

Faculty Senate Minutes

February 12, 2016

Lynn Library, Room 207

Members Present	Reem Witherspoon, Nancy Forrest, Emily Gilbert, Donna Cleere, Craig Clifton, Nichol Dolby, Deborah Harding, Marcia Julian, Jodi Lindseth, Shawna Lopez, Tara Meraz, Brant Davis, Kerrie Young
Members Absent	LaVon Barrett, Brian Farmer, Robert Gustin, Brian Jacob, Alan Kee, Courtney Milleson, Derek Weathersbee
Guests	Susie Regan, Bob Austin, Chandra Melton, Larry Adams, Walt Webb,

Topics	Discussion/Information	Actions/Decisions Recommendations/Timelines
Call to Order	President Reem Witherspoon called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.	
Approval of Minutes	December 4 minutes were approved by consensus via email.	
Special Guest Report	<p>Susie Regan - Mentoring Coordinator</p> <p>The mentoring program currently serves ACE students. AC Mentoring Program has agreed to take all 2016 Caprock graduates - even if they are not ACE students.</p> <p>Also, for the past 5 years the mentoring program has been optional for incoming students. Next year it is mandatory (students cannot opt out). This is consistent with the message that AC staff keeps giving, which is that this is a really good program and every student needs to experience this.</p> <p>The tremendous growth in the program means that we</p>	Send feedback about the calendar changes to your Senator, Reem Witherspoon, or Bob Austin directly.

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need more coaches!! Especially faculty as you work with these students daily, so please take this back to your departments.

For any who are hesitating, the Mentoring program is easier than ever. It has changed from the past: there are no coach logs. The interactions will now be based on individual student/coach relationships. It can be a text, a phone call, in person, etc. It can occur as many times as the student wants - whether 2x a month or just have the coach be a contact when/if the student needs it.

Coach requirements:

- Give the student your phone number (Susie does this once you are matched with a person)
- Help the student get used to campus/college in the first 6 weeks
- Experience the relationship and see where it goes.

Coach Week: last week in March. There will be sessions every day, at multiple times. The presentation/discussion takes about 40 minutes. Susie will provide an overview of the program after which attendees will preview incoming students (on paper) and if they find one they believe is compatible, pick a

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mentee. If you have never been a coach before, OR if it's been more than a year since you've coached, this training is mandatory.

Question: What if you get a non-responsive student?

Answer: It's okay; it happens. If you have already done the first two requirements (phone number and try to contact them and help with the first 6 weeks), then don't worry about it. There should never be any guilt associated with this program. It's not your fault if the student doesn't respond to your outreach. At least they know someone here at Amarillo College tried to reach out and therefore cares about them.

Bob Austin - VP of Student Affairs

Proposal of new academic calendar [see attached].

Bottom of the calendar has a legend. There are different colors for session beginnings, endings, college closed, student breaks, and general assembly.

Important dates for Fall 2016: Start date is August 22, which is a pretty early start date for us. End date for the first 8 week is 10/14. We would like to build in a break

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between the first 8 weeks and the second 8 weeks in the Fall. This is to give everyone a break, but also to give students and AC some time to reconcile any problems with student schedules (for example, if you are in English 1301 in the first 8 weeks and fail the class, this gives us time to get you into another section).

End date for Fall semester is December 16. Another difference with this calendar is that Fall commencement would occur on Friday evening (7pm) - as it is in the Spring - instead of Saturday morning. Our current (the calendar we have now as opposed to the one being presented) schedule conflicts with a major Civic Center event and thus we are unable to book the arena for a Friday evening Graduation.

We would open for Spring classes on January 17. The first 8 weeks end on March 10, which is normal Spring Break, so this Break would not change. The second 8 weeks/semester would end on May 12.

One of the things Dr. Vess has asked us to consider is a May "mini-mester" 3 week session for specific programs. This would be mostly for Gen. Ed. courses, but they are pretty intense. We will need to clarify this with Dr. Vess.

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The other major change is the 8 week Summer term. This is pretty significant. The reasoning behind it is - once we get to a point that all of our classes are taught in an 8 week format, this would help students to continue on through. The blocked schedules/pathways would call for most students to be enrolled through the summer. So, Summer would be built into the natural progression for students; it would no longer be an afterthought. Most Gen. Ed. classes would be offered in the Summer - not just a few. When a student signs up, we would say this is your schedule, this is when you take this, this, this, etc. and summer would be built into that as a "normal" semester for them.

