**Texas Woman’s University  
Undergraduate Council**

**Academic Year Theme: Advocacy**

December 4, 2:30 PM-4:00 PM

**Minutes**

1. Welcome: Dr. Jorge F. Figueroa, VP-CSI
   1. Dr. Figueroa welcomed everyone to the undergraduate council meeting.
2. Opening Remarks and Quorum check: Dr. William Benner
   1. Dr. Benner started the meeting, and quorum was checked.
3. Message from Provost Bauer: Dr. Angela Bauer, EVP & Provost
   1. Dr. Bauer addressed the UG Council, and in her message, she shared her idea for exploring options about the Core Curriculum in alignment with student persistence and degree completion and to increase our retention numbers. As part of her ideas, she mentioned revisiting the core curriculum and seeing if it’s aligned with where we are as an institution, assessing if we are employing best practices to engage students in the first year as a way to foster academic performance and student retention, and exploring the creation of a “General Education Council” or “Core Curriculum Council” as an additional body. This extra body would be comprised of faculty from the core courses dependent on the discipline and proportional to their requirements in the core. Dr. Bauer was transparent to the UG Council and expressed her desire to go ahead and form the General Education Council. Still, she knew that it might be duplicative of the UG Council efforts, and the General Education Council would have a lot to do, which would be cumbersome for the members, and she would not want to add that additional task. Dr. Bauer expressed that there’s a need for a separate body to look at the core curriculum, along with getting full-time faculty involved in teaching the core and creating professional development opportunities to enhance the pedagogies used during first-year courses with the assistance of the Center for Faculty Success. In addition, she expressed her desire for our UNIV-1231 First Year Seminar to be a three-credit seminar. She shared information, and Dr. Figueroa shared the document during her message with the UG Council, about how increasing to a three-credit seminar that focuses on a particular topic, along with incorporating study skills and additional UNIV topics has seen a 5% bump in retention from first to second year. In addition, she shared that data shows that if at least 25% of freshmen take in-person courses by full-time faculty, it will have a 10% retention from the first to second year. Dr. Bauer expressed that she would also argue that our core curriculum needs some TLC. With that in mind, she indicated that she would be forming an advisory council in the Spring to explore and find answers to these questions: Can we get full-time faculty involved in teaching the core? Do we have the ability? Do we want to do a full-fledged three-credit first-year seminar? She also would like the advisory council to look at the data and how a general education council might benefit our campus and how that would fit and work with the Undergraduate Council and other faculty-driven committees that provide oversight for the curriculum. Lastly, Dr. Bauer requested that faculty members send her feedback about her thoughts directly.
4. Review and Motion for approval of 10/23 meeting minutes: Dr. William Benner
   1. Motion to accept minutes from the October 23rd Meeting with updates/corrections for the SACSCOC update from Dr. Gray Scott.
      1. Approved by: Dr. Kyle Biggerstaff
      2. Second by: Dr. Matthew Brown
5. Introduction of Guest speaker: Dr. William Benner
   1. Dr. William Benner introduced guest speaker Dr. Gretchen Busl, Director of QEP

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to the UG Council.

* 1. Dr. Busl thanked the UG Council for the invitation and started her presentation indicating that the QEP is a requirement for accreditation by SACSCOC. It is a 5-year program to improve students’ success. The current institutional focus is titled “Amplify Your Impact,” which aims to improve our students’ ability to impact community well-being by developing their public speaking skills. The QEP focuses on graduate students across all academic disciplines and campuses as our future scholars, practitioners, teachers, and leaders. Faculty, staff, and, eventually, other graduate students will serve as student mentors with training specific to public-facing communication, technology, and student health and wellbeing, answering the call to make higher education relevant to real-world outcomes. Initially, the QEP was set to focus on graduate students as they already have one degree and are impacting their communities. but they’ve started a mentoring program for graduate students that will connect undergraduate students.
  2. Dr. Busl shared the three major QEP initiatives:
     1. Faculty Fellows (currently in the second cohort) and they are designing and redesigning assignment(s)for one of their courses to have a public communication component.
     2. Mentoring Program, where we are pairing graduate students with undergraduate students, and they are working on a project that will result in a public engagement.
     3. Graduate Student Grant Program, funded by the Jane Nelson Institute for Women’s Leadership. This is a re-granting program focusing on research.
  3. As part of the activities associated with the QEP, they’ve incorporated book discussions and hosting workshops. Dr. Busl mentioned the workshop titled Game Planning by Dr. Elizabeth Brownlow, [brownlow@twu.edu](mailto:brownlow@twu.edu), Public Scholarship Specialist, as an example. Finally, Dr. Busl shared her email information for questions and to get involved [gbusl@twu.edu](mailto:gbusl@twu.edu). Lastly, she shared that the QEP active survey will help us know what kind of thought leadership activity, public scholarship, engaged scholarship, experiential learning, and community practices you are currently involved/using or are interested in so that we can help you. <https://twu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_57usqq6uL77x9B4>

1. UG Council sub-committees’ updates: Dr. William Benner & Dr. Aimée Myers
   1. Update/reminder from Dr. Aimée Myers about the April workshop titled Creating a Well-Rounded Syllabus. She shared that marketing items and workshop artifacts are being developed, and a communication will be sent in January after winter break.
   2. Academic Policy Advisory: Dr. Matthew Brown
      1. Dr. Brown presented the motion for approval: UG minor rule verbiage update (non-substantive change) for TWU catalog
         1. Approved by the UG Council
      2. Dr. Brown presented the motion for approval: CPL policy for business, industry, and government certifications and examinations
         1. Approved by the UG Council with the verbiage modification of “may not” to “cannot” in section Regulation and Procedure, C. 4.
   3. Course Proposal Review: Dr. Joy Spadachene
      1. Dr Spadachene presented the course READ 2013: Global Literacy for Change: Building Strong Communities Through Emancipatory Education
         1. Approved by the council
   4. Program Review: Dr. Jerry Burkett
      1. Dr. Burkett indicated no updates from his sub-committee.
   5. Assessment: Ms. Aubri Thurmond
      1. Ms. Thurmond indicated that the sub-committee met twice this semester. We went into depth on how to go about our goals/projects. She informed the UG Council that they are working on materials to be distributed to faculty. A potential workshop in March (virtual and in person), including adjunct faculty, is being explored.
2. Office of VP of CSI Updates: Dr. Jorge F. Figueroa, VP-CSI
   1. Dr. Figueroa indicated that an optional SB 17 syllabi statement can now be added to the TWU syllabi template.
3. New Business: Dr. William Benner
   1. Next UG Council meeting: 1/22/2025
4. Adjourn: Dr. William Benner at 3:17 pm
   1. Motion: Dr. Pam Baker
   2. Second: Ms. Sarah Gamblin