

**Texas Tech University  
Academic Council**

**Meeting of October 19, 2021  
1:30 PM, Skype**

**Attendance**

**Present:** Faisal Al-Hmoud, Mario Beruvides, Andrea Bilkey, Stephanie Borst, Dee Dee Brown-Campbell, Todd Chambers, Robert Cox, Mayukh Dass, Dottie Durband, Kristi Gaines, Lindsay Hallowell, Kaelene Hansen, Melanie Hart, Bret Hendricks, Wendy-Adele Humphrey, Jorge Iber, Catherine Jai, Darryl James, Michelle Kiser, Amy Koerber, Rodney Lackey, Mitzi Lauderdale, Ryan Litsey, Justin Louder, Brenda Martinez (for Bobbie Brown), Pat McConnel, Kuhn Park, Pradip Sahu, Brian Shannon, Rob Stewart (Chair), Carol Sumner, Suzanne Tapp, Clay Taylor, Elizabeth Trejos-Castillo, and Janessa Walls.

**Guests:** Shelly Bowman, Jonathan Duncan, Matt Gregory, Anthony Rodriguez, and Jyotsna Sharma.

**Action Items:**

1. Associate deans are asked to volunteer and to ask the faculty within their areas to volunteer for the Transfer Steering Group.

Stewart called the meeting to order by presenting the September Council minutes. With no comments or revisions needed, Cox moved to accept the minutes. Chambers seconded, and the minutes were approved.

For the next item of business, Hallowell introduced the course proposals, beginning with the voting items. Hallowell pointed out that the summary of proposals will now show course and program modalities. Cox pointed out item 11, GEOG 1401, as having a proposed title similar to an existing course in NRM and requested to table the item pending further discussion between AS and CASNR. With no further discussion, Stewart called for a motion. Chambers motioned to approve items 1-34, with a table of item 11. Humphrey seconded, and the course approvals were approved.

Hendricks clarified that item 36, EDLD 6392, is requesting to remove a restriction that only students in the Ph.D. program can take the course. Instead, the restriction will permit students in both the Ph.D. and Ed.D. programs to take the course.

With no further discussion, James introduced the program proposals. James pointed out that item 3, the new M.S. in Human Sciences, will likely be effective later than Spring 2022. James also requested a table for item 4, the proposed B.A. in Criminology, pending further discussion with AS. Stewart added that any new degree programs need to be review by James prior to being presented at Academic Council.

Beruvides explained that the proposed Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's in Mechanical Engineering and Bioengineering is in line with previous submissions from the College of Engineering to propose similar accelerated programs. James added that because these are existing

programs, THECB and SACSCOC approval are not needed. James then pointed out that in 2026, we will have someone from SACSCOC reviewing our accelerated programs.

Lauderdale explained that Human Sciences worked with the Graduate School to make sure the M.S. in Human Sciences was distinctly different from the interdisciplinary programs in the Graduate School. The program will combine two areas of concentration within Human Sciences or in related fields. The college anticipates the majority of students combining two certificate programs to complete the degree. Louder verified that the proposal went through eLearning Council in August.

Stewart asked if item 5, the proposed new online modality for the B.A. in Public Relations, had also been through eLearning Council, and Louder confirmed that. Chambers explained that item 2, the new graduate certificate in Sports Communication, is in response to student demand. Stewart asked if it was a brand-new certificate that is starting out as online, and Chambers confirmed that. Louder added that the certificate would require 12 hours. Louder also mentioned that there had been discussions on whether the program was different from those being offered by Kinesiology and Sport Management, and it was determined that the program is unique in its content.

With no further discussion, Stewart called for a motion for items 1-5, with a table of item 4. Louder so moved, Koerber seconded, and the program proposals were approved. Stewart then introduced the informational items and reminded Council members that these changes could affect students in their areas.

For the next item of business, Stewart invited Lauderdale to give a report from the Transfer Working Group on the barriers students are experiencing when attempting to transfer and recommendations to mitigate these barriers. The presentation included nine barriers with accompanying recommendations.

The first barrier is lack of direct course equivalence. Lauderdale pointed out that a common theme in the barriers is the difference between transferability and degree applicability and the importance of learning how to communicate these differences. Degree applicability determinations are under the authority of the respective department and college. The recommendations are for departments to consider all reasonable transfer courses as degree-applicable substitutions. In addition, departments should consider offering adding lower-division special topics courses, and academic units should objectively review general credit for possible substitutions.

The second barrier is the delay of substitutions being entered into DegreeWorks, which could cause a student to take extra coursework. The recommendation is for departments to approve substitutions in DegreeWorks as soon as possible.

The third barrier is changes in curriculum without accommodation for students planning to transfer. We are obligated by the State of Texas to honor any active catalog (7 years) post high school graduation. The recommendation is for advisors to make students aware of the fastest pathway to graduation but to also provide reasonable degree substitutions when departments want to encourage students' transferring to the most recent catalog. Another recommendation is for departments to consider additional catalog language for those outside the university who might be looking at TTU's curriculum.

