



Undergraduate Council Minutes

March 25, 2026

2:30 PM-4:00 PM

- I. Welcome and Opening Remarks and Quorum Check: Dr. William Benner, Chair
- II. Review and approval of December Minutes: Dr. William Benner, Chair
 - a. Motion to: Dr. Ashley Bender
 - b. Second by: Dr. Joy Spadachene
- III. Sub Committee Introductions and Updates
 - a. Course Proposal Sub-Committee: Dr. Joy Spadachene, Chair
 - i. Our committee reviewed all five courses and is proposing approval to the Undergraduate Council.
 - ii. DH 1123 Oral Health as a Component of Whole-Person Wellness
 1. Approved by the council
 - iii. PHIL 3043 Philosophy of Religion
 1. Approved by the council
 - iv. SOWK 1403 Introduction to Social Welfare Policies and Services
 1. Approved by the council
 - v. SOWK 2813 Human Behavior and the Social Environment
 1. Approved by the council
 - vi. SOWK 3513 Culturally Competent Practice
 1. There were questions about the number of SLOs as they had a lot, and we recognized that as part of their accreditation process, this is sometimes a requirement by the accreditation/licensing body.
 2. Approved by the council
 - b. Program Review Sub-Committee: Dr. Jerry Burkett, Chair
 - i. Accelerated B.A. History/M.A. History
 1. Approved by the council
 - ii. Accelerated B.S. History/M.A. History
 1. Approved by the council
 - iii. How are the two accelerated, B.A. History/M.A. History and B.S. History/M.A. History are different?

Dr. Parker Hevron: Yes, so we offer a B.A. in History and a B.S. in History, and the B.A. in History requires a foreign language, and in order for us to offer the 4+1 program for our B.A. and B.S. students, we needed to submit a program proposal for each.

Dr. Burkett: We noted that the programs are competitive and that UNT has similar programs, and you want to offer these programs to some of your exceptional history students.

Another question: Is this aligned with the Provost's cost-cutting measures if we end up with low enrollment?

Dr. Hevron: Yes, so if this were a standalone program that we thought would only have five to ten students, then that would not align. We already have a master's program in history, and this will only add to the



number. This was meant to augment and help with some of the low-enrollment issues we already have in the master's program. The idea is to bring in as many students as we can, and the 4+1 program is our effort to increase the pool of potential master's students into the program. Since the stand-alone master's program is somewhat small, this accelerated program will increase the pool of students for the master's program.

Dr. Benner: I do have a question, when it comes to career tracks, how would you distinguish between the B.A. and B.S. in History? What is the profile of the student, and where do they end up in the job market?

Dr. Hevron: For me, looking at our students, those who come into our program with a background in a foreign language proficiency will go into the BA program, as they can easily earn those credits. As for a difference in careers for the two, there is not a notable difference in work; the main difference is the undergraduate coursework, which does not affect the graduate path or career paths.

iv. Accelerated B.S. Biology/M.S. Biology

1. Very similar to the scope of the two accelerated programs that we just passed. Offering students an advantage by providing an accelerated program that saves time and money, with a path to faster workforce entry. We also believe that this will support our R2 status and when we apply for opportunities with external grant funding and STEM workforce development. Interesting note is that this will also offer an alternative to a gap-year for pre-med students, providing a path to a PhD as an alternative postgraduate degree. This was very well written and loved the bullet points it provided.
2. Dr. Joy Spadachene: This is more out of my own curiosity, but with this type of accelerated degree do we find that more students entering the workforce straight from the master's, or is this more of a pathway to accelerated PhD or MD studies?

Dr. Ann Davis: We have one accelerated biology program right now, but it's part of our Professional Science Master's program, which is very targeted toward the workforce. The students complete an internship as part of the program, and most of them are placed directly into the same company after graduation. We don't have a 4 plus 1 for our research-based master's right now, and would love to see our current students progress through the BS to MS and then on to our PhD program so that they do not leave to go to another program/institution.

Dr. Dayna Averitt: I'll just add that our master's thesis program is a little weak. We take students directly from bachelor's into a PhD program, so I feel like there's a gap that we can be filling by building up our MS thesis program by capturing some of those students that are already in our labs doing research and are great students, but they want to go to med school, dental school or PT



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programs and if we can keep them for another year and give them a second degree, plus we get more research productivity from them.

