

Deans' Council Minutes -- November 22, 2005

Commencement - Paige Bussell reviewed the configuration of the Field House space for Commencement activities, including the reserved seating area for faculty and graduates and the stage. Deans agreed that seating for faculty would best be located behind the students because there is some uncertainty about how many will attend one or the other or both ceremonies. Better to seat students, for whom we will have a firm count, at the front. As students exit out one side, faculty can join the stage party in exiting. A reception for graduates and families will be held in the Founders Lounge, sponsored by the Alumni Association.

THECB Graduate Advisory Committee - Allan Headley reported on his role as representative on this Committee. He indicated that highest priority is given to measures of quality in graduate education. The group will meet in early December to finalize a quality matrix and to discuss how programs should be periodically reviewed. Dean Headley also reported on Texas A&M University-Commerce's most recent doctoral program review, for Counseling, and the good results. Dr. Scott asked that those involved review and categorize the data problems identified.

Orientation 2006 Proposal (Attachment) - Mary Hendrix shared proposed schedules for Orientation, including two on Saturdays and two for non-traditional students. Goals of the program will be to give students the opportunity to

- Dialogue with current faculty
- Interact with student leaders
- Register for classes
- Develop successful student strategies
- Tour the campus

University Student Migration Report (Attachment) - Joyce Scott reviewed the statewide student migration report prepared by the TAMUS. It notes changes in first-time, full-time students' attendance and includes retention at the same school, transfer to other senior institutions or to junior colleges, concurrent enrollment at two institutions, and those who have not enrolled

Space Utilization Report (Attachment) - Joyce Scott shared the most recent THECB report on lab and classroom use which shows an increase in average hours per classroom from 21.4 in fall 2004 to 29.79 in fall 05. In laboratory use, the number remained the same although 12 laboratories were closed. Staff will follow up with THECB to determine the source of the problem.

Proposal to Contract for E-College Courseware (Attachment) – Mary Hendrix reported on the work of the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Committee, which has recommended changing from Educator to E-College. E-College charges \$85 per student, which will result in an annual cost of about \$636,000. Subtracting funds currently expended on Educator, there would be an annual cost of \$551,000 for E-College. Joyce Scott reported that there is some reluctance in the administration to commit the distance education fee to this based on only one semester of experience with the fee and the prospective loss of any flexibility afforded by that new source of funding. Deans reported Educator is crashing almost daily and there are problems with lost communications between faculty and students.

Proposed Engineering Programs - Hal Langford presented proposals for two new programs at the baccalaureate level in Construction Engineering and Computer Engineering. Following extended discussions, the Deans voted unanimously to support both proposals. The Provost proposed that she would review these with the President prior to referring them to the Faculty Senate, and Dean Langford indicated that the Construction Engineering draft would need some updates to meet ABET standards.

Feedback Mechanism to/from sending high schools and community colleges - Joyce Scott asked Deans to consider inviting high school counselors of the major “sending” schools to come to campus for a visit. During this time, they could talk with faculty and administrators as well as meet with their former students to learn how they are getting along. Students and their high school counselors could have lunch, after which students would be excused and counselors could de-brief to Texas A&M University-Commerce staff about what is going well and what is not. A similar model with community college faculty and deans could be used to gather feedback about those students’ transitions. Deans agreed to support this initiative for the spring 2006 semester.

Campus Computer Labs – Deans reported on progress in closing down low-usage labs. Joyce Scott announced that 65 computers, desks and chairs had been provided for the Gee Library Computer Lab which will be open on the 1st floor and available 88 hours per week. The Council thanked Dean Langford and the College of Business and Technology for the contribution to a broad access lab that will serve all students.

Dropping Developmental Courses - Frank Ashley and Sandy Weeks reported that there are continuing problems with instructors who are signing off on drops from developmental courses even though policy is that students cannot drop these courses. Further discussion will be pursued in the broader discussion of developmental education as a result of the Commissioners Summit on the topic last week.

Topics deferred until the next meeting:

Alcohol and Other Drugs Task Force Committee Report (Attachment) - Joyce Scott

Counseling Center/AOD Programming (Attachment) - Joyce Scott

FY 06 Operating Budget - Terry Pankratz

Building security evenings and weekends