

Core Team Meeting

July 18, 2014
Lynn Library 207
9:00 a.m.

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Austin, Janine Goode, April Sessler, Jason Norman, Carol Bevel, Melanie Castro, Dr. Tamara Clunis, Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart, Heather Voran, Dr. Kathryn Wetzel and Dr. Paul Matney

Others present:

Student Representatives: Andrew Alexander and Seth Brogdon

Recorder: Carolyn Leslie

MEMBERS ABSENT: Janet Barton, Penny Massey, Susan Burks, Megan Eikner, Olga Bustos, Bruce Moseley, and Danita McAnally

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Bob Austin)

- Bob Austin asked for approval of the minutes from the June 20, 2014 No Excuses Core Team meeting. Jason Norman made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. Kathryn Wetzel seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by majority vote.

CALL FOR ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS AND ACTION ITEMS (Bob Austin)

- There were no additional agenda items or action items brought up by committee members.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- **Enrollment Intent for Application Update (Janine Goode)**
 - Janine reported that the process has been set up on the Apply Texas application to question applicants as to how many classes they plan to attend the first semester. She gave committee members a handout that listed the results of students answering this question. (See Handout)
 - Janine said that she could also set up a process that would provide the student's contact information in order to follow up with their answers to the question.
 - Bob Austin commented that a report could be run for mismatches to identify those students who plan to earn a degree but are only taking a few classes each semester.
 - April Sessler said that the information that is obtained through the application process will let the college know how to focus on communication with the student.
 - Bob said that the landing page for the application needs to include information that is specific to 15 to Finish and on time completion.
- **AC No Excuses Web Presence Update (Bob Austin)**
 - Bob stated that information related to No Excuses has been hosted by Planning and Advancement. At the last meeting there was a request for a link that specifically goes to the No Excuses page.
 - Kristin McDonald-Wiley made arrangements to provide a link from the Planning and Advancement page to the No Excuses Philosophy page.

- Penney Massey said there is now a dropdown link from the About AC button located on the banner. This also goes directly to the No Excuses Philosophy page.
- The No Excuses site can also be reached through: actx.edu/ida/noexcuses.
- **Course Scheduler Update (Jason Norman)**
 - Jason Norman reported that Course Scheduler is operational and the advisors are showing students how to use it to plan their schedules
 - Course Scheduler is located behind the AC Connect portal. It can be accessed through the self service module or in bookmarks. Jason demonstrated how Course Scheduler works and the features it has to help the students plan their schedule around certain instructors and classes. Videos are also available on the site to help students learn how to use it. In AC Connect, Course Scheduler is titled Schedule Planner.
 - April Sessler asked how often the site is refreshed and new class status and information is updated. Janine said that Schedule Planner is set to update with the latest class information every 5 minutes.
 - Bob said that this is only a schedule planning tool and that the student must go back to AC Connect to actually register for classes.
 - Bob also stated that an important feature of Course Planner is that it will give information as to when students are wanting to take classes. This information will be sent to the Department Chairs, Deans, and Assistant Deans for future planning.
- **Common Reader Program Update (April Sessler)**
 - The institutional theme which will be integrated into the Common Reader program this year is Moral Courage. The book which will be featured is: Blue Hole Back Home.
 - April Sessler asked Jason to bring copies of the common reader to the August, No Excuses Committee meeting so members could read it.
 - The object of the Common Reader program is to generate conversation between students, staff and faculty.
 - The author, Joy Jordan-Lake, is an English professor. Ms. Jordan-Lake will be at Amarillo College the first week of November.

PROMISING PRACTICES

- **Changes to New Student Orientation (April Sessler)**
 - April gave committee members a handout on New Student Orientation Guidelines (See Handout) The handout listed the current guidelines and the new guidelines to be implemented.
 - April said that the best statistic for student success is tied to attendance to Badger Boot Camp.
 - Jason and his staff have designed an orientation for students age 24 and older. They have scheduled one in the evening and one in the afternoon. As soon as the email went out offering this orientation, 10 students registered.
 - April said that too many students have holds for not attending New Student Orientation so the goal is to sign students up earlier. She asked for feedback from committee members on how to get students to complete this requirement.
 - Bob told committee members to bring their ideas to the meeting because the No Excuses committee is authorized to make changes.
- **Student Success Certification (Russell Lowery-Hart)**
 - Dr. Lowery-Hart evaluated the Student Success Orientation at Athens Technical College and stated that they require faculty and staff to attend training for student success every two years. This orientation gives information as to who students are and how to

relate to them. The orientation also integrates customer service training into the certification.

