

Texas A&M- San Antonio
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
December 4, 2015, from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.
Central Academic Building 219

Call to Order at 11:30 a.m. by L.Webb

In Attendance:

K. Barton, E. Bliss-Zaks, K. Gillen, D. Glaser, T. Hinojosa, R. Kapavik, B. Moore, M. Peterson, C. Ross, J. Simpson, K. Voges, L. Webb, Dr. Teniente-Matson (President), Dr. Snow (Provost), K. Bridgman

Approval of Faculty Senate meeting Minutes from November 6 , 2015

Amendments: Change last line in the first paragraph on page two that states, “A subcommittee has been developed which includes all campuses in the System and input is wanted.” to say , “A subcommittee has been developed which includes a representative from all systems and independent universities of Texas.”

Motion: M. Peterson motions to approve the minutes as amended. 2nd by C. Ross

Vote Passes: 12 yes; 0 no; 0 abstentions

Executive Committee Updates

University Holiday Party: Leah Adrian (University Events Manager) asked L. Webb if the Faculty Senate would like to represent the Faculty as a whole at the party. L. Webb expressed her concerns about Faculty Senate representing faculty as whole at the event and asked how other senators felt about attending. J. Simpson suggested attendance should be optional for Faculty Senate members. However, if attendance is going to be required, their participation should involve a neutral activity such as passing out cookies or something that involves charity work such as collecting for Toys for Tots. K. Gillen felt participating in a movie screening is not a role the Faculty Senate should be playing due to all the other priorities faculty have at the moment. R. Kapavik also added faculty members will be administrating final exams during the party as well. Dr. Matson added the goal was to find an event that could be done during the workday and be family appropriate. Dr. Matson acknowledged the event conflicted with finals but due to the many scheduling conflicts, that was the best day to host the event. Dr. Matson encouraged faculty to attend the holiday event after graduation if faculty couldn't attend the Holiday Party. From the discussion, L. Webb concluded that Faculty Senate wouldn't be representing Faculty at the event, though individual faculty members could attend the event if they would like. L. Webb stated she did appreciate Leah asking Faculty Senate to participate and encouraged her to do so in the future.

Election Committee: J. Simpson announced that we have enough nominees to form the Faculty Evaluation Committee. The following faculty members were nominated: Brian Brantley, Kevin Barton, Douglas Carter, Christine Weiland, John Smith, Adrian Sorrell, Bryant Moore, Megan Wise de Valdez, Michael Proctor. The ballot to elect representatives who will serve on this committee will go out on Monday. The committee will consist of two faculty members from

each college and one librarian. At the moment there are three nominees for the College of Arts and Sciences and for the College of Education and Human Development. For those faculty who want to apply for one of the awards, applications will be due at the end of the January. J. Simpson stated it was very difficult to find faculty who wanted to serve on this committee due to the fact if a faculty member wanted to apply for the award, they couldn't serve on the committee. J. Simpson suggested that the senate may want to re-examine how the committee is formed for the following year. One suggestion was to the winners of the award be on the committee for the following year.

Administrative Update

Shared Governance and Academic Plan: Dr. Snow shared the Academic Plan with the Faculty Senate. L. Webb announced that both the Academic Plan and the Shared Governance definition have been uploaded to the Faculty Town Square Blackboard course. Dr. Snow encouraged faculty to provide input on the Academic Plan. A committee will also be formed to get additional feedback. Dr. Matson stressed the importance of the plan and added this plan is going to drive what we ask for in terms of funding during the next legislative session. We are also re-examining our master plan, and the Academic Plan is also a driver for the Master Plan.

Academic Learning Communities: Dr. Bala presented a proposal to link courses to form an Academic Learning Community (ALC). A handout explaining Academic Learning Communities with examples was provided to the Faculty Senate (see attached handout for more details). An ALC would consist of linked general education core classes with a Jaguar track course. The provided handout contains an example of a block schedule ALC for 72 students. The ALC would be a one-year experience. All the courses in the ALCs would also be offered as a stand-alone course as well. Decisions still need to be made on what classes are linked as well as how many ALCs should be formed.

