



CURRICULUM &
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

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

January 22nd, 2:30 PM-4:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

- I. Welcome: Dr. Jorge F. Figueroa, VP-CSI: Welcomed everyone and introduced Dr. William Benner.
- II. Opening Remarks and Quorum check: Dr. William Benner gave opening remarks and quorum check.
- III. Review and Motion for approval of 12/3 meeting minutes: Dr. William Benner
 - a. Motion: Dr. Pamela Baker
 - b. Second: Dr. Tina Gumienny
- IV. Introduction to Guest speaker: Dr. William Benner
 - a. First Generation Champion: Dr. Becky Rodriguez, Executive Director Center for First Generation Students

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – I am thrilled to share a new initiative as part of our First-Generation Pioneers Initiative. We aim to connect some of our First-Gen students with First-Gen faculty and staff. This initiative includes pairing faculty and staff who wish to be advocates or share their experiences, knowledge, and journeys, and be allies. This Spring, we will launch The First-Gen Champions. The interest form is available on our [website](#). Initially, we will collect information from faculty and staff interested in being champions to understand their interests in supporting First-Gen students. The goal is to foster leadership skills in first-gen students, create a network and framework to support them across campus, and empower their skill development. We will match you as soon as we establish the connections. Throughout the semester, there will be 3-4 meetings. We already have students inquiring about when they will be paired with a faculty or staff member. At the end of the semester, we will distribute a survey to gather feedback from both students and faculty/staff members.

Dr. William Benner – How many mentors would you like that are staff, and how many mentors would you like that are faculty? Do you think academic advisors are a good fit for this?

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – It could be anyone who is willing to talk/mentor a student. My goal is 25 – you will have 1 student, 2 max.

Dr. William Benner – Can Dallas and Houston join in?

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – Dallas and Houston can join in. I can find students from those campuses that are interested, right now we have no interest. We will launch as soon as I have faculty and staff.



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Dr. Tina Gumienny – I was wondering if students could be paired with mentors based on availability. If we could meet up with two students at once they get to know each other as well as us; two birds one stone.

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – I want to give faculty and staff the opportunity to decide how they want to meet with their students. If faculty/student mentees want to meet all together, that's fine. I don't want it to be restrictive.

Dr. Brigitte Vittrup – Is this similar to the second year/sophomore year communities?

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – yes, many years ago we had the Success Mentor Program with the sophomores; this is a version of that. We had really good success rates on that.

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – On the interest form there is an option for your photo. You will be featured on our website as a First-Gen Champion and you will also receive something to put on your door.

Dr. Jorge Figueroa – I have a recommendation - please develop a letter for faculty members so they can use it for their promotion and tenure, or post-tenure processes.

Dr. Becky Rodriguez – We have many faculty and staff who are First-Gen but not everyone is First-Gen in our faculty and staff teams, but they are vested in helping First-Gen students. We want to be open to having everybody assist us in making sure all our students are successful. I will draft that letter.

V. UG Council sub-committees' updates: Dr. William Benner

a. Program Review: Dr. Jerry Burkett

i. Bachelor of Science in Nutrition (Community Nutrition) – formerly “Wellness”

Dr. Jerry Burkett - This is a program that provides students with nutritional knowledge that will allow the individual to assist others in reducing the risk of chronic diseases through educational and behavioral approaches; it is a core nutrition course. Students take classes in health studies. Graduates will be able to inform individuals, communities, organizations about community health and nutrition. It looks like a good program giving the students a new professional certificate. Changes that were made look very necessary. We do have some comments if someone is on from Nutrition to help us out.

Angela Griffin – yes, I am

Dr. Jerry Burkett – We want some clarity around the wording of the program. It says it's not eligible for certification, but it looks like it's an improvement towards certification.

Angela Griffin – In the past students have been advised that they should seek out these health studies classes that would allow them to take the test certification (Certified Health Personal Educator). It was outside of the 120



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hours that's required for the degree so a few students would do it, but overall not many. We do feel that it adds value to the degree plan so we changed it where it is part of the 120 hour degree requirement. We think students will be more successful and will be able to take the classes; they won't be in addition to.

Dr. Jerry Burkett – There are some new electives for the program. Does the department have the existing staff to cover those electives? What are those courses going to add to the program?

Angela Griffin – We currently have all of those courses, they are part of the dietetic undergraduate program. We want to get them in the lab learning some practical application to the education that they will be providing clients. We already have those classes in place and many students take them. We do have the space available for them so there will not be any additional loads on faculty to teach these electives.

Dr. Jerry Burkett – The program is very well written and very straight forward. We just had those two questions and that clarifies things for us. It passed sub-committee 5-0 so it is ready for full council approval.

ii. Approved by council

- b. Academic Policy Advisory: Dr. Matt Brown – no updates
- c. Course Proposal Review: Dr. Joy Spadachene – no updates
- d. Assessment: Ms. Aubri Thurmond: We have finalized the details of our spring workshop, "Course Design for Better Outcomes." It is a backwards design workshop and is intended to help faculty members start with their course learning outcomes and the framework will ensure that the assessment, assignments and activities are scaffolded to meet the outcomes. It will be led by Dr. Jennifer Danley-Scott and Dr. Gray Scott. It will be held on Friday, March 28th from 1 – 3 pm via Zoom. Dr. Gray Scott: The Office of Academic Assessment & Accreditation will be offering stipends for the adjuncts to attend.

VI. Office of VP of CSI Updates: Dr. Jorge F. Figueroa, VP-CSI

- a. Notification to the Undergraduate Council that all the Academic Program Reviews are underway, and we have met with the reviewers. We are now waiting for the self-studies to be submitted in early March.
- b. Dr. Bauer is in the process of organizing and forming a faculty led advisory committee team to explore opportunities for general education.
- c. The Texas Transfer Advisory Committee has approved field of Study in Kinesiology. So, at this time, it is in the process of "Open Comment," and the College of Health Sciences has been informed if they wish to respond or react.
- d. The Texas Transfer Advisory Committee did not approve the Field of Study in Biology. The Field of Study subcommittee is expected to convene in during this month (January).



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- e. The TWU Micro-credentials initiative continues. We are still in the pilot's first year, and we currently have 14 micro-credentials that have been approved and are up for issuance.

VII. Spring Workshop: Dr. Aimée Myers

- a. This is a continuation of the workshop from previous years, and we are excited to offer it to a larger audience. We are hosting the workshop "Creating a Well-Rounded Syllabi" on April 15th from 1 pm – 3 pm in Hubbard Hall. There is a registration, and the limit is 40 attendees, so please complete the [google form](#) if you want to attend. The registration deadline is March 30th (if not full before).

VIII. New Business: Dr. William Benner

- a. Next UG Council meeting: 2/26/2025
- b. As mentioned last semester we are having awards that will be coming this semester.
- c. I am also working on the handbook as a way to keep institutional knowledge to be able to pass on to the next leadership.

IX. Adjourn: Dr. William Benner at 3:03 pm

- a. Motion: Dr. Niki Fogg
- b. Second: Dr. Jackie Hoermann-Elliott