Deans Council Minutes
July 9, 2013
BA 290

Deans Council Members in Attendance:
• Dr. Adolfo Benavides, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
• Dr. Dan Edelman, Associate Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
• Dr. Arlene Horne, Vice Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies
• Dr. Dale Funderburk, Interim Dean, College of Business and Entrepreneurship
• Dr. Sal Attardo, Dean, College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Art
• Dr. Grady Blount, Dean, College of Science, Engineering and Agriculture

Others in Attendance:
• Dr. Marila Palmer, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning
• Dr. Jennifer Schroeder, Department Head, Psychology, Counseling and Special Education (Attending in the absence of Interim Dean Gail Johnson.)
• Ms. Cynthia Rhodes, Executive Assistant to the Provost

Not in attendance: Dr. Gail Johnson, Interim Dean, College of Education and Human Services.

Minutes recorded by Cynthia Rhodes.

PROVOST – Provost Adolfo Benavides greeted Deans Council members and as the new provost, he expressed his enthusiasm and eagerness to serve as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Dr. Benavides emphasized the importance of communication and transparency at all levels. He plans to meet with each dean periodically to ensure open lines of communications and stay well-informed regarding academic affairs activities and issues. Dr. Benavides requests that when possible, the chain-of-command be followed so resolutions can be made at the appropriate level.

SACS – Dr. Palmer provided the following update regarding SACS activities:

- Ninety-seven percent of the first drafts have been submitted.
- Dr. Harp has reviewed 94% of the narratives for the Principles.
- Dr. Palmer has reviewed 65% of the narratives for the Principles.
- Fifty-five percent of the narratives have been input into the Xitracs program with an associated 2,076 pieces of evidence linked, not counting the faculty credential documentation.

In response to Dr. Benavides’ question about areas of concern, Dr. Palmer reviewed the following.

- Federal Requirement 4.5 - Dr. Palmer reminded the council that the university must have adequate procedures for addressing student complaints, and must be able to demonstrate that it follows its procedures when addressing student complaints. Emphasis was given that colleges should be maintaining formal logs and ensuring that they are responding to
student complaints in a timely manner. Dr. Benavides asked Dean Attardo, Blount and Funderburk to provide examples to Dr. Palmer regarding student complaints. Dr. Hendrix has written the narrative for addressing written student complaints, but documentation could still be added.

- **Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1** – This is not one of our strong areas which is most likely a result of changes in leadership and formats. Dr. Palmer needs to finish the rewrite of this one, but currently content editing is the most important so that entries can continue to be made into Xitracs software, and that is also the most time consuming task at hand.

- Other areas with challenges include:
  1) Adjunct faculty evaluations, which currently use student course evaluations.
  2) The need for on-going faculty development for adjunct faculty. Dr. Attardo discussed expanding what was currently in operation as training for graduate assistants to include adjuncts.
  3) There may be questions regarding the adequacy of full-time versus part-time faculty in Core Requirement 2.8 and in the 25% requirement for terminally degree faculty to teach in the undergraduate programs in Comprehensive Standard 3.5.4.
  4) Most of the original narratives relied heavily on policy rather than product. (We need to keep in mind the 3 P’s: Practice/Policy/Product)
  5) The committee might have concerns about the qualifications of some of the faculty that are credentialed based on a justification. Academic Affairs is providing oversight for faculty credentials.

Dr. Palmer concluded by saying that her comments do not represent a comprehensive review of the areas of possible concern, since she had not brought her notes.

- **July 18-19, 2103** – Dr. Goldstein, SACS Vice President, will visit campus. Dr. Palmer will forward a copy of the agenda for his visit to Dr. Benavides. During this brief time, President Jones, the reaffirmation leadership team, the reaffirmation steering committee, and the QEP leadership team are scheduled to meet with Dr. Goldstein. In advance of the visit, Dr. Goldstein is reviewing some of the standards. He will give us an overview of how the on-site committee will operate and discuss which off-campus sites to visit. Other areas under review will be our reporting format and perhaps input regarding our self-judgments of compliance, partial compliance, and non-compliance.

- **The first week of September 2013** is the deadline to submit the Compliance Certification Report to SACS.

- **The first week of March 2014** there will be an on-site campus SACS visit.

**TURNITIN** – Although the Library has been the contact area for the purchase of Turnitin software, it is not a library expense. Turnitin assists faculty in catching plagiarism and assists students to ensure their work does not cross the line into plagiarism. Discussion was held rather the contact area should be relocated to the Faculty Teaching with Technology Center as this seemed more appropriate. The annual cost for this service is approximately $13,204.45. A review is needed to determine where it would be best located and who would contribute to its purchase.
UNDERGRADUATE/GRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEWS – In a previous Deans Council meeting, it was agreed that undergraduate programs reviews could be included in graduate program reviews. Subsequently, colleges submitted their UG data to the provost office and a master program review schedule was compiled using the THECB graduate program review schedule.

A copy of the master UG/G programs review schedule was shared with Deans Council members.

SUMMER I GRADES – Prior to Deans Council, Dr. Edelman forwarded electronic copies of a list of faculty who have not yet turned in Summer I grades. The deadline for summer I grading was 5 p.m., July 8. The Registrar Office’s will close grades today at noon. Deans will review the list and prompt faculty to get grades in as soon as possible.

FOREIGN TRAVEL – Deans are to remind department heads and faculty to submit requests for foreign travel in a timely manner. Submissions should be made so that routing is completed and received by the president “45 days prior to the trip” timeframe. If the timeframe is not met, written justification/explanation must accompany the request prior to receiving approval from the president/provost.

MERIT – Merit spreadsheets are due in the Provost Office tomorrow (July 10) at noon. Dr. Blount stated he has a department head that is on vacation. Dr. Edelman stated there is no flexibility in extending the timeframe.

HEF – HEF data is due in the Provost Office no later than July 15. Deans were reminded that enhancement fees can be used to purchase computer equipment. Academic Affairs had to obtain an advancement from our FY 2014 HEF allocation for essential needs in the Nursing Department and Planetarium.

Dr. Edelman requested deans to send him a list of classrooms (and estimates) that need remodeling/repairing/upgrading. Currently, Rockwall and UCD should be in good shape.

AD-INTERIM APPOINTMENTS – Dr. Edelman informed colleges that the procedures regarding the appointment and posting of ad-interim positions is being reviewed by Human Resources (HR). If external candidates are considered, it may be that the position may need to be listed with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) via TAMUS PATHS. If a change is made to our current process, it is anticipated that HR will issue a notice.