

**BLINN COLLEGE
COUNCIL OF DIVISIONS
Minutes, Regular Meeting, October 17, 2008
Via Video-Conference**

Present: Bob Brick, Presiding, Linda Richardson, Jason Stegner, Marcelo Bussiki, Erica DeYoung, Dennis Utley, David Corkran, Bill Nix, Blanche Brick, Ron Hammond, John Schaffer, Dustin Hill, Nancy Wright, Ken French, Mary Barnes-Tilley, Mary Barnes-Tilley (representing Doug Pierce), Marvin Leed (representing Mr. Hoppens and Mr. Ivy), H.F. Poehlmann, Theresa Wahrmund, Linda Flynn, Rick Church, Mark Wilkening, Karen May, Larry Campbell, and Greg Phillips.

Minutes: Bob Brick called the meeting to order at 2:13 pm following the adjournment of the Curriculum Committee. He asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes from the past two meetings (August 2008 and Sept. 2008.) Marcelo Bussiki asked to have the spelling of his first name corrected in the September minutes; this was approved. Since no other changes/additions were suggested, the minutes were approved on a motion from Larry Campbell, seconded by Bill Nix.

Old Business

I. Workload Formula

Bob Brick presented the final revision of the Workload Formula, went over the changes, and then for input. Some of the chairs had not yet sent in corrected information to be plugged in; Bob asked them to do so soon as he will present this revised version to the Administrative Council on Wednesday, Oct. 22nd. A question on how these proposed reductions would be used—for assistant chairs? coordinators? student workers? or secretaries? Discussion ensued. Dustin Hill noted that in the Technical Education Division, they use coordinators who are given course reductions. While the unofficial position of “Coordinator” is used in several academic divisions, no coordinators get course reductions as do the ones in Technical Education.

It was also mentioned that perhaps we ought to use the term “credits” rather than “reductions.” Blanche Brick said that student worker funds should not be tied to these extra course reductions. Four divisions---Technical Education/Computer Science, Bryan Campus; Fine Arts in Brenham; Kinesiology in Brenham; and Allied Health in Bryan---are excluded from this Workload Formula. Bob Brick suggested we may want to revisit this issue in the future. Bill Nix said that Kinesiology in Brenham should be added to this Chart because the position of division chair has been separated from the position of athletic director. Larry Campbell pointed out that the Fine Arts division chair position has been separated from the band director position but that the designation should be left as is because of the nature of the classes/courses, such as private lessons.

After much discussion, it was agreed by the group to leave the current “NA” designations as they are, and individual division chairs may petition for change if and when they want.

Motion: Nancy Wright moved that the revised chart presented by Bob Brick be taken to the Administrative Council to go into effect, if approved, in the

Spring 2009 semester and to remain in effect for two years.
Marcelo Bussiki seconded the motion.
Unanimously approved.

II. Student Evaluations

A subcommittee was appointed at the last meeting to consider the efficacy of moving student evaluations from the fall semesters to the spring semesters. This Committee consists of Nancy Wright, Chr., Ken French, Larry Campbell, and Erika DeYoung. Nancy said that after speaking with Dr. LaCour and Dean Kemper, it was learned that an overall revision of the entire assessment process (including student evaluations) was planned in the future. In view of this, the committee members decided to present recommendations to this group that, if approved, would be sent forward to the group undertaking this assessment process when it begins. Also Dr. LaCour did not seem to be amenable to changing the time of evaluations from fall to spring for several reasons, including contract renewals and budget considerations, both of which are done early in the spring semester.

Nancy presented the following recommendations for the Council's consideration:

Recommendation 1:

that we remain with the current timetable of conducting student evaluations in the fall semesters with division chairs having the option/responsibility of assigning new instructors and instructors who are having problems to be evaluated in the spring semesters and summers if necessary.

Discussion ensued. **Recommendation passed unanimously.**

Recommendation 2:

that the Fine Arts Division on the Bryan Campus conduct a Pilot Study in the Spring 2009 semester of on-line student evaluations, the specifics of this plan to be worked out by the division chair and assistant chair, Dr. Bussiki and Erika DeYoung. This on-line evaluation would be a supplement to the regular Blinn College evaluation instrument with questions specifically tailored to the types of courses in this Division.

Discussion ensued. **Recommendation passed unanimously.**

Recommendation 3:

that the date of student evaluations be moved to a later time in the semester. The reason for this recommendation is that a lot of the faculty feel it is unfair to ask students their opinions so early in the semester as many of them have no intention of finishing the class or they are frustrated by the amount of work required and want to take their frustration out on the instructor. Blanche Brick and others disagreed, saying the chairs need input from all of the students in case there are problems with an instructor.

Nancy Wright pointed out that the Administration's reason for changing to an earlier date is that by doing them early in the semester, IR&E can get the scanned evaluations back to the division chairs before they leave for Christmas Break. She noted, however,

that this past year the evaluations arrived on Dec. 14th when most of the faculty had gone for the break. There was not enough time for the chairs to fill out all the forms and schedule and hold individual conferences with the faculty members. Therefore, waiting a couple of weeks later to do the student evaluations, while it would delay getting the scanned evaluations in the hands of the division chairs till January, would make no meaningful difference.

Marcelo Bussiki moved that we ask to have the student evaluations administered a couple of weeks later than they are now done. There was no second, but there was more discussion. Some said they would like for the evaluations to be delayed till after the drop date (Nov. 14th this term). However, others noted that we need to hear from all students in order to get a full picture, not just the ones who stick it out to the drop date. It was noted that the timetable this year is very close to the drop date; therefore, Marcelo withdrew his motion to ask to do the student evaluations later in the semester.

This recommendation was not approved.

Mary Barnes-Tilley asked why we can't go back to where full time instructors would be evaluated, at random, on only some of their classes rather than on all of them. It used to be that an instructor teaching multiple sections of the same course would be evaluated only on one or two sections, sections to be chosen at random by the division chair. Ken French answered that Dr. LaCour says we don't get enough feedback unless we do all of the classes taught. Mary countered that every research entity today bases their conclusions on sampling rather than on the whole and this seems to work. There was no further discussion on this point.

Recommendation 4:

that we ask the Administration to strongly consider administering student evaluations on-line in the future. Although we recognize there would be glitches to work out, we believe that this would ultimately be more efficient and effective. Larry Campbell found in his survey of other colleges in Texas that while only a few were doing on-line evaluations at this time, many said they were working toward on-line in the near future. There was some discussion on this point. H. F. Poehlmann noted that if we want students to participate in an acceptable number, we should encourage more of our faculty to participate in the on-line evaluations of chairs and division chairs. Currently, this level of participation is very low. All agreed.

This recommendation was approved unanimously.

New Business

Bob Brick addressed the issue of safety on campus and noted the escalation of violence on campus. One Bryan instructor noted that recently a student had threatened his life; the student was suspended from school. Others noted an increase in incivility cases on both the Bryan and Brenham campuses. No action was taken.

Bill Nix moved for adjournment and Dustin Hill seconded. Unanimously approved.