



CURRICULUM & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Texas Woman's University Undergraduate Council Academic Year Theme: Advocacy

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

Minutes

- I. Welcome: Dr. Jorge F. Figueroa, VP-CSI
 - a. Dr. Figueroa welcomes everyone to the undergraduate council meeting.
- II. Opening Remarks and Quorum check: Dr. William Benner
 - a. Dr. Benner started the meeting, and quorum was checked.
- III. Message from Provost Bauer: Dr. Angela Bauer, EVP & Provost
 - a. I would like to plant a seed of an idea with you and get feedback on – with our core curriculum and the oversight of the core curriculum and thinking ahead as we look at student persistence and degree completion, there are many things that we can do to enhance our numbers. As I understand it, it has been a while since the core has been revisited to see if it's aligned with where we are as an institution, if we are employing best practices that we know are really engaging students in their first year, foster great academic performance, retaining students, etc. Typically, at other institutions, in addition to the Undergraduate Council and Curriculum Committee, there is an additional body called the “General Education Council” or “Core Curriculum Council” that would comprise faculty from the core courses and dependent on the discipline and proportional to their requirements in the core. In the spring semester, I would like to form a short-term advisory council to provide guidance on the next steps. If I'm being completely honest, I would love to go ahead and form this general education council, but I know that might duplicative the efforts of what the Undergraduate Council is already doing. And the general education council would have a lot to do, which would be cumbersome for the members, and I would not want to add that to your plate. I think there needs to be a separate body looking at the curriculum, finding ways to get more 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. Consider implementing a best practice by going beyond the one-credit hour and making it a full three-credit traditional first-year seminar. I have shared some literature with Dr. Figueroa. He can provide you with that stating that when campuses like ours incorporate a traditional first-year seminar that goes beyond UNIV, and the course can focus on a particular topic and incorporate study skills and other UNIV topics, they have seen a 5% bump in retention from first to second year. Also, they show that if at least 25% of freshmen take in-person courses by full-time faculty, it will



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have a 10% retention from the first to second year. I would also argue that our core needs some TLC. Here are some questions that I have. 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? I would want the advisory council to look at the data and the ways that 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.

- IV. Review and Motion for approval of 10/23 meeting minutes: Dr. William Benner
 - a. Motion to accept minutes from the October 23rd Meeting with updates/corrections for the SACSCOC update from Dr. Gray Scott.
 - b. Approved by: Dr. Kyle Biggerstaff
 - c. Second by: Dr. Matthew Brown
- V. Introduction of Guest speaker: Dr. William Benner
 - a. Update on the QEP: Dr. Gretchen Busl, Director of QEP
 - b. Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is required for accreditation by SACSCOC. It is a 5-year program to improve students' success. The current focus is "Amplify Your Impact", to improve our students' ability to impact community well-being by developing their public speaking skills. The QEP will focus 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, and with the graduate students honing in and continuing the skills they have, that is impacting their communities. With the mentoring program that we have started with graduate students, connecting with undergraduate students will be incorporated into the QEP. The three major initiatives are: 1) faculty fellows, we are on our 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, Jane Nelson Institute for Women's Leadership is funding, it is actually a re-granting program; this program is helping students to independent research or take the research they are doing for course work and make it visible and impactful for the public. We are also doing a book discussion with thick essays and leadership books. We are also hosting workshops, like one we hosted yesterday, "Game Planning" by , Dr. Elizabeth Brownlow, brownlow@twu.edu, Public Scholarship Specialist. Director, Dr. Gretchen Busl, gbusl@twu.edu. This is our information so that you can get involved/partner with us if you need help.



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- c. 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
- VI. UG Council sub-committees updates: Dr. William Benner & Dr. Aimée Myers
 - a. Update/reminder from Dr. Aimée Myers about the April workshop. Marketing items and other things are being developed, and they will be sent in January after winter break.
 - b. Academic Policy Advisory: Dr. Matthew Brown
 - i. Motion for approval: UG minor rule verbiage update (non-substantive change) for TWU catalog
 - 1. Approved by council
 - ii. Motion for approval: CPL policy for business, industry, and government certifications and examinations
 - 1. Ms. Sarah Gamblin: Need clarification for business industry and government certifications and examinations; are there any exclusions specifically as it relates to the arts industry?
Dr. Figueroa: It depends on the academic component, specifically the policy that establishes that mechanism. We are just giving an opportunity to any academic component that would like to see this as a way to increase enrollment and provide opportunities for students.
Dr. Brown: The term “industry” as it exists in the policy is very broadly interpretable by the academic component, and it should be emphasized that the way the policy is written is entirely up to the subject experts in the academic component to decide whether or not to accept any given certification or experience.
Dr. Agatha Beins: The regulation and procedure section needs clarification (CPL credits may not transfer or be counted as part of the core curriculum).
Dr. Figueroa: There might be institutions that do not accept CPL, so we are protecting our curriculum as well as our subject matter experts from any misinterpretation. If any student transfers to another institution and receives CPL for grade and parallel learning, that is subject to the institution to accept it.
 - 2. Motion to modify verbiage from “may not” to “cannot” to section Regulation and Procedure, C. 4.
 - 3. Approved by council
 - c. Course Proposal Review: Dr. Joy Spadachene
 - i. READ 2013: Dr. Agatha Beins: In the Global Perspectives, one of the rows/columns in the table that outlines the SLOs is blank; is that intentional?



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Dr. Joy Spadachene: The Global Perspectives requirements do not all have to be addressed within a course; just a certain number of them do.

- ii. Approved by the council
- d. Program Review: Dr. Jerry Burkett
 - i. No updates.
- e. Assessment: Ms. Aubri Thurmond
 - i. Our committee met twice this semester. We went into depth on how to go about our goals/projects.
 - ii. Working on materials to be distributed to faculty with new syllabus template; workshop in March (virtual and in person), including adjuncts.
- VII. Office of VP of CSI Updates: Dr. Jorge F. Figueroa, VP-CSI
 - a. SB 17 syllabi statement is an option to add to a course syllabus and has been added to the syllabi template.
- VIII. New Business: Dr. William Benner
 - a. Next UG Council meeting: 1/22/2025
- IX. Adjourn: Dr. William Benner at 3:17 pm
 - a. Motion: Dr. Pam Baker
 - b. Second: Ms. Sarah Gamblin