Deans' Council Minutes--May 24, 2005

1.   **Orientation Program Development**—the Provost introduced Louisa Kessel who has joined the staff at Commerce on emergency hire to assist with orientation of new students over the summer. In addition, she will consult with deans about changes they would like to see in orientation and assist in developing materials for prospective students and parents.

2.   **Update on Campus Residence Life Facilities**—Dean. Joe Webber briefed deans on the discussions about residence facilities. The plan is to pare down and upgrade the inventory. This involves demolition of old facilities (G-buildings, Acker and McNeil), renovation of Smith Hall this summer, remodeling of Phillips and Walker halls, and possible closing/renovating Hubbell. PAC and Student Affairs staff will meet July 9-10 to review present occupancy and make final decisions about Hubbell and men's housing generally.

3.   **THECB Report on Developmental Education: Implications for Commerce Programs in Developmental Education** (Attachment)–Dr. Hendrix reviewed THECB's findings and how A&M-C's practices stack up by comparison. Deans will rate the concerns for the next meeting and begin a conversation about how to address the most serious deficiencies and improve the effectiveness of the developmental program.

4.   **Smoking Policy**—Dr. Scott reported on SGA recommendations for changes in the smoking policy that will be implemented this year. Specifically, no smoking in residence halls or in the doorways to buildings. Smoking outposts will be located at some distance from doors to buildings so that those entering a building will not have to go through a cloud of smoke.

5.   **HEF Allocations** (Attachment)—Dr. Scott reviewed the impact of the State's reductions in HEF funds for the campus for FY 06 at $371,183. This reduction, in combination with the cost of student information system acquisition @ $700,000 and costs of the Science Building will result in a reduction to HEF allocations, with Academic and Student Affairs receiving $630,000 or $200,000 less in 06 than 05. Library materials allocations will be reduced by $55,000 to $175,000. Dr. Zelhart reported that this would accelerate the Library's weeding process to reduce duplication of hard-copy serials that are available online. Questions came up about the funding of IT equipment in the Science Building—was it in the building plans or another expense on top of what has been set aside? And about how to provide faculty start-up costs?

6.   **Unhelpful Advisors**—–Dr. Scott asked the Deans to brief department heads on how sensitive students are to rumors and, especially, to advisors who speculate on what might be going on in other departments. Best plan is to avoid gossip and such speculation about other programs or departments.

7.   **Assistantship Stipends**—Dean Headley opened discussion about how to allow for some flexibility in setting assistantship rates for some departments where other institutions offer much larger stipends. Questions addressed the *zero sum game issue*: how much flexibility can we really afford? Every GA stipend that is increased will reduce the overall fund and impact the number of GA's available and potentially, the total enrollment. Do we really need a campus-wide solution or a spot solution? Discussion will continue at the next meeting

Additional Items to be Considered at Next Meeting:
8.   Twelve (12) Hour Rule for Non-Degree Courses -- Dean Headley
          Procedure A11.35 Admission to Graduate School (Attachment)
          Procedure A11.39 Course Requirements for the Master's Degree (Attachment)
9.   Significant Financial Interest Certification (Conflict of Interest) (Attachment) -- Dr. Headley
10.   Research & Creative Activity Advisory Council (Attachment) -- Dr. Headley
11.   Procedure A15.01 Internally Funded Research Grants (Attachment) -- Dr. Headley

Developmental Education Policies and Practices—Comparison to State Results
Completed 05/23/05

1. Institutional Priority

   Results of survey: Best practices indicate DE should be a major part of an institution's strategic plan. Sixty-six (66) percent of institutions reported that developmental education was a major part of their strategic plan in 2004, compared to 52 percent in 2000. Developmental education is not reflected in our strategic plan.

2. Increase the number of developmental education class sections taught by regular, full-time faculty (not necessarily tenured/tenure track).