- Dr. Lowery-Hart said that we need to be more passionate in serving the students and each other. Many of us are at a loss as to how to make contact with students when we see them on campus.
 - Athens Technical College created this program in a short amount of time and have already seen a big difference in how faculty, administrators, and staff feel about the student success agenda.
 - Dr. Lowery-Hart stated that the current orientation at Athens Technical College is 2 hours but they are planning to increase it to 4 hours. They did not anticipate the number of questions and problem solving issues that would arise as a result of this.
 - The No Excuses Committee members discussed options on how to develop this orientation and training at AC. Dr. Lowery-Hart stated that the minutes will show that everyone is in agreement with the idea of developing the Student Success Orientation. This will become an action item and a task force from the No Excuses Committee will develop a syllabus and manual using Athens Technical College as a model. The task force was asked to bring action items to the all college General Assembly at the Civic Center on Friday, September 5, 2014.
 - Dr. Lowery-Hart asked if the President's Office could send out an email giving the specifics on the General Assembly date and time.
- **Phone Calls for TSI Math Results (Dr. Kathryn Wetzel)**
 - Dr. Wetzel gave committee members a handout entitled Math Department Offerings. (See Handout)
 - She thanked Amber Brookshire for sending the results of the students who have tested and their scores for math. Dr. Wetzel said that two – three days after the students test, they are contacted and given suggestions for interventions they can participate in.
 - **Save a Semester (Dr. Kathryn Wetzel)**
 - Dr. Wetzel said that save a semester has been successful. If a student doesn't want to repeat the Texas Success Initiative Exam (TSI), they can attend a no cost offering designed to determine if the student is ready to move up to the next level. (See Handout for dates and times of Save a Semester offerings)
 - There were 15-16 students interested in Save a Semester. Twelve students took the course and final and only one did not pass.
 - The purpose of this is to try to help students move through math courses at a faster pace. Those students who passed did very well.
 - **Rapid Review Workshops (Dr. Kathryn Wetzel)**
 - Students have stated that the TSI exam is overwhelming. An option to help students prepare for the math portion of this exam is Rapid Review. The student can attend a no cost one day math review specifically to help them prepare for the TSI. Students can take the review session prior to testing or after completing the test in order to re-test and improve their results. (See Handout for times of Rapid Reviews)

ACTION ITEMS

- **Financial Intervention (April Sessler)**
 - April reported that Olga Bustos did a great job on gathering data with the goal of trying to help students who had to drop their classes because they couldn't pay.
 - Bob, April and Olga said at the previous No Excuses Committee meeting that they would write up an action plan that the committee could consider so scholarships could be implemented to help these students.

- April gave committee members a handout entitled: No Excuses Core Team Process/Procedure Proposal Form. (See Handout)
- April stated that every semester there are students who are making good grades and progressing in their degree plan but they run out of money to complete school. These students are ones who had initiated a payment plan, made the down payment and second payment but were unable to make the final payment. Many of these students don't qualify for financial aid.
- The plan presented included setting up a scholarship fund for these students in order to award funds to complete their tuition payment. Qualifications to receive this scholarship money would include, viewing a video on money management and taking a quiz. They would also talk with Jordan Fajardo for support and intervention. The students would be required to apply for financial aid the next semester and report whether or not they qualified. This would be a one-time offering for the student to help them through a difficult semester.
- Bob and Dr. Lowery-Hart said they would be happy to represent this before the Foundation.
- April said that many of these students would probably qualify for scholarships if they applied.
- Bob asked for a motion from the floor that the committee go forward with this proposal. Heather Voran made the motion and Carol Bevel seconded the motion. Andrew Alexander asked if the proposal could be amended to include a requirement for the student to also apply for other Amarillo College scholarships. The proposal was amended with a motion from Andrew and second from Dr. Wetzel.

- **2014-2015 Meeting Schedule (Committee Members)**

- Carolyn Leslie will schedule the No Excuses Committee meetings for the 2014-2015 academic year. The meetings will be scheduled for the third Friday of each month from 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 15, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

Recorder: Carolyn Leslie Carolyn Leslie

Apply Texas Application – Enrollment Intent Question.

How many classes do you plan to take during your first semester?

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five
- More than five

Since 7/7/14 the data has been transmitted to our production environment. We've processed 296 applications during this time. The responses to date are as follows:

One	33 = 11%
Two	58 = 20%
Three	69 = 23%
Four	91 = 31%
Five	26 = 9%
More than 5	19 = 6%

This provides specific target audiences for tailored communication. If you need any processes developed that provides the student's contact information please let me know. We are already processing applications for 2015SP.