HOWEVER, one problem with this right now is that currently students cannot get Pell funding through the summer. What we do at AC, is pool leftover money and give it to students that want to take classes in the summer. "Also, if you [a student] absolutely can't come in the Summer, then you can't come in the Summer. This would be worked around."

Another plus to the new Summer term is that it does not leave Summer up in the air. Right now, the schedule for Summer classes is always different, and we have no way of knowing how many students will attend. It also doesn't leave students with a gap of 3 months in

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their schooling. It gives students a better opportunity to finish within the 2-3 years, and gives us the ability to know how many classes need to be taught.

Question: will there still be 6 week summer terms for some programs? For example: in math we do Calc 1 in the first 6 weeks and then Calc 2 in the second 6 weeks.

Answer: This is based somewhat on summer registration. The numbers are low; this is not affecting very many students. Average enrollment in summer is 5 credits. Of course there are those outliers that take 10-15 credits. It might be different for some nursing programs, or math, but it's not the norm. Dr. Vess would probably be willing to look at these on a case-by-case basis. The major programs should not be very, if at all, affected.

The current master schedule for summer is in an 8 week format. The classes were designed in a way that classes will not conflict with each other. It is not final yet, however.

This new schedule is nice because it gives a 3 week cushion on either side of the Summer term.

There was a question regarding a change in schedules

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for 9 month faculty members (to be off during the Spring semester, for example, but full time through the summer and fall). Bob referred any changes about faculty to Dr. Vess.

Senator Question: Would this allow for flexibility in the Sciences? Classes are 4 credit hours so we have to teach 4 sections a semester to be full, but that's an overload. So, perhaps we could "underload" in one semester and make some up in the Summer?

Answer: This is best discussed with Dr. Vess.

Bob relayed that he did know SACS doesn't look at Summer Pay like they do "regular" semester pay, so this would be where faculty could potentially make up any money lost from overloads being removed.

Senator concern: Students seem to be shocked at how fast the 8 week is going. Are we losing them? Discussion followed and there seem to be a mix of students who are adapting well and those that are falling behind due to the fast pace.

There are also students who are taking both 8 week and 16 week courses. Some instructors have noticed that these students seem to focus on the 8 week because it

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is faster and they are worried, so how do we combat this and get them to focus on the 16 week too?

The norm seems to be that students are taking 2 8 weeks at a time, instead of 4 at once.

Bob on enrollment:

The average student at AC is enrolled for 9 hours. As a Cabinet we looked at how we could incentivize students to take more credit hours. In order for us to break even, or possibly make money, we have to get the average student up to 12 hours. If we can manage to get students to take 2 8 week courses the first 8 weeks, and 2 classes the second, we have literally moved 1000s of students up to full time. That means we get more money and the students get more federal money as well.

Also, looking at the numbers, Week 10 is where they start walking away. Even students who are doing well experience fatigue at this point. The theory is that is they don't have a week 10, then we won't have so many students dropping. Odessa Community College uses this system and we've met with them. They are having tremendous success, particularly in fewer number of dropped classes.

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The state is requiring 2-3 year finishes in community colleges. We simply HAVE to get students moving through faster.

Senator Concern: Are we going to have enough faculty? And are we going to be able to still put out quality education?

Answer: There will always be that fear. That would be up to the instructor, Department Chair, and Dr. Vess to determine.

On Blocked Scheduling:

Allied Health programs are already blocked. This doesn't affect students in schedules that are already blocked. There are always going to be case-by-case bases. People affected are mostly General Studies majors.