   Results of survey: Best practices indicate using full-time faculty to teach developmental education improves student achievement. This table explains the data we reported, as well as the results of the state survey for 2004:

Course	Percentage of Course Sections—A&M-Commerce	Percentage of Course Sections--Universities
DE Math	18%	40%
College-Level Math	81%	71%
DE Reading	25%	38%
College-Level History	68%	70%
DE Writing	42%	41%
College-Level English Composition	68%	48%

3. Centralize all developmental education under one administrative entity.

   Results of survey: Best practices indicate organizing DE in a centralized administrative structure improves student achievement. Results of state survey indicate the percentage of institutions that have created a separate organizational structure increased from 27 percent to 33 percent. We reported we are decentralized, but coordinated.

4. Change procedure to include the calculation of developmental education grades in students' GPA.

   Results of survey: Best practices indicate grades in DE courses should be calculated in GPA along with college-level courses to determine academic standing. Currently, we use grades in DE to determine academic standing (i.e. probation, suspension, etc.), but DE grades are not used in GPA calculation. State results indicate institutions were slightly more likely to use grades in developmental education to determine academic standing.

5. Pursue National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) certification.

   Results of survey: Best practices indicate institutions that have received National Association for Developmental Education certification improve retention, time-to-degree, and graduation rates. Our institution does not hold NADE certification. Findings from the state survey indicate the percentage of institutions that either hold accreditation form NADE or are seeking it, increased from 8 percent in 2000 to 27 percent in 2004.

6. Inform newly hired full and part-time regular faculty that they will be expected to periodically teach developmental education courses as part of their load.

Results of survey: Research indicates when over 75% of the newly hired faculty understand they are expected to periodically teach DE courses as a part of their load, student achievement is improved. Our institution reported that less than 25% of our faculty understand this expectation. State results indicate approximately 60 percent of departments that offer developmental education courses, at least 75 percent of new faculty are advised that they will be expected to teach developmental education along with their other courses.

7. Develop developmental education procedure that requires weekly assessment and prompt feedback.

Results of survey: Best practices research indicates when weekly assessment and prompt feedback is provided, students' grades improve. Our institution reported that this occurs in both reading and writing and that in math it is not required, but recommended. Findings from the state survey indicate approximately one-third of reporting institutions have policies requiring weekly assessments and prompt feedback, but most institutions report that these practices are recommended and are common.

8.   Require TASP/THEA reassessment as the standard external assessment of achievement.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate TASP/THEA is required by policy at the end of the DE course or other DE intervention. We indicated we administer departmental assessment not created by the instructor. Results of the state survey indicate in about two-thirds of cases, an external assessment is provided at the end of developmental education courses.

9. After assessment testing, provide students with specific diagnostic information regarding strengths and weaknesses, rather than pass/fail or a score.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate providing a student with diagnostic information improves his or her performance. We indicated we provide only a pass/fail or a score. This practice is consistent with the findings from the state survey in which approximately 40 percent of institutions reported providing a pass/fail score. The report indicates, "This is a significant weakness because it gives students no information on how they can most efficiently address their deficiencies. As a result, students are not able to make good decisions, and they enroll in full-length courses when less time-consuming and expensive options might suffice."

10. Change the academic advising policy to require mandatory academic advising each semester until the student leaves the institution for those students who fail TASP/TSI assessment.

Results of survey: Best practice indicate the academic advising policy requires mandatory academic advising each semester until student leaves the institution. We indicated we require mandatory advising each semester until all areas have been successfully completed. This practice is consistent with the findings from the state survey in which 75 percent of institutions reported that advising in mandatory each semester until developmental education is completed.

11. Provide training to all advisors on the use of the high school transcript as diagnostic tool for appropriate placement.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate past performance in high school courses is a better indicator of appropriate placement than standardized test scores. We indicated we consider high school performance, along with standardized tests. This is consistent with the findings from the state survey. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, however, notes that if these two tools are not used for diagnosing specific deficiencies and prescribing appropriate interventions, they are not useful in remediation.