Thanks,

Janine Goode

Amarillo College New Student Orientation Guidelines

Current Guidelines

- All new students (non-dual credit) who are enrolled in 8 or more credit hours are required to complete a NSO session (in person or online) prior to re-enrolling in their second semester.
- Exemptions include:
 - 1.) Transfer students who demonstrate academic success in 12 or more hours at their former institution.
 - 2.) Some short-term programs such as truck driving
- Holds are placed on those who fail to complete their NSO by the end of their first semester, and several communications are sent.

New Guidelines

- All new students (non-dual credit) who are declared as degree seeking will be required to complete a NSO session prior to re-enrolling in their second semester, regardless of number of hours enrolled.
- Exemptions will be re-examined by program
- Greater efforts will be made to encourage students to complete their NSO requirement in person rather than online, based on research and best practices.
- Greater efforts will be made to encourage students to complete their NSO requirement earlier in the semester, resulting in fewer "holds".

Math Department Offerings
Student Information

- **Rapid Reviews** – A no cost, one day (8 am- 5 pm) math review specifically for the TSI. You can take it prior to the testing or after you test in order to re-test and improve your results.
- **“Save a Semester”** – If you do not want to repeat the TSI test, you can opt to take a no cost, one day offering designed to determine if you can move up one level. “Save A Semester” class times are listed below. After one day (8am – 5 pm), students will be tested over the day’s material. If you are correct on 70% or more of the material on the test, you may move into the next course. Sign up for the course you are currently placed in. So, for example, if you placed into Math 0302 and want to move up to Math 0303, sign up for the Math 0302 class to show you are prepared.
- New developmental math courses for fall.
 - Math 0302-CC1 and Math 0303-CC1. Designed to fit the needs of a flexible schedule especially those on shiftwork etc. You must come to campus at least once per week (for three hours) to work on your course material. You will meet in the Math Outreach (tutoring) Center. You have deadlines for your homework and testing but you may choose to be here at any time each week as it fits your schedule. So one week you might come in from 8-11 am on a Monday and the next you may come one day at 4-6 pm Friday and 10-11 am Saturday.

Upcoming dates are listed below. Please contact Seth Hussey at 371- 5435, Kathryn Wetzel at 371-5097 or Michelle Boillat at 371-5158 to register for any course listed below.

Rapid Review		Save A Semester	
Wednesday	June 18	0301	
Friday	June 27	Tuesday	June 17
Tuesday	July 8	Thursday	August 14
Friday	July 18	0302	
Wednesday	July 23	Wednesday	July 30
Tuesday	August 5	0303	
Wednesday	August 13	Friday	August 8
		0301 and 0302 and 0303 LAST DATE	
		Friday	August 29

No Excuses Core Team Process/Procedure Proposal Form

Division/Departments: Student Affairs, Business Office

Prepared by: Olga Bustos, April Sessler

Request(s):

Currently AC students who are enrolled in the "payment plan" and do not pay their balances by the final due dates have their accounts sent to a collections status with the Credit Bureau, thereby preventing the student from registering for classes or receiving transcripts, etc. from the College. Although the College expects fiscal responsibility from the student, business office research has revealed that there are a number of students who have made most of their payments, have been successful and are progressing in their classes, but simply cannot make their final payment. Oftentimes this situation prevents a good student from ever re-enrolling in the college with no intervention or guidance to rectify their situation so that they can continue their education, graduate, and enter their chosen career.

We therefore recommend that the NE Core Team request \$20K/year commitment from Amarillo College Foundation that would allow the Business Office to pay off the end-of-term balances for students (other than dual credit) who meet the following criteria:

- Have a payment plan contract with an outstanding (end-of-term) balance
- Successfully complete the semester with grades of A, B or C
- Complete FAFSA for upcoming award year
- Participate in two-hour financial literacy seminar
- Have not previously benefited from this special one-time opportunity

Rationale / Justification / Assessment Data:

In the spring 2014 semester, 57 students (excluding dual credit) completed their classes with passing grades and were submitted to the credit bureau for collections, and were not able to pay. Approximate total owed = \$10,000.

Effects of Revisions:

A. Faculty & Staff Requirements: N/A

B. Equipment/Facility Requirements: N/A

C. Location: All AC campuses

D. Income projections: Approximately \$10,000 for each long semester. Program would not be offered in summer semesters.

Effective Term: End of fall 2014 semester if funds were granted.