

Real Estate Advisory Committee Minutes – February 22, 2011

Members present: Dennis Beene, Shan Clapp, Taylor Bonifield-Faught, Lisa Harris, Linda Littlejohn, Missy Villarreal, Becky Swanson, Ken Thompson

Members absent: Deana Houlette, Denise Price

Guests: Greg Glenn

Ex-officio: Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart, Dr. Shawn Fouts, Kim Davis, Daniel Esquivel, Jason Norman, Beverly Vinson

Becky Swanson called the meeting to order . Those present introduced themselves and told their affiliation with the program.

Upon a motion by Linda Littlejohn, seconded by Missy Villarreal, the minutes of the June 24, 2010 meeting were approved as printed.

Old Business:

Beverly Vinson reported the following:

1. Curriculum changes were approved by Academic Affairs in October, 2010: Property Management on-line course (RELE 1215) was added to the choices; the wording was changed and/or added on the Salesperson Certificate and the Real Estate Certificate to include “Any courses accepted by TREC for core or related credit and approved by the academic advisor...” These changes allow students more “related credit” options in completing the certificates.
2. The on-line course provider, State CE, may be considered as a future on-line provider.
3. The Real Estate Principles courses that were offered in the day format for Fall 2010, and Spring 2011, did not have sufficient numbers for the courses to make, so the schedule will no longer include the day format.

New Business:

Beverly Vinson gave a brief history of the Real Estate program.

The program began in the 70's and the academic program was added in 1985. Since that time, Real Estate students have been allowed to take the Real Estate courses for either academic credit (and declare a major as a Salesperson Certificate, Real Estate Certificate or A.A.S degree) or Continuing Education credit. The Texas Real Estate Commission accepts the courses in either format for pre-license requirements and SAE renewal requirements. Statistics were given--(AC second highest in state (69.23%) among comparable institutions compared to state first-time pass rate (62.8%)—that prove AC students were accomplishing their education goal (to complete license requirements). But, the AC records did not reflect sufficient number of “completers” acceptable to the Texas Higher Education Board (THECB), so THECB targeted the Real Estate program for “de-activation.” This became effective January 18, 2011 (the beginning of the Spring 2011 semester). Ms. Vinson explained that it is difficult to track “completers” because the Salesperson Certificate includes pre-license requirements as well as the first year renewal requirement of 60 additional core real estate hours. Once students complete pre-license requirements, we have not determined how to stay in contact. After a concerted effort to encourage students to apply for graduation, the records reflect that there were 22 completers in the program for the Fall 2010 semester, but action had already been taken to de-activate the program.

Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart explained that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) changed the target rates for number of completers and targeted low producing programs to be de-activated. AC was no longer given the option to “justify” the program. Therefore, the Real Estate program will be moved under the Continuing Education umbrella. **Current certificate and degree**

majors are allowed a two-year window in which they can complete the requirements. The pre-license courses will still be available for continuing education credit.

Becky Swanson asked why the completion rates were so low. Was it lack of knowledge? Ms. Swanson stated that students are not accustomed to having to “apply” to graduate, so many probably did not realize that was necessary. Dr. Lowery-Hart explained that previously the college required that students apply to receive their certificate or degree, but recently the system was changed to identify and notify those students who have completed their certificate/degree requirements and automatically issue the appropriate certificate or degree. Since the Legislature has determined that at least 10% of funding will be based on completion rates and possibly even more, this improved process will assist greatly with funding.

Greg Glenn inquired as to how the academic program can be reinstated. Dr. Lowery-Hart stated that as with any new program, to reinstate the program in the future, we would have to show industry demand validated by workforce data. Shawn Fouts explained that it would be based on the Department of Labor statistics for a three-year trend both at the national, state, and local levels. Dr. Lowery-Hart stated that the rules of the game are changing rapidly and without dialogue.

Dennis Been asked “Where is the savings for CE vs. academic since adjunct faculty are still required and Beverly Vinson is retiring?” Dr. Lowery-Hart said frankly that he could not answer that question. In the Continuing Education arena, the courses are market driven and there is an enrollment expectation. Amarillo College is looking at a 25% budget cut this year. Dr. Lowery-Hart explained that this action was not something that AC wanted, but with the \$27 billion state budget short fall, THECB felt it was necessary.

A discussion ensued about the benefits of live classes, some of which include: personal contact with the instructors in the field, practical application of principles taught, and networking opportunities. Greg Glenn stated that he has visited with many licensees who took their pre-license courses through an on-line provider, but they regretted that they had not taken live classes. He also mentioned that now--more than ever in all the years he has taught in the Real Estate program--agents desire to take academic credit and work toward a certificate or degree in order to set themselves apart from their competition. Ms. Vinson stated that in visiting with Dr. Mark Dotzer at the A&M Research Center about the possibility of the academic program being de-activated, he stated that he was very disappointed to hear that, because with all of the legal ramifications in the industry, he believes that agents need more education than ever; not less.

When asked how this action would impact the MCE program, Ms. Vinson stated that the number of students taking MCE courses through the AC program has diminished to the point that it is not a concern. AC will continue to offer one MCE course each semester and the on-line MCE courses as long as there is a demand.

Ms. Vinson stated that she would hate to see the program go to strictly on-line format. The completion rates for on-line students in the Real Estate courses would be very low without followup. Ken Thompson concurred and stated that he realizes that many students prefer the on-line format, but there are also many students who prefer on-campus classes as well.

Dr. Fouts and Kim Davis explained that the Continuing Education program will service the students as with other programs that require license under the Continuing Education umbrella. They will transition from Beverly Vinson’s leadership to one of their staff taking those responsibilities. How the academic advising responsibilities will be handled for current majors was not addressed.

After further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Beverly Vinson
Coordinator, Real Estate Program

Shawn Fouts
Dean, Career & Technical Education