

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Texas Tech University

Meeting of
October 18, 2011

MINUTES

Present: Sam Bradley, Wes Cochran, Cathy Duran, Gary Elbow, Ralph Ferguson, Melanie Hart, Robert Henry, Lynn Huffman, Patrick Hughes, Jorge Iber, Ramona Johnson for Cindy Akers, Sue Jones, Debbie Laverie, Ethan Logan, Pat McConnel, Tara Miller for Amy Murphy, Juan Munoz, Carla Myers, Walt Oler, Valerie Paton, Donna Perry for Peggy Johnson, Marjean Purinton, David Roach, Bob Schaller for Bobbie Brown, Brian Shannon, Brian Steele, Rob Stewart (chair), Kevin Stoker, Austin Walden for Janessa Walls, Vicki West

Guests: Joshua Barron, Andrea McCourt, Roger Saathoff, Steven Morales

Walden and Morales represented Academic Support and Facilities Resources in discussing recent Coordinating Board changes requiring Texas Tech to change its coding system to depict the instructional method of (1) distance education and (2) hybrid/blended instruction. Although ASFR and Institutional Research will make all the changes, department personnel who build sections in the future will need to adhere to the new codes. A course that is fully a distance education course may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. A hybrid/blended course, on the other hand, will have the majority of planned instruction (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent) occurring when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place.

Council members reviewed minutes of the September 20, 2011, meeting. Purinton moved that the minutes be approved as presented, Cochran seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Jones presented the course approval summary. Saathoff stressed the need for IS 3100 as a seminar for transfer students transitioning into a new environment beyond community college. McCourt discussed creation of a new human resource development concentration in the University Studies program and the need for a new HRDV prefix for courses related to the new concentration. Jones moved that the course summary be accepted as presented, Roach seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Elbow informed council members that 99 courses in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics have received CIP funding code changes.

Elbow, Jones, and Stewart led a discussion of the Faculty Senate's response to options suggested as a means to resolve the future academic calendar conflict between final exams and Carol of Lights. Stewart summarized an additional option suggested after the Faculty Senate meeting, but council members did not favor extending final exams through Thursday prior to commencement. After extensive discussion of the many issues involved in seeking a solution to the calendar problem, Stewart said he would arrange a meeting of the council's ad hoc calendar committee and the Faculty Senate's calendar subcommittee in an effort to resolve the issue.

Brown called attention to recent deadline changes in final grading. Final grading now opens on Monday (December 5) prior to the last day of class. Grades for degree candidates will be due on Thursday (December 15) prior to commencement, and grading will close three calendar days after the last day of

finals (December 17) in fall/spring. During summer terms, grading will close two calendar days after the last day of finals.

Jones discussed recent changes in how hours are reported to the Coordinating Board and subsequently expressed in official university documents. Instead of expressing hours in a four-digit format (e.g., 3:3:0:2) in course descriptions, Jones suggested that students are only interested in one number – the number of credit hours. Elbow moved that course descriptions appearing in official university publications both online and in print begin using only the number of credit hours. Iber seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Jones passed out a copy of the SACSCOC guidelines stating that “catalogs or other official publications” should explicitly state frequency of courses. Referring to an informal survey of 17 randomly selected Southern universities, Jones noted that only three universities report frequency of courses. The council agreed that Valerie Paton would make an inquiry with SACSCOC regarding whether the guidelines are a suggestion or a requirement.