

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Texas Tech University

Meeting of
October 19, 2010

MINUTES

Present: Bruce Bills, Wesley Cochran, Cathy Duran, Gary Elbow, Laura Stout for Drew Graham, Bob Henry, Sheila Hoover, Ramona Johnson for Norm Hopper, Lynn Huffman, Patrick Hughes, Jorge Iber, Peggy Johnson, Sue Jones, Bobbie Latham, Deborah Lavrie, Pat McConnel, Juan Munoz, Walt Oler, Valerie Paton, DaNay Phelps, Marjean Purinton, David Roach, Brian Shannon, Brian Steele, Rob Stewart (chair), Kevin Stoker, Vicki West

Guests: Dale Ganus, Julie McCauley, Michele Moskos, Delia Tibbs

The Academic Council reviewed the minutes from the September 21, 2010, meeting and approved the minutes as presented.

Hughes discussed Distributive Learning enrollment trends that reveal impressive growth from fall 2009 to fall 2010. The number of courses in all modes of delivery increased from 569 to 1,744, enrollments increased from 6,616 to 23,606, and total semester credit hours grew from 20,297 to 72,272. Hughes attributed part of the growth to “constant marketing.” Moskos summarized the expanded marketing efforts of University College since September 2009.

Hughes also updated the council on the status of the university’s correspondence courses, which traditionally have been non-semester based. Because all distance education courses will be semester based in the future, Texas Tech will no longer offer correspondence courses after current students are “taught out.”

Phelps and McCauley summarized the efforts of the university to address all concerns from parents, students, and faculty/staff regarding the December 2010 implementation of the decision to block the ability of students to view final grades if they have not completed the online AlcoholEdu course. Munoz suggested that the words “in jeopardy” be substituted for “at risk” in all program materials and communications. Paton asked McCauley to send council members “three to four bullets” that can be used by colleges and advisors when people question the value of this type of institutional commitment to content delivery when many studies show that content exposure does not change behavior.

Stewart emphasized the need for faculty to submit textbook orders as soon as possible to allow students to shop competitively prior to the start of spring semester.

Jones presented the October course approval summary. Henry moved the courses be accepted as presented, Cochran seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Henry reviewed the decision by the College of Visual and Performing Arts to consolidate and phase-out subordinate programs in order to come into compliance with THECB rules regarding low-producing programs. The following subordinate programs will be phased out and replaced with concentrations in the M.F.A. in Theatre Arts: Theatre Arts-Design, Theatre Arts-Playwriting, Theatre Arts-Performance and Pedagogy, and Theatre Arts-Theatre Management. In addition, the following subordinate programs will

be phased out and replaced with concentrations in the Ph.D. in Fine Arts: Fine Arts–Theatre Arts, Fine Arts–Art, and Fine Arts–Music.

Paton urged other colleges to follow the lead of the College of Visual and Performing Arts in phasing out their low-producing subordinate programs and replacing them as concentrations within existing degree programs. This move would have no effect on the teaching of the program but would move the program off the Coordinating Board's degree inventory, prevent the program from being identified as low producing, and eliminate the risk of discontinuation. Paton said 22 subordinate programs presently identified as low producing can be phased out into concentrations. Other low-producing programs that do not have this option are likely to be cut by THECB after February 1 regardless of the university's justifications for keeping the program. Paton said she will send a letter to the colleges this week reminding administrators of the need for appropriate actions in the face of approaching deadlines. She urged colleges to contact their accrediting bodies to discuss how phasing out subordinate programs into concentrations might affect their accreditation.

Jones presented a Report to the Provost from the 11-member Ad Hoc Committee on the Academic Calendar. After explaining why the fall calendars for 2012 – 2015 face unique scheduling problems, Jones presented three committee recommendations:

- Schedule fall commencement in 2012 for December 14-15 by starting classes on August 27, having faculty report for duty on August 22, conducting the last Red Raider Orientations on August 23-24, eliminating fall break, designating Dec. 6 as an individual study day, beginning finals on December 7, and encouraging Carol of Lights sponsors to reschedule the event for November 30.
- Reconvene the existing committee to re-evaluate every aspect of the university's fall class schedule and calendar in 2013 – 2015 to determine any alternatives to resolving the scheduling conflict between final exams and the traditional date of Carol of Lights.
- Beginning in academic year 2011-12, make Raiderlink available for grading on Monday prior to the last day of finals and change the due date for grades to three calendar days after the last day of finals during long terms and two calendar days after the last day of finals during summer terms (national holidays exempt).

Elbow informed the council members that in the process of clarifying the Guidelines for Course Approval Requests that were approved at the September meeting, he added a reference to the Graduate Course Addition Worksheet for New Courses that appears on the Institutional Research Course Inventory web page. When the amended guidelines were circulated, Elbow said he was reminded that this document was discussed at the January 19, 2010, Academic Council meeting. At that meeting council members expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the worksheet but took no vote regarding its approval. Elbow suggested that a vote to approve or delete the worksheet would clarify the Academic Council members' wishes. Henry moved that the use of the three-page document be discontinued, Jones seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Stewart reminded council members of the requirement of H.B. No. 269 to provide 12 hours of undergraduate course credit for military service. Citing the need to articulate how this credit will be applied to military veterans enrolled at Texas Tech, Stewart appointed Munoz and Latham to a committee charged with making recommendations to the Provost's Office. He said other members will be added to the committee and the group will be finalized in the next few days.

Latham discussed two items that need clarification in both the printed and the html catalogs: (1) A second degree student may replace a grade in a course taken during the second degree but not a course taken during the first degree, and (2) a grade of D cannot be replaced with a grade of P, which has no GPA points attached to it. The catalog wording will be clarified.

Stewart reminded associate deans to email him any issues and statements from their areas pertaining to course fees. He will be meeting with the Chief Operating Officer to address course fee concerns and to clarify inconsistent catalog wording regarding course fees.

Other business brought before the council included the following:

- Paton invited the council members to a free breakfast at the Overton Hotel on October 20 as part of the Race Ethnicity and Community Engagement Conference.
- Stewart noted that next month the council will address the decreasing availability of Honors courses in the various colleges and ways to revitalize and maintain our commitment to the Honors Program.
- Munoz noted that the Provost's Office is soliciting nominations and applications for two new positions recently created in the area of retention and advising: Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Assistant Vice Provost for Community College and Transfer Relations.