Old Business

Amendments to the Faculty Senate Constitution: J. Simpson informed the Senate that a ballot was sent out to all faculty to vote on the amendments to the constitution via email. The results of the ballot are as follows:

For amendment one, Structure of the Presidency: **38 out of 45** faculty members voted to approve the amendment

- 2.1 Number of Senators - Each academic college shall elect four Senators, and the library shall elect two Senators to the Faculty Senate. The President of the Faculty Senate shall serve in addition to this number.
- 3.4 Terms of Office
 - 3.4.1 A Senator shall serve for two years.
 - 3.4.2 A Senator may serve an additional year as President if elected as President Elect in their second year.
 - 3.4.3 No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms.
 - 3.4.4 The immediate Past President shall not serve two consecutive terms.
 - 3.4.5 A term will begin on the last meeting of the spring semester in which a

Senator is elected and shall terminate in the last meeting of the spring semester in which he/she is replaced.

- 5.1 Two Senators from each academic college shall be elected each year, and one Senator from the library shall be elected each year. One additional Senator will be elected from the electoral unit of the current President Elect.
- 5.3 All full-time, non-adjunct faculty members are eligible to vote, but shall vote in only one electoral unit. In the case of a questioned status under this provision, or of any provision following, the decision of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall be final. The ~~two~~ candidate(s) who receive the most votes by secret ballot within their respective electoral units shall be elected Senators.
- 6.1 Elections and Terms of office for Executive Officer
 - 6.1.1 The President, the President-Elect, the Secretary, and the Parliamentarian shall be members of the Senate and, with the exception of the President and the Immediate Past President shall be elected by the Senate at the last meeting of the spring semester in which they are elected. Officers shall take office following the end of the last meeting of the spring semester and shall serve in that capacity for one calendar year. All senators who have not completed their term are eligible to serve as officers.
 - 6.1.2 Officers to fill newly created offices shall be appointed by the President of the Senate or elected by the Senate. If a new office is to be continued beyond one year, the Constitution shall be amended to include the office and to specify the qualifications and method of election or appointment.
 - 6.4.1 President: The Faculty Senate President shall preside at meetings and vote only in the case of a tie, represent the Senate to the University administration and the public, and be responsible for transmitting to the President and the Provost of the University all proposals and resolutions enacted by the Senate. The Faculty Senate President or his/her representative and any members of the Executive Committee who so choose shall meet on a regular monthly basis with the Provost for informational purposes. The President shall prepare an end-of-year summary report of Faculty Senate proceedings as well as assist the Secretary in archiving documents.

For amendment two, Parliamentary Rules: **42 out of 45** faculty members voted to approve the amendment

- 6.1.1 Parliamentarian: The Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate advises the Senate on parliamentary procedures, which shall follow *Democratic Rules of Order*, and oversees all elections, polls, and evaluations sponsored by the Faculty Senate. The Parliamentarian manages conduct during all meetings, ensuring the orderly conduct of meetings according to *Democratic Rules of Order*.

For amendment three, URC: **42 out of 45** faculty members voted to approve the amendment

- 9.1.1 University Resource Commission (Faculty Senate President only)

For amendment four, Standing Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Committee: 39 out of 45 faculty members voted to approve the amendment

- 9.2.8 The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Committee--The WAC Committee will consist of three representatives (one from Arts & Sciences, Education & Human Development, and Business) elected by their respective Academic Units, two representatives of the Faculty Senate elected by the Faculty Senate, and the Writing Across the Curriculum Director. The Committee will be chaired by a Faculty Senator. The WAC Committee's duties will include defining criteria for Writing Intensive (WI) courses, interpreting best practices for our institutional context, and determining a process for designating, assessing, and supporting WI courses. In addition, the WAC Committee will promote writing at the university and will identify areas in which the faculty would benefit from institutional support related to the teaching of writing. The WAC Committee will make recommendations to the Provost and the President.

All four proposed amendments received the two-thirds majority needed to approve the changes. E. Bliss-Zaks will work with J. Simpson on updating the constitution and uploading the amended constitution to the Faculty website and to the Faculty Town Square Blackboard course before the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Scheduling Committee: There were no updates from this committee at this time.

Faculty Annual Evaluation Review Committee: R. Kapavik informed the Senate that the committee has examined how other A&M campuses in the system as well as other universities

evaluate faculty on an annual basis. The committee is in the process of creating a document that reflects what the committee would suggest the annual evaluation to include based off their research. The committee hopes to have this document ready by the February Faculty Senate meeting.

College Bylaws Committee: D. Glaser announced committee members have been identified. The committee will most likely hold their first meeting in January and will update the Senate at the February meeting.

