

**Council of Academic Deans Meeting
February 2, 2021**

Summary and Action Items

1. **Potential Minors in Data Science and Entrepreneurship and Innovation** – Discussion was held amongst the Council, Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman, and Dr. Dan Perry regarding exploring the concepts of creating two new minors in Data Science and Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Dr. Bourgeois approved moving forward with the planning of these two minors and his approval was endorsed by the Council.

2. **National Survey of Earned Doctorates and Faculty Diversity** – Dr. Debbie Thorne announced that once a year a division of the National Science Foundation publishes statistics on earned doctorates by discipline, gender, race/ethnicity, and other characteristics. A report of the latest results was distributed. Dr. Scott Bowman emphasized the importance of using this data to understand the availability of diverse faculty candidates, staying mindful of our faculty diversity goals, and using the Faculty Hiring Toolkit and best practices for recruiting, hiring, and retaining diverse faculty. Discussion was held amongst the Council regarding commitment, actions, and outcomes that reflect the shared values of diversity, inclusion, access, and opportunity. Deans are encouraged to discuss potential opportunity hires with the Provost's Office.

3. **Presidential Awards for Excellence** – Dr. Beth Wuest announced that TRACS will no longer be the mechanism for implementing the awards process for the Presidential Awards for Excellence. Rather than TRACS, IT has created a process via Digital Measures/Faculty Qualifications for nominated faculty to enter materials and documentation and for review committees to view documents for the selection process. It is important to note that the timeframe for this process has not changed. Deans should submit the names of the college nominees for each Presidential Award to Dr. Wuest and she will inform the respective committee chair, along with a copy to Michael Baker in ITAC. Faculty nominees and review committee members are individually added to the Faculty Qualifications site.

Dr. Walt Horton briefly discussed the new Denise M. Trauth Endowed Presidential Research Professorship that was recently announced. An email was sent to faculty and deans with information such as criteria and application process.

4. **Undergraduate Admissions Report** – Mr. Gary Ray provided the Council with an undergraduate admissions report. As of February 1, 2021, the current student headcount for spring 2021 was 34,552, which is a 215 (0.6%) decrease from last year; SCH decreased by 2.3% and continuing undergraduate students has decreased by 716 (2.4%) students. The second class schedule drop for non-payment occurred on January 27, 2021 and 122 students were dropped, compared to 76 from one year ago. Census Day is on February 3, 2021.

Approximately 91.6% of the fall 2020 freshman class is registered for spring 2021, compared to 90.8% a year ago.

New students for spring 2021 – an increase of 19 freshman; readmits increased by 124; students pursuing second baccalaureates increased by 2; and transfer students increased by 13.

Withdrawals – 764 withdrawals for spring 2021 compared to 790 a year ago; top three reasons include financial difficulties, transfer to a new school, and unknown/other. Specifically, because of COVID-19 related issues, 105 students withdrew from the university.

Update on FAFSA – As of January 15, 2021, 35.52% of Texas high school class of 2021 has completed a FAFSA. Texas applications are lagging behind last year's pace by 7.5%.

Mr. Ray announced that Mr. Lou Jimenez, University Registrar, has resigned effective February 26, 2021. Mr. Ray will be working on forming a search committee in the near future.

CARES Act – \$6.5M will be distributed to students in spring 2021; \$1.395M will be distributed to students in summer 2021; \$8M will be distributed to students in fall 2021. Application information will be published soon.

Fall 2021 – Current freshman application numbers are down but student admits are up 2.3%.

5. Graduate Admissions Report – Dr. Andrea Golato provided the Council with a graduate admissions report. Master's applications are up significantly (254) and there is an increase in acceptances as well. The Graduate and Professional School Fair is scheduled for February 9, 2021. Dr. Golato also announced that The Graduate College has created a new podcast, with the first episode topic on how to navigate a graduate and professional fair. Other topics will be designed to assist current students as well as prospective students and will be used as a recruiting tool.

6. COVID-19 Updates - Dr. Bourgeois provided an update from Dr. Emilio Carranco as of the week of January 25, 2021:

- State of Texas – average new cases of COVID-19 per day was 13,657, which is a decrease from 14,800 from the previous week; the positivity rate has decreased to 14% from 14.4%
- Williamson County – average new cases of COVID-19 per day was 325, which is a decrease from 384 from the previous week; the positivity rate remained flat from 12.9% to 13.1%.
- Hays County – average new cases of COVID-19 per day was 174, which is an increase from 148 from the previous week; the positivity rate decreased from 10.6% to 9.9%.
- The Student Health Center and Curative Inc. administered 1,678 total COVID-19 tests; this resulted in 67 positive cases, which brings the positivity rate to 4.0%, a decline from 4.7%
- There are seven students in isolation and four students in quarantine.
- Active cases have declined in recent weeks to 196 current active cases at TXST.
- TXST is in a good position for the continued beginning of another safe semester. Dr. Carranco has emphasized the following: 1) state and local numbers are declining; 2) to date, there is no evidence of transmission of COVID-19 in classrooms, labs or offices and no transmission between residence halls; 3) new research shows that

- transmission is happening in household and in social situations, which is true in K-12, higher education, and other education sectors.
- Vaccination update – since the State of Texas has transitioned to a Hub vaccine delivery system, non-Hub smaller vaccine providers like TXST are not likely to receive vaccines in the near future under current policy. Eligible TXST faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to seek alternative providers of the vaccine.
 - TXST’s vaccination webpage is now live and linked to the Roadmap and updated weekly.
 - Round Rock Campus – Spartan Medical is now providing free COVID-19 testing and is the only state-funded testing site in Williamson County.
 - At the end of January 2021, six students had been referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for not complying with the face covering requirement. All six referrals derived from the library.
 - Dr. Bourgeois reminded the Council that instruction and classes identified as face-to-face in the spring 2021 schedule of classes should have resumed to in-person delivery on February 1, 2021.

7. **Spring, Summer, and Fall 2021 Classes** – No update provided for this agenda item.

8. **Budget Planning** – No update provided for this agenda item.

OFF AGENDA

- Dr. Bourgeois provided a reminder to the Council and their staff and faculty who are Campus Security Authorities (CSA) to please submit annual reports in a timely fashion. Email reminders have been sent to CSAs.
- A copy of the division of Student Affairs’ Spring Activities Plan will be emailed to the Council.
- Dr. Bourgeois mentioned that 10 TXST students have been named Fulbright semi-finalists (five undergraduate students and five graduate students) and recognized Dr. Valentina Glajar’s work with the student Fulbright program.
- Dr. Bourgeois announced that thus far, two TXST faculty members have recently received 2021 NSF CAREER awards – Dr. Shetay Ashford-Hanserd (OWLS) and Dr. Yoichi Miyahara (Physics).