12. Require students to complete all developmental education courses before enrolling in any college-level courses or require the pairing of DE courses to appropriate college-level courses.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate requiring students to complete all developmental education courses before enrolling in any college-level courses improves their motivation, but when certain college-level courses are paired with DE courses, there is greater gain in student achievement. We currently require students to complete related DE courses before enrolling in college-level course in the area of deficiency. This practice is consistent with the state survey results in which 90 percent of the institutions reported that students complete the related developmental education courses prior to enrolling in college-level courses.

13. Establish a formal process to determine the knowledge and skills necessary for entry into college-level courses and align exit requirements in developmental education courses with entry requirements in college courses.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate when a formal process in place for the knowledge and skills needed for success in college-level courses are aligned with the exit requirements in DE courses, students experience greater success. The results of the state survey indicate the percentages of institutions reporting that they had no explicit process for aligning exit requirements in developmental education with entry requirements in college-level courses decreased between 2000-2004 from 22 percent to 19 percent in mathematics, from 32 percent to 30 percent in reading, and from 27 percent to 19 percent in writing.

14. Develop a plan for pairing first college-level course with a specific developmental education course.

Results of survey: Same as number 12. Currently, we do not pair DE with college-level courses. The report indicates, "This is rare in Texas."

15. Develop a plan for using appropriate interventions (such as multiple courses in each discipline, computer-aided instruction, peer tutoring, learning communities, and supplemental instruction).

Results of survey: Best practices point to the fact that the interventions described above improve student achievement. Our survey results indicate math offers multiple courses in the discipline and peer tutoring. Reading and writing offers single course in each discipline, computer-aided instruction, peer tutoring, and learning communities. Results of the state survey indicate over 76 institutions provide tutoring by faculty; 71 to 80 of institutions (depending on the discipline) provide computer-aided instruction; peer tutoring is available at between 58 and 72 of institutions.

16. Increase the number of students who are actively involved in learning communities.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate when nearly all DE students are actively involved in learning communities that are supported by predetermined procedures, staffing, and evaluations, there is an improvement in student achievement. Survey results indicate math has a few (under one-third), while reading and writing has nearly all of their students involved in learning communities. The report also indicates, "More innovative interventions such as learning communities, paired courses, and supplemental instruction are relatively rare."

17. Implement supplemental instruction with appropriate college-level courses.

Results of survey: Best practices indicate the use of supplemental instruction in college-level courses improves the performance of students with academic deficiencies. We indicated students are required to

complete DE before enrolling in college-level courses. The report also indicates, "More innovative interventions such as learning communities, paired courses, and supplemental instruction are relatively rare.

18. Increase the use of case studies and problem-based learning in all developmental education courses.

    Results of survey: Research indicates student learning improves when constructivist theory is applied. Survey results indicate math almost never uses these strategies and reading and writing uses these strategies in virtually all courses. The report also indicates, "More innovative interventions such as learning communities, paired courses, and supplemental instruction are relatively rare.

19. Establish a formal process involving data analysis of program outcomes that is used annually to evaluate the effectiveness of developmental education and to make appropriate changes.

    Results of survey: Research indicates when institutions analyze and evaluate DE program and develop and implement quality enhancement plans, student achievement improves. We indicated we have just begun this process informally. Nearly 90 percent of institutions report that they have a formal or informal data analysis process to evaluate the effectiveness of their developmental education program.

20. Make developmental education instructors aware of their students' progress or lack of progress in remedying academic deficiencies.

    Results of survey: Research indicates that DE instructors need to be made aware of their students' progress or lack of progress in remedying academic deficiencies. We reported pass rates to math instructors this past fall, but no meaningful diagnostic data have been provided in the past. Findings from the state survey indicate, "In about 65 percent of institutions, no information is routinely provided to faculty on student performance in other developmental education classes, although it is often available to faculty who seek it."