3. Approved by the council

v. B.S. Food Science

1. I had to look up IFT which is the Institute of Food Technologist, and this is an accrediting body. IFT will significantly enhance the program's value for TWU students. As part of the IFT accreditation, we will have an IFT student association chapter as part of the degree, and this will give the students chances for national competitions, apply for scholarships, and connect with the local food industry. Being an IFT-approved program will give the food businesses that hire our students the reassurance of the quality education here at TWU.

2. Stefka Arnaudova: Does the university currently maintain a list of approved partners or vendors that provide internship or volunteer opportunities for students while they are still enrolled? (about the degree).

Dr. Cynthia Warren: Yes, our internships are conducted in-house with our faculty, who have strong industry connections. TWU is at the hub of the food industry in the Southern United States, which provides many opportunities for our students.

Dr. Benner: So, no matter how high this scales up with students, you feel that the department can support our students and internships?

Dr. Warren: Yes. And so far we have been very successful.

3. Stefka Arnaudova: And if so, how are those partnerships coordinated across departments? Follow-up: Would you accept additional resources and companies? And who to contact about it?

Dr. Warren: Yes, you can contact me, and I can connect them with the appropriate person.

4. Approved by the council

vi. B.M. Music (Musical Theatre)

1. We actually approved this program back in 2023, and they have evaluated their cohorts and made some adjustments to their curriculum to make it more effective in the plan of study. They are continually improving their program to refine transfer student pathways, maximize transfer credit, and align with NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) accreditation requirements.

2. Approved by the council

vii. Undergraduate Certificate in AI Literacy

1. This is a 15-hour undergraduate certificate housed in the Department of English, Rhetoric, and Spanish. The certificate will have 5 courses. I won't bore you with the courses. You can read



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that in the notes. It will be offered in person at the Denton campus starting Fall 2026. It will introduce foundational AI concepts and critical thinking across disciplines, helping our students become informed, ethical users of AI in their personal and professional lives. There will be modifications to include materials like ENG 3253 Technical Writing Course, the Professional Writing Course, and the Marketing, Digital Marketing course.

2. Approved by the council

- c. Assessment Sub-Committee: Ms. Aubri Thurmond, Chair
 - i. No updates
- d. Academic Policy Advisory Sub-Committee: Dr. Jackie Hoermann-Elliott
 - i. We are working on the award criteria for the two Undergraduate Council Awards, which may now include non-ex officio members who contribute to the council.

Dr. Benner: Thank you, Jackie, for stepping in temporarily to help with the Academic Policy Advisory Subcommittee. The language has been updated, including descriptions and assessments for the awards. Jackie and her subcommittee were able to come in and review and revise the awards, and you will be able to read and see how they were updated soon.

IV. TWU Undergraduate Studies Updates: Dr. Brandi Falley

- a. General Education Review Committee Update
 - i. We are meeting weekly for now, but this could change. We are meeting to review different areas. Dr. Gray Scott attended the last meeting and shared information about assessment and how, in some areas, they use different criteria, which tends to make things messy, and the artifact numbers are not reflected accurately. Dr. Stankey came and shared data on the common courses both FTIC and transfer students take. We are gauging which courses should remain in the common core. Some things coming from the state will change the core requirements by reducing the required hours, the number and how it will look is still unclear. The Gen Ed will focus on what we, as TWU, can control, like the 90 and 91 areas. Some surveys will be released soon. SO please take the time to complete and encourage your students to complete as well.
- b. Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair 2026-2027
 - i. Dr. Benner and Myers will be rolling off the council as they have completed the max of two terms on the council. An email will be sent to all members after this meeting with a Google Form for nominations. All nominations, even self-nominations, are due by Friday, April 10, 2026.

V. Other Business: Dr. William Benner

- a. Dr. Myers and I are finishing up some projects that we have started while on the council. I will be updating the handbook created last academic year to support leadership change and institutional knowledge. Dr. Myers and Dr. Bender are



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wrapping up the Inclusive Excellence Workshop. Also, April is our last meeting of the year.

- VI. Adjourn at 3:13
 - a. Motion Joy Spadachene
 - b. Second Dr. Ashley Bender

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, April 22, 2026