for the summer and fall. Drops that count against the drop limit are given a grade of DG, and those that are given an exception are given a grade of DX, which does not count against the limit of 6. Brown asked if we should continue to allow exceptions to drops for either summer or fall or both. Akers motioned to accept the exceptions of drops through the fall term, Louder seconded, and the chat box revealed an overwhelming approval of the motion.

Stewart then moved on to the topic of updating final grades to grades of CR or NC. The initial plan was not to allow the extension for the change of final grades to CR or NC for summer and fall, but the Provost's Office would now like to open the floor for a discussion on offering these grade changes for the fall term. Stewart explained that any discussion on this topic started during this meeting would be carried forward to the Associate Deans' and

Chairs Council meetings in September. Heck explained that the summer served as an opportunity for both students and faculty to adjust to these new circumstances. Because of that, Heck was unsure whether allowing grade changes to CR and NC would be necessary for the fall. Stewart thanked Heck for that insight from a student perspective.

Martinez explained that from the Registrar's Office perspective, changing grades to CR and NC creates complications for students wishing to transfer. Martinez also reiterated the toll the mass grade changes took on the Registrar's Office staff for the spring. Brown also added that grade change requests, which had gotten lost in advisor emails, are still coming in for spring. Stewart thanked the Council members for their thoughts on this matter and requested for additional thoughts or discussions to be forwarded to him for the Provost's Office to consider.

The next item of business was the upcoming spring schedule. Currently, the spring schedule that is available was rolled over from the spring 2019 schedule and shows mostly face-to-face modalities. While a decision on modalities for the spring has not been made, Stewart reasoned that a decision should be forthcoming as preparations for advance registration begin. Brown explained that dates, times, and instructors can be updated on the schedule for spring. The modalities, however, should not be changed until we receive direction on how spring courses should be handled.

Stewart asked if there were any questions or concerns about the class builds for spring. Wong explained that Honors College students and parents have expressed concern about the modality changes that took place late in the process. Wong requested that departments do as much as possible to make changes ahead of time rather than having so many changes take place so close to the start of the term. Stewart agreed and said that we are waiting to give appropriate guidance for changes to be made in advance of registration opening.

Louder mentioned that if faculty members want to require students to attend class synchronously, those requests needed to have been submitted earlier. If those changes have not already been made and approved, faculty members cannot now require students to attend courses synchronously.

Durham DeCesaro then asked for the Council to return to a few COVID related questions that had been submitted in the chat. Shannon expressed concern about the feasibility of faculty checking students' phones before they enter classrooms. Austin explained that the faculty member will make the decision whether or not to require the quick assessment results prior to allowing students to enter the classroom. Using the application will not be required. Shannon then asked if the Law School should update their syllabus language with information about the new application. Austin said that this new application can be linked directly in the syllabi.

Glaus asked if the new application would send notifications to professors for students who have tested positive for or have been identified through contact tracing as having been exposed to COVID-19. Austin explained that the new application will send out automatic notifications with two exceptions. The first exception is for supervisors of employees, which HR has requested to handle. The other exception is for absenteeism notifications to professors, which will be handled by the Dean of Students. Stewart added that Matt Gregory is working on language that will be added to the standard notifications to professors. Austin continued with an explanation of the types of notifications that will be sent by the application and by medical personnel conducting contact tracing interviews.

Duran explained that notifications of students with positive tests or for students who may have been exposed will be sent by the new application to the Dean of Students directly. The Dean of Students' Office will process those notifications and will use the standard absence policy to notify instructors when necessary.

Chambers asked if there was a protocol for a faculty member to follow if one or two students have tested positive in a single class. Stewart asked for clarification. Chambers clarified by asking if there was a trigger point in which an entire class would be quarantined. Stewart explained that such a situation would depend on contact tracing and the extent of the exposure to the class. If necessary, the professor would work with the chairperson and the dean to determine whether the class would need to transition to remote instruction for a certain amount of time.

Stewart added that additional language about the contact tracing process is being drafted and will be added to the flowchart that was sent previously. In response to a question in the chat, Austin mentioned that a contact tracer will reach out to a faculty member if a student has tested positive or has possibly been exposed, and the faculty member can share the classroom seating chart with the contact tracer at that point to allow for further contact tracing.

Akers asked if there was a new flowchart or if the previous flowchart had been updated. Stewart explained that the previous flowchart is being updated. Duran added that the flowchart was created before the management system was completed, so it needs additional updates, which are forthcoming. Akers then asked if there could be a single-page document describing to faculty members the appropriate process for how to handle students showing up to class and saying they have tested positive. Stewart asked for Council members to send him their questions and requests so that he can send a single request to the COVID-19 task force.

Duran clarified that all students should be directed to the new application to report positive tests, which students should do instead of calling Student Health. Stewart added that since students will be reporting positive cases to their professors, instructors should have some ready guidance.

Stewart then asked for items of other business. Arnett asked what the protocol should be for students who show up to class but refuse to wear a mask. Stewart clarified that instructors should request for students to present or go get a mask. Texas Tech Police should not be called. If students refuse to wear masks, they should be taken aside and informed of the consequences of refusing to comply with the face covering policy. In an attempt to mitigate these types of interactions, students should be notified in advance of the first day of class the expectations of face coverings as per university policy. Duran explained that TTPD will assist in disruptions or violent aggression but will not be mask enforcers.

Sumner added that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has been working with various colleges and entities across the System on workshops for de-escalation procedures and other resources for the difficult times we are in right now. Sumner suggested that bringing in an expert to Academic Council might be an option to give Council members additional guidance on how to handle noncompliance in various capacities.

Stewart then asked for any announcements. Sumner updated the Council that Diversity, Equity and

Inclusion has been awarded the grant for TRIO SSS to continue providing advising support for first-generation students, low-income students, and students with disabilities, which was presented to the Council in January. The grant has been awarded for the 2020-2025 application window. Stewart congratulated DE&I on receiving the grant.

Akers explained that CASNR has been using a third-party source called Pollack Peacebuilding to work through de-escalation tactics. Stewart recommended that any interested parties should contact Akers about that resource. Sumner added that DE&I has been working with the System to find additional options for these types of workshops.

With no further business, Stewart wished the Council members well as they prepare for classes to start next week and then adjourned the meeting.