

**Council of Academic Deans Meeting
October 20, 2020**

Summary and Action Items

1. **EvaluationKit** – Mr. Whitten Smart announced the university has contracted with EvaluationKit, a new service for implementing student evaluations of teaching. EvaluationKit will be piloted in fall 2020 with the Student Perceptions of Instruction (SPI) assessment required by Texas Education Code (Public Access to Course Information). In spring 2021, EvaluationKit will replace department-specific course evaluations currently delivered through ePortfolio. ITAC will no longer be sending department-specific course evaluations, rather each academic unit will be able to schedule and send their own surveys, as well as pull reports via self-service. EvaluationKit will integrate with Canvas and Faculty Qualifications to increase survey participation and allow instructors to leverage results and reports in Faculty Qualifications. Training will be available on the new evaluation system and a training schedule will be announced by ITAC when available.
2. **Accessibility Reports for University Websites** – Dr. Debbie Thorne announced that website managers should be receiving quarterly accessibility reports from Mr. Evan Pickrell, electronic information resources accessibility coordinator. These reports outline webpage errors, contrast issues, alerts, error density, and the percentage of increase or decrease in statistics since the last report. Dr. Thorne asked the deans to remind their website managers to review these reports and make sure they correct accessibility issues occurring on university websites and digital assets that they manage.
3. **Undergraduate Admissions Report** – Mr. Gary Ray distributed handouts from College Board regarding the intended college majors and degree-level goals of test-takers and institutions that received the most SAT score reports from Texas students.

Mr. Ray also discussed five COVID-19 related recruitment challenges:

1. Acquiring enough student names from the College Board is difficult because institutions are moving toward test optional for 2021 admissions and there is a 30 percent decline in test-takers; there are other sources of student names to add to TXST's recruitment pool
2. Virtual college fair attendance has decreased; Undergraduate Admissions is working with high school counselors to provide them with digital sessions/events for their schools
3. Affordability and scholarships available to students
4. Limitation on size of groups for campus tours; we are only allowed to have 10 people on a campus tour, including the tour guide, so more tour guides are being hired; Undergraduate Admissions is working with University Marketing to enhance virtual tours for the San Marcos Campus and Round Rock Campus
5. Engagement with virtual events; University Marketing is developing digital marketing for enhancing virtual events and recommending multiple days of programming

4. **Graduate Admissions Report** – Dr. Andrea Golato provided the Council with a graduate admissions report. Dr. Golato also announced that a virtual panel discussion, Pathway to Graduate School, is scheduled for October 27, 2020 aimed at supporting students who have an interest in pursuing graduate school. She also mentioned that virtual campus tours for prospective graduate students has been revised to make the content more relevant for graduate students. A virtual campus tour for the San Marcos Campus is available on The Graduate College website and one will be available for the Round Rock Campus soon. The Graduate College will be developing a new policy on the roles and responsibilities of graduate advisors.

5. **COVID-19 Updates** – Dr. Bourgeois provided an update from Dr. Emilio Carranco:
 - Overall, some aspects of the pandemic are improving while others are not
 - State of Texas is reporting 3,500 cases per day but cases are increasing
 - Texas has a positivity rate that increased from 6.9% to 8.3%; more significant increases are occurring in El Paso, the Panhandle, and rural parts of the state
 - Williamson County – positivity rate has gone from 3.5% to 2.5%
 - Hays County – positivity rate has gone from 16.8% to 16.3%
 - TXST – the Student Health Center and Curative Inc. administered 1,217 total COVID-19 tests last week; 19 positive results, which is a decrease in the positivity rate from 2.5% to 1.6%
 - Dr. Carranco reports that to date, based on contact tracing efforts, there is no evidence of transmission of COVID-19 in residence halls nor in any classrooms.
 - Dr. Mary Ellen Cavitt mentioned that she is working with Dr. Carranco on producing a series of guidelines for safe events for student organizations and activities to assist when coordinating/planning events; this ultimately can be used for academic events as well.
 - A series of messages and a social media campaign is being developed targeting students with helpful hints and advice for the upcoming holidays.
 - All study abroad has been canceled for spring 2021 and no official decision has been made for summer 2021 study abroad.

6. **Budget Planning** – Dr. Thorne announced that any changes to temporary faculty salary requests for spring 2021 can be sent to Ms. Cindy Waggoner. She also mentioned that she is still working on the summer 2021 budget allocation and provost/university summer commitments as well as recent trends in SCH, enrollments, and expenditures.

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

OFF AGENDA

- Dr. Mary Brennan provided the Council with an update from the Elections Task Force. She mentioned that many students had registered to vote and that a statement was being crafted to faculty to remind students how to check to see if they are registered to vote, as well as encouraging students to vote. Dr. Brennan also mentioned that there is a Vote on Campus website that has been developed. The Task Force continues to discuss election night activities and post-election preparations.

- Dr. Brennan also provided an update from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Training Task Force. Faculty can direct any questions to Dr. Stella Silva or Dr. Scott Bowman.

- Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman provided a brief update from the Continuity of Education Work Group, which included difficulties faculty are encountering with instructional methods, proctoring exams, and student engagement.

- Dr. Sriraman also provided the Council with an update from the Commencement Planning Work Group. There will be three ceremonies on December 11, 2020 for fall 2020 graduates and there will be three make-up ceremonies on December 10, 2020 for students who graduated spring 2020 and summer 2020. All in-person ceremonies will occur at Bobcat Stadium. A virtual commencement has been scheduled for December 12, 2020. The work group is designing many safety protocols such as limiting guests to four per graduate and not allowing food or drinks to be sold at the events (water will be allowed to be brought into Bobcat Stadium).