

Minutes--Liberal Arts Council  
October 23, 2019—2 p.m.

**Presiding:** Dean Mary Brennan

**Present:** Council members: Audwin Anderson, Manda Anderson, Susan Day (recording), Beth Erhart, Ken Grasso, Craig Hanks, Lucy Harney, Paul