

## **Teaching Academy Executive Council Minutes**

### **August 29, 2025**

#### **Members Present:**

Ameri Gurley, Nancy Soonpaa, Jeffrey Harper, Shane Blum, Fanni Coward, Feruzan Irani Williams, Vijay Hegde, Alan Barenberg, Chris Smith, Yuan Shu, Julie Chang, Lisa Low, Cindy Akers, Charles Crews, Suzanne Tapp

#### **Members Not Present:**

#### **Welcome and Group Activity:**

Ameri welcomed the group and asked the new members to introduce themselves. She gave everyone a prompt card and asked each person to write a response to the question, “If I could ask a student...”. She collected the cards at the end of the meeting and will use these to collect information as part of her theme for the year.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Cindy Akers moved to approve the minutes from April 25<sup>th</sup>; Nancy Soonpaa seconded. The council approved the April minutes.

#### **2025-2026 Vision:**

Ameri announced that her vision and theme for this year is “Connecting with today’s students”. Each member was given a shirt that fit this theme. The goal is to engage with today’s generation of students and help them talk about and discover why they want to be at Texas Tech. She has plans to hold a few tabling events in the free speech area to connect with students, start the conversation, and give away the themed shirts.

Fanni Coward shared that she has been reading *10 to 25: The Science of Motivating Young People: A Groundbreaking Approach to Leading the Next Generation* by David Yeager and plans to have a workshop with the author this fall. This could fit with the theme and be promoted by the Teaching Academy. Lisa Low noted that Barbie Chambers has done research on the current generation of college students and has a list of articles that can be shared with the council.

#### **Burns Conference Speaker:**

Suzanne Tapp reminded the council that the Burns Conference is on October 17<sup>th</sup> and shared details about the sessions with Dr. Ann Austin. She mentioned that there may be opportunities for small groups to meet with her while she’s in Lubbock.

#### **Announcements:**

Shane Blum announced that he will act as interim director of the TLPDC this year while Suzanne Tapp transitions to a full time role as Associate Vice Provost for Teaching & Learning. Shane will develop a strategic plan that aligns with the university’s vision and will chair a national search for a new director in the spring.

Suzanne asked for feedback on RaiderCanvas and the transition to the new LMS. A few members noted some of the positives and things they recently learned. Suzanne shared that TTU Online and the TLPDC will continue to host open houses for faculty to help with issues that come up in the first weeks of class. She asked that council members send issues to her so that the team can

stay up to date on what faculty need. Many council members gave encouragement to the TTU Online staff and appreciated their responsiveness.

The Piper Professor Award nominations are now open, and applications close on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching Award applications are now open, and applications close on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The New Member Induction Ceremony and Fall Business Meeting are on Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 2pm in TLPDC 151.

**Adjourn:**

Ameri adjourned the meeting.