The fourth barrier is the inconsistent application of the requirement for students to receive permission for concurrent enrollment. Many students are not aware of this requirement, and there is inconsistency in academic units' application of the requirement. The recommendations are for

academic units to not unnecessarily deny credit if the language is kept, and more importantly to consider revising the language in the catalog so that prior written permission is recommended but not required.

The fifth barrier is residency requirements for degree programs. SACSCOC requires that one-fourth of the total hours applicable to the degree be taken at TTU, but some programs have higher residency requirements. The recommendation is for academic units to revisit residency requirements and to lift the additional residency requirements when not required for legitimate reasons. If the additional residency requirements are retained, the recommendation is to add those requirements to the catalog in the TTU residence credit section.

The sixth barrier relates to the course articulation review process. The working group determined that syllabi are necessary in the review process to ensure learning outcomes are met. The recommendation is to encourage students to use the transfer equivalency tool to know when they will need to submit a syllabus for review.

The seventh barrier relates to the transferring of core curriculum coursework. When a student transfers to TTU as core complete, the student will not be required to complete the core curriculum at TTU unless there are additional program requirements that happen to fall within the core requirement. If a student transfers to TTU partially core complete, TTU applies those core courses that are deemed equivalent to ours. If students transfer in from out of state, their core curriculum may be denied applicability. Another related issue is that Texas requires students to complete a course with content on the Texas Constitution. The current solution to this is for out of state transfer students to take POLS 2107, but this course is not offered regularly. Instead, students will take POLS 2306, which requires an unnecessary 2 credit hours. The recommendations are for TTU to accept courses transcribed and designated as written communications core when a student is partially core complete. In addition, the Department of Political Science should consider offering POLS 2107 more often.

The eighth barrier is the TTU lab science requirement, which already has a solution. TTU's 2-hour lab requirement is not a state requirement, so TTU offers BIOL 2202 to support transfer students who transferred in without those lab hours. There was a previous shortage of offerings for this course, but the Department of Biology has agreed to offer more sections of this course.

The ninth barrier is regarding the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) and Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS) it uses for lower-division courses. TTU does not ascribe to TCCNS, which causes confusion in advising transfer students. One issue is that TTU offers some of the TCCNS equivalent courses at the upper division, which causes graduation issues when students aren't meeting that upper-division hour requirement. One recommendation is for TTU to consider aligning course numbering with TCCNS. Another recommendation is to move any ACGM course to the lower division.

Lauderdale then gave other general recommendations. The working group is putting together a transfer steering committee to assist with guiding matters related to academic transfers. They would also like to provide a transfer equivalency guide or rubric for faculty to use as a tool in reviewing transfer credit. The working group already has a draft guide ready to go. The working group would like to put a focus on communicating the difference between degree applicability and transferability. Transferability does not always help the student, while degree applicability means applying coursework where appropriate to a student's degree. Another recommendation is to communicate acceptable substitutions for our partner institutions for 2 years. Similarly, the working group recommends communicating significant curricular changes with transfer units.

Academic units should focus on high-volume transfer institutions, for example the guidebooks we are working on with South Plains College. The last recommendation is for academic units to consider creating a transfer student guidebook.

Lauderdale then explained the details of the addendum of the report, which largely focused on the interpretation of the Texas core curriculum. The foundational component area is what we traditionally view as core. Each foundational component area has a 3-digit code (e.g., Written Communication is coded 010). After asking the THECB for assistance, we were told that when students transfer in as partially core complete, we need to apply any courses that are coded as foundational component areas to those core requirements.

In addition, if a transfer student brings in an institutional component area option course, coded as 090 (i.e., additional Math/Logic and Oral Communication) from their previous institution, that is not the same as our options, we must apply it, and TTU needs to determine which component area option should be replaced. The THECB only said to find a suitable replacement for that course. Lauderdale clarified that we are still allowed to require additional degree requirements as long as they are included in the degree program. Lauderdale added that the new interpretation of transfer of core will be applicable for students entering in the Fall 2022 semester, which is the 2022-2023 catalog year.

The working group encourages academic units to evaluate their degree programs to determine if there are any core courses necessary for any specific program learning outcome to be achieved. If such courses exist, the academic units need to list those courses as degree program requirements. (N.B. The deadline for degree program changes to be included in the 2022-2023 printed catalog is the February 2022 Academic Council meeting. Any program changes approved at the March 2022 Academic Council meeting will only appear in the online catalog.) The last recommendation was to utilize the Core Curriculum Steering Committee to assist with determining which institutional component area option (090-coded courses) to replace.

Stewart announced to the Council members that there were five minutes allowed for questions. Stewart then asked what the next steps would be. Lauderdale explained that the next step would be putting the steering group together. Stewart asked if the working group is needing volunteers to participate in the steering group. Lauderdale encouraged Council members to consider participating in the steering group and to encourage the faculty in their areas to consider volunteering as well.

With no additional items or announcements, Stewart adjourned the meeting.