Studies show fewer choices are easier on students and also, when you show them the finish line, they are more likely to complete. When you look at most of our programs, it's the same 20 classes. If you knock out, say 4 in the first semester, that's a big step toward finishing. Right now, there is not a clear ending in sight and it

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	<p>makes students uneasy.</p> <p>The new break was discussed as a positive change. It would provide an opportunity to avoid burn out in students and faculty. Also, perhaps we could get more high school students for the Summer session.</p>	
President's Report	<p>Introduce Brant Davis - newest member of Senate; taking over due to Scott Rankin's resignation from Amarillo College.</p> <p>Courtney Milleson is moving from Advising to teach Speech full time. This leaves a hole for Advising; we need to talk to Susan McClure, as she is the only faculty member left in that area.</p> <p>No Excuses 20/20: Cara discussed Foundations of Excellence survey results. Over 9000 students were sent the survey; responses were received from 563 (5.7%). Baseline from those responses were 65-70% favorable. AC wants to get above 80%. 1250 surveys were sent to faculty and staff, 300 responded (24%). If anyone wants to see the results, Reem will send them out.</p>	<p>If anyone is interested in survey results, email Reem.</p>

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	Board of Regents: January 26th meeting held an approval of the Tobacco Policy. It will be in effect beginning August 1. Kerrie Young was approved for Tenure :).	
Secretary's Report	All materials handed out here will be uploaded to Google Drive folder.	
Courtesy	Deborah Harding was given notecards and a list of retirees. She will send out cards to those who retired at the end of January.	Deborah Harding is filling out cards for newly retired faculty and staff. They will be mailed before the next Senate meeting on March 4.
Elections	Craig found a replacement for Scott (Brant), and will be looking for a replacement for Courtney.	
Legislative	no update.	
Mead Award	Deborah will talk to Brian Farmer about getting this started.	
Professor Emeritus Award	Handout with possible award recipients attached. Please send Nancy Forrest nominations; vote will happen in the March 4 meeting.	Send Nancy Forrest nominations for Professor Emeritus.
Questions	Concern over loss of 95% of majors (9 Pathways). It was shared that these are overall pathways; students would take the same courses UNTIL elective semester and then would specialize in certain majors. Which would mean that we would NOT be paring down majors to only 9.	All questions will be forward to Dr. Vess and appropriate ones forward to Dr. Lowery-Hart (re: Cabinet members)

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	<p>For example, Craig Clifton was told that his majors would be Gen. Studies majors with an emphasis in Exercise Science.</p> <p>Concern over lack of faculty involvement in decision making. Especially that department chairs were not told when their people were let go; the people were given the letter and that's how the Chair found out. Also, faculty members were not consulted about the Retention Alert; there were no faculty members on the Committee.</p> <p>Why are there no faculty members on President's Cabinet? Could there be 2 Department Chairs and 2 faculty members as representation?</p>	
Salary	<p>Dr. Vess shared with Senate officers that the budget is flat, however the Board needs to see where we fall in State numbers. Merit pay will help increase our State ranking. The Board doesn't seem to be interested in across the board raises any more. She urged us to temper this proposal with the current climate and budget.</p> <p>This needs to represent ALL faculty when we propose this, so please talk to your people [SEE ATTACHED</p>	<p>Bring comments and concerns about salary to Nancy Forrest.</p> <p>Send comments and concerns about the Faculty Evaluation to your Senators or to Reem Witherspoon.</p>

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	<p>HANDOUTS]. Set a meeting with your department members to discuss this. Summer session change will potentially decrease faculty salaries. So, as many faculty as possible need to be in these discussions.</p> <p>Merit pay will be tied to the new Faculty Evaluation. The faculty commitments were not signed at General Assembly because they will be included in the new Evaluation.</p> <p>Dr. Vess asked that the Salary Committee and Reem would work on the Evaluation. However, the committee would like to take all your questions and concerns back to Dr. Vess so we can ensure that all faculty members are represented. Senate will call an emergency meeting to discuss concerns if necessary.</p>	
Technology	none	
Faculty Survey	<p>Survey is ready to go! There will be some changes to questions and department areas, but the format is the same. The goal is to get it out before Spring Break so faculty will have a month to respond. It will go out through Institutional Research and will be through Class Climate. We have been assured that the IP addresses will not be tracked.</p> <p>Results will be due right around Easter and will go to IR</p>	

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	<p>and Survey committee, who will compile and sort results.</p> <p>There will be an added emphasis on constructive criticism, however, we do want this to be open and honest, since this is our only real voice to the administration.</p>	
Hospitality	none	
Faculty Development	none	
Instructional Technology	none	
Pinning	none	
Faculty Committee Appointments	none	
New Business	none currently	
Updates and Announcements	none	

Recorder: Emily Gilbert, Senate Secretary – Director of Information Services, Library