

Core Team Meeting

July 17, 2015
Lynn Library 207
9:00 a.m.

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Austin – Chair, Janet Barton, Carol Bevel, Megan Eikner, Emily Gilbert, Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart, Kristin McDonald-Willey, April Sessler, Dr. Deborah Vess, and Reem Witherspoon
Others present:

Guest Presenter: Dennis Leslie

Recorder: Carolyn Leslie

MEMBERS ABSENT: Melanie Castro, Dr. Tamara Clunis, Nancy Forrest, Janine Goode, Mark Hanna, Olga Kleffman, Penny Massey, Jason Norman, and Kelly Prater

Student Representatives: Cutter Love and Abraham Tenorio

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – (Bob Austin)

- Bob Austin asked for approval of the minutes from the June 19, 2015 No Excuses Core Team meeting. April Sessler made a motion to approve the minutes, and Megan Eikner 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 before the committee.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Payment Plans – (Olga Kleffman)**
 - Bob Austin reported that there was a discussion on a payment plan model about 10 years ago. The Texas Education Coordinating Board sets the guidelines for payment plans. The guidelines changed a couple of years ago. Olga Kleffman was going to head a committee to investigate the options for alternative payment plans for students. This item will be left on the agenda for further discussion. Olga will present a recommendation at a future meeting.
 - Kelly Prater and Olga have been working on how to budget for work study differently than has been done in the past. They want to find a way to make sure student money is not going unused and that the work study program is making full use of the money. The allocation of funds is based on the amount spent on the work study the previous year. If all of the funds are not used, the allocation goes down the next year. Amarillo College has almost doubled the number of students that work on campus and the No Excuses Committee has helped with this. Decisions made on how to handle work study need to be good for the business office and others involved.

DISCUSSION

- **AC Bookstore Prices and Policies – (Dennis Leslie)**
 - Dennis Leslie gave a report on things the bookstore is doing to help keep costs low for the students. He stated that there is a fine tightrope that the bookstore walks to keep costs low for the students, and be a revenue producer for the college.
 - Amarillo College has an online bookstore which provides a way for distance education students to see what is required for classes, and to purchase their books. Moore County and Hereford students can also use the online bookstore to order their books. They

indicate which campus they attend, and a courier takes their books to that campus. These students can pay for their books with financial aid, also.

- The Higher Education Opportunity Act established guidelines for transparency which requires the bookstore to have the list of textbooks, and costs to the students at the time of registration as is proper and available.
- Dennis provided a handout to the committee titled, *Keeping Textbook Costs Low*. He went through and explained the scenarios of potential cost savings to the students based on the type of textbook they are using.
- Another way the bookstore helps students cut down on costs is by providing a third party to handle buybacks at the end of the semester. There is a greater chance that the student will receive some of their money back because if the bookstore doesn't need to buy a book back, the third party vendor may.
- The bookstore works to keep freight costs low by providing used books for purchase as often as possible.
- The bookstore works with departments to create supply and tool kits for the students. This helps the students have what they need for their classes, and provides a cost savings since the bookstore can give students a discount when supplies are purchased as a kit.
- A possible idea that can be utilized to keep costs down for students would be to adopt charging a flat fee for textbooks. In some ways this would make financial aid easier also. The bookstore can still make revenue for the college with this practice. Dennis suggested that AC could advertise that a student could get their degree and never have to buy a book again. There was a discussion on the advantages and problems of adopting this new plan.
- Bob Austin asked Dennis to give his ideal scenario for keeping book costs down for the student and what group at AC he would like to meet with to discuss this scenario. Dennis said the ideal situation for keeping costs down for students would be to only use traditional textbooks whether they are paperback or hard cover. This would not include access codes or loose leaf textbooks. The students would have options to buy used books and most textbooks could be rented. He would like to communicate this to the Faculty Senate.
- Dennis said the bookstore has only run out of books for the student about 5% of the time. This is largely due to the book buyer not being informed when sections of a class are added which creates the need for more books for classes. Also, if the book buyer is not given the correct number of books needed for custom books and a reorder has to be done, it takes 5-6 weeks for the books to be printed and shipped. This is due to the fact that custom books are not printed until they are ordered.
- Bob suggested that the Dean's Council needs a forum to address the issue of textbook costs. He asked the No Excuses Committee members to go back to their areas and communicate what they learned today as to what the bookstore is doing to keep costs low.
- Dennis closed his presentation by saying that the AC bookstore is a part of Amarillo College and the profit it produces goes into the general fund of the college to help balance the budget at the end of the year.

- **Consistency in the Use of Blackboard – (Carol Bevel)**

- Students have had issues with the ways different instructors use Blackboard.
- There are printouts available to students on how to use Blackboard, but some instructors use some features and some use others.
- The policy for Blackboard use states that every instructor must use the gradebook, and have their syllabus in blackboard. Some instructors also use Blackboard to post assignments and have discussion groups. Students are told to check their syllabus as to how their instructor uses Blackboard for their course.
- There is currently a lack of training for students on how to use Blackboard. Emily Gilbert will be teaching Blackboard to some of the students in the ACE program as part of the mentoring programs. The purpose of this training is to eliminate communication issues, and help students to better know how to get around in Blackboard, and get assignments done.
- The First Year Seminar also gives Blackboard training to students but not all take this class.

- There are videos available to students on how to use Blackboard and Bob asked Emily to contact Lee Colaw about putting a video on the AC portal that students can readily access.
- **Strategic Plan Update – (Bob Austin)**
 - The Cabinet met yesterday afternoon and wrapped up discussion on the Strategic Plan.
 - A copy of the Strategic Plan will be available to employees soon. The college will be working on ways to implement the plan so everyone will know the timeline of what needs to be accomplished.
 - The Strategic Plan is related in a large part to what is communicated in the book, *Redesigning America's Community Colleges*. The book deals with the concept of "Guided Pathways". Incorporating this concept at AC will be an important and significant step in encouraging student completion.

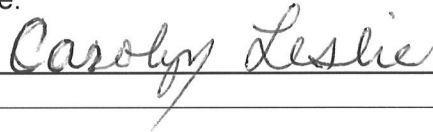
ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

- The August meeting is pending and appointments will be sent out once the 2015-2016 committee assignments are made.

Recorder: Carolyn Leslie



KEEPING TEXTBOOK COSTS LOW

A COST TO STUDENT COMPARISON OF 3 OPTIONS

Loose Leaf Additions or textbooks w/ required access codes	Traditional Textbook with Buyback	Traditional Textbook that is rented
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Book A - Loose leaf

New	\$121.50	\$189.00	\$85.50
Used	----NA-----	\$132.50	\$65.00
Buyback value	\$0.00	\$85.00	----NA-----

Cost to Student

New	\$121.50	\$104.00	\$85.50
Used	-----NA----	\$47.00	\$65.00

Book B - Custom Paperback with Required Access Code Compared to Same Book without Access Code

New \$126.75	\$133.25	---bndl not rentable text only (\$74.00) w/ 2yr dept agreement
Used \$ NA Access Code not Available Separately or Too Costly Combined w/ Used Book	\$93.50	---with agreement (\$47.00)
Buyback value \$0 see above	\$60.00	---NA-----
Cost to student New \$126.75	\$73.25	\$74.00
Used -NA----	\$33.50	\$47.00