

Council of Academic Deans Meeting
August 31, 2021

Summary and Action Items

1. **Presentation of Valero Award for Excellence** – Provost Gene Bourgeois presented Dr. Sarah Fritts, Assistant Professor of Biology, with the Valero Award for Excellence. As recipient of the Presidential Seminar Award, Dr. Fritts will deliver the Presidential Seminar during spring 2022 and will be honored at a reception during fall 2021. Dr. Fritts discussed her research on wildlife ecology and wildlife populations in response to changes in land use, environmental conditions, and weather.

2. **Division of Student Affairs Reorganization Update** - Dr. Cynthia Hernandez, Vice President for Student Affairs, described organizational changes in the Division of Student Affairs driven by data and evidence, a culture of care, expressive activity, health and wellbeing, next evolution, proactive nature, and creating a senior staff.
 - Dr. Vincent Morton, Associate Vice President and Dean of Students will oversee the Advocacy and Support cluster, which consists of the Dean of Students Office, Disability Services, and Student Affairs Technology.
 - Dr. Emilio Carranco, Assistant Vice President and Director of the Health Center, will lead the Health, Counseling, and Wellbeing cluster, which includes the Student Health Center and the Counseling Center.
 - The new Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. David Byrd, will oversee the Engagement and Involvement cluster which includes Campus Recreation, the LBJ Student Center, and Student Involvement.
 - Housing and Residential Life (Mr. Kyle Estes, interim Director), Career Services (Mr. Ray Rogers, Director), and Assessment and Planning (Dr. Jen Beck, Director) will report to Dr. Hernandez. The Parent and Family programs will continue to report to Dr. Jen Beck.
 - Dr. Hernandez described the creation of a new CARE (Compassion Advocacy Resources and Education) Center that will be led by Mr. Terrance Parker in the Dean of Students Office. The CARE Center will include absence notifications, Brilliant Bobcats, Bobcat Bond, PAWS Alert, emergency management services, and the FACES program.

3. **Seal of Excelencia Application** – Dr. Victoria Black, Associate Dean for Student Services in University College, and Dr. Toni Moreno, Assistant Director for Hispanic and First-Generation Student Retention in Institutional Inclusive Excellence, described the Seal of Excelencia application process. *Excelencia* in Education is a non-profit national organization that supports and recognizes university presidents and institutions that demonstrate commitment, intentionality, and positive metrics for Latino student success. Dr. Sherri Benn and Dr. Stella Silva chaired the committee for Excelencia while Dr. Black and Dr. Moreno served as the coordinators for the application. A committee of twenty-two staff and faculty compiled quantitative and qualitative data to support the application. The application highlighted the strong Texas State’s degree completion rates for Latino students and that Texas State Latino students have a lower percent of debt as

compared to other students as a whole. Some areas of growth include hiring a faculty who reflect our student population and increasing transfer support. The application was submitted in summer 2021, with results expected in September 2021.

4. **Undergraduate Admissions Report** – Mr. Gary Ray acknowledged the many contributions of Ms. Stephanie Anderson, who is retiring today as Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management and Director of Undergraduate Admissions. She joined the university in 2008 and posted record freshman classes in all but two years of her tenure. Mr. Ray reported that 17,350 students had submitted applications to Bobcat Cares for COVID-19 relief funding assistance with emergency costs that arose due to the Coronavirus or any component of the cost of attendance. Applications for fall 2021 assistance opened August 23 and close September 9, 2021. Awards are prioritized based on exceptional financial need as demonstrated by the FAFSA.
 - Today, August 31, 2021, was the last day for students to register for fall classes.
 - Registrations totaled 38,091 this morning.
 - Freshman enrollment is 6,657, along with 3,135 transfer students.
 - Current semester credit hours (SCH) are down 0.4% or -1,824 over last year.
 - First-time student retention based on fall 2021 registration status for the fall 2020 cohort increased to 77.9% (up from 77.2% for the fall 2019 cohort).
 - Retention rates for the fall 2020 transfer student cohort rose 0.6% to 84.7%.
 - Dr. Bourgeois acknowledged these improved retention rates are attributed to excellent and substantive faculty and staff engagement with students during a very challenging academic year.
5. **Graduate Admissions Report** – As of today, Dr. Andrea Golato reported 4,415 graduate students enrolled for fall 2021, up 1.6% over fall 2020. Continuing master's, continuing doctoral, and new doctoral students are driving the positive result. Dr. Golato and Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman are collaborating with Budget, Financial Planning & Analysis on a potential strategy to attract more out-of-state graduate students to online programs via new tuition pricing models.
6. **COVID-19 Updates** – Dr. Gene Bourgeois reviewed Dr. Emilio Carranco's recent COVID-19 status update to the president's cabinet. The following data were provided:
 - The State of Texas' active COVID-19 cases per day decreased to 11,500 this week as compared to 11,778 last week. The State of Texas positivity rate decreased from 17.2% last week to 16.1% this week.
 - Hays County active cases averaged 158 cases per day this week as compared to 153 last week.
 - Travis County cases decreased from 565 active cases last week to 468 cases this week.
 - The positivity rate in Travis County decreased from 14.8% last week to 13.5% this week.

- Williamson County positivity rate decreased from 16.3% last week to 12.7% this week.
- Texas State University had a significant increase in active cases from 131 last week to 415 this week. The positivity rate at Texas State is currently 9.5%. Although there are a significant number of active cases at Texas State, there are no identified clusters of transmission on campus (even in the residence halls).
- Contact tracing at Texas State has adjusted its processes in order to keep up with the increased number of cases. Entire classes, including instructors, will be notified if anyone in the class tested positive for COVID-19. Students and faculty are asked to read their Bobcat Trace email message closely to learn their next course of action. Because Bobcat Trace services are at capacity, close contacts may not be contacted individually at this time. Bobcat Trace protocols will continue to be adjusted based on the number of cases they are handling. Currently the process is being automated to handle large caseloads.

7. **Fall 2021 Classes** – Dr. Gene Bourgeois reminded the Council of faculty flexibility for instructional delivery as articulated in previous communications:

Classes must be implemented in the instruction mode that appears on the Schedule of Classes in [Catsweb](#). The [University Registrar](#) defines the most common instruction modes as follows:

- FTF- At least 85% of the section is taught face-to-face (in-person)
- INT- At least 85% of the section is taught via the internet
- HYB- 50-85% of the section is taught via the internet, the other portion is taught face-to-face (in-person)
- ITV- Section is taught via two-interactive video

Faculty have discretion and flexibility to implement classes according to the definition and parameters of instruction modes. For example, the face-to-face course instruction mode means 85 percent or more of the faculty-student interaction occurs in-person. The remaining 15 percent may occur in other formats, including Zoom.

The A/B classroom model for a face-to-face class could work as long as the 85 percent in-person threshold is met across the semester. As another example, an instructor could deliver a face-to-face class via Zoom for two weeks and then transition to in-person instruction to meet the 85% in-person threshold.

8. **Budget Planning** – No discussion was held on this item.