SRI: J. Simpson met with Provost, Sherita Love (Academic Technology Manager), and Holly Verhasselt (Assistant VP for Academic Affairs) to discuss structure and content of SRIs and how they will be implemented. Handout containing updated SRI questions was provided to the Faculty Senate (see attached document). As far as changes go, numbers have been added to the questions, and two of the questions under the Student Feedback section have been combined (question eleven). J. Simpson stated that H. Verhasselt suggested replacing the word 'responsive' in question seven with the word available and Sherita Love will look into how the SRIs can be implemented into Blackboard. J. Simpson added the evaluation committee also has to look into how the SRIs will fit into the annual evaluation process. Jane Mims (Director of Institutional Research) should be able to create a report for the annual evaluations at the end of the semester for each faculty member.

Discussion: R. Kapavik asked who makes the final call on how the survey is administrated in Blackboard. J. Simpson said no decision has been made on that, though the consensus was to create a pop up that appears when students open their Blackboard course that will continue to appear until they complete it. Dr. Snow mentioned we could use the spring semester as a trail period. D. Glaser suggested we should continue to reevaluate the SRIs evaluation in the future. J. Simpson agreed with his suggestion but noted if we change the SRI questions we would also have to update several other processes as well such as faculty evaluations, etc.

Motion: Motioned from the committee to approve the revised SRI Questions, 2nd by K. Voges

Vote Passes: 12 Yes No 0 Abstentions 0

Office Space Committee: J. Simpson met with Darrell Morrison (VP for Business Affairs) to discuss strategies to approach office space. M. Allen (College of Education) and R. Alonzo (College of Arts and Sciences) volunteered to serve on the committee. The committee still needs a volunteer from the College of Business. J. Simpson informed the Senate that the committee would need to find 50 additional office spaces for new faculty and staff. The committee will meet in January to start developing temporary and long-term plans for office space for faculty and staff members.

New Business

Merit Pay Committee: L. Webb announced a Merit Pay Committee will be formed to develop policies and procedures for Merit Pay for the next cycle and forward at A&M-SA. Currently, we don't have merit pay procedure in place. Dr. Snow said the committee would consist of faculty members, Senators, and URC members. The committee wouldn't be defining an amount for merit pay, but instead determine the criteria and implementation of merit pay procedures.

Announcements

Dr. Matson thanked everyone for his or her service this semester.

L. Webb reminded the Senate that the next meeting will take place in February.

Motion: Motions to adjourn.

L Webb adjourns the meeting at 12:55p.m.

Approved 2/5/2016

Linking Courses to form Academic Learning Communities for the First Year Experience

The University Core Curriculum Committee, a body composed of our faculty drawn from all Colleges, created the General Education Core (GEC) Curriculum proposal during 2014-15 which has gone through the process of approval at all stages, both internal and external, including by the Texas A&M System Board of Regents and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. It states the following: "...While planning the GEC curriculum the faculty and the administration decided to limit the number of GEC courses to a reasonable figure for three reasons. *The first was academic; it was generally agreed that persistence and student success during the first two years of college depended critically on students building lasting academic relationships with their peers. Many universities have successfully implemented the learning community model using a limited number of GEC courses rather than provide a large menu of courses. The recurrence of similar intellectual themes and core objectives in the linked courses in a learning community provides a structure to building the skills necessary for college students' progress and eventual graduation...*

...A course will be classified as an introductory-level course for any of the following reasons: (1) It is the only course in a discipline, (2) It is a pre-requisite course for another GEC course, but does not have a pre-requisite, or (3) It is a course most likely taken by freshmen and sophomore students. Similarly a course will be classified as a proficiency-level course if (1) it is a course that has one or more pre-requisite courses and is not a pre-requisite course for another GEC course or (2) juniors and seniors are most likely to enroll in it due to the structuring of several degree plans. *The university intends to use the learning community model for the first year students and that imposes a stratification of student population in courses, with some courses dominated by freshmen-sophomores and others by juniors-seniors...*"

This proposal provides a model to link some courses to form Academic Learning Communities (ALC). Given that Jaguar Tracks-1 is a course whose theme is 'Introduction to College' it can be linked with any cluster of GEC courses to form an ALC; such a course cluster lends itself to block scheduling. Also, students can register in Banner to a course cluster using a single code.

Here is an **example** of an ALC schedule; semester credit hours are indicated in parenthesis. Courses linked are: Jaguar Tracks I (1), Composition I (3), History I (3), Government I (3) – Total of 10 Hours

Example Block Schedule for 72 Students – Number within parenthesis indicates maximum enrollment. Sections with the same color are linked.

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
8:00 – 8:50	Jaguar Tracks I (24) Composition I	Composition I (24) Jaguar Tracks I (12+12)	Composition I (24)
9:00 - 9:50	History I (36) Jaguar Tracks I (24)	History I (36)	History I (36)
10:00 - 10:50	History I (36) Composition I (24)	History I (36) Composition I (24)	History I (36) Composition I (24)
11:00 – 11:50	Government I (36)	Government I (36)	Government I (36)
12:00 – 12:50	Government I (36)	Government I (36)	Government I (36)
1:00 – 1:50	Composition I (12+12)	Composition I (12+12)	Composition I (12+12)

The 36 students in the 'Yellow' cluster can be thought of as two groups of 24 (Group A) and 12 (Group B) students. Group A has History 1 at 9:00-9:50, Government I at 11:00-11:50, Composition I at 10:00-10:50, and Jaguar Tracks I at M 8:00-8:50. Group B has the same schedule for History I and Government

I but Composition I is at 1:00-1:50 and Jaguar Tracks at W 8:00-8:50. Four instructors, one each for the four disciplines/subjects, teach this community of 72 students. The History and Government instructors teach two sections each, and the Composition and Jaguar Tracks instructors three sections each. About six to ten course clusters can be formed to create ALCs.

Teaching ALC sections requires collaboration between faculty teaching the linked sections. Each GEC course has four core objectives (any four of Critical Thinking, Communication, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Team Work, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility) required by the Texas Core Curriculum. Common themes within an ALC could be one or all of the core objectives *common to the linked courses*.

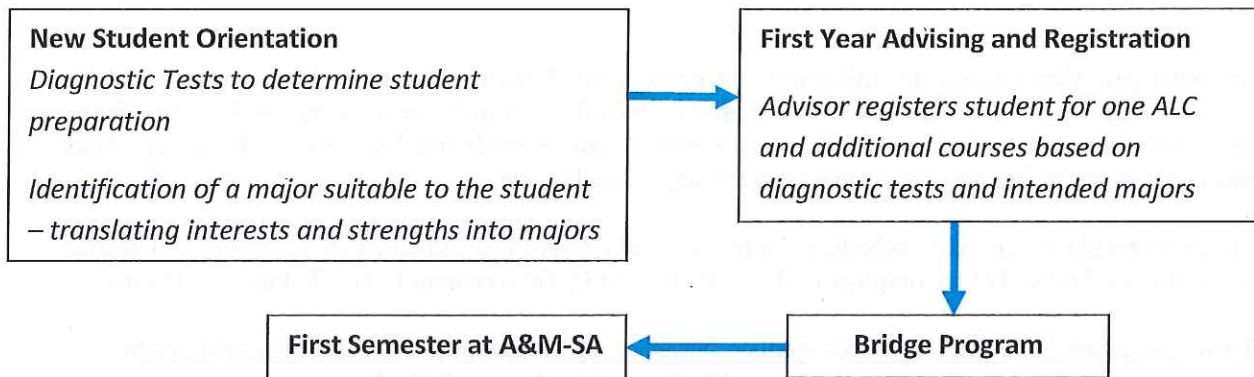
Resources: No additional resources are sought for these ALCs other than what is already planned for supporting first year students.

Implementation of ALC Plan

[1] Decision on which courses to link, how many ALCs, and block scheduling. *Responsible entity for GEC course scheduling: Office of the Dean, College of Arts & Sciences. Deadline: Mid-December 2015.*

Develop criteria for 'exempting' first year/first time students from ALCs. *Deadline: Mid-December 2015.*

[2] Forming ALCs (Summer 2016)



[3] Faculty Preparation for ALCs (Spring and Summer 2016)

Faculty Professional Development:

-Coordinating courses within ALC - Common themes, Assignments, Periodic group meetings, Alerting Support Services about students at risk.

-Onsite workshops on best practices for ALCs.

Draft SRI Questions

Informational Statements

(5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree):

- 1) The instructor clearly defined and explained the course objectives and expectations.
- 2) The instructor communicated information effectively.
- 3) The instructor was engaged with the subject matter of the course.
- 4) The instructor was prepared to teach for each instructional period.
- 5) The instructor encouraged me to take an active role in my own learning.
- 6) The instructor taught in a way that stimulated my critical thinking.
- 7) The instructor was responsive outside of class either electronically or in person.
- 8) I perceive that my knowledge/skills in this content field have improved as a result of this course.

Essential Statements

(5 = Excellent; 4 = Above Average; 3 = Average; 2 = Below Average; 1 = Poor):

- 9) What is your overall rating of this course?
- 10) What is your overall rating of the teaching of this course?

Student Feedback Open ended response.

- 11) Do you have any suggestions on the course or instruction that would improve student learning?
- 12) Do you have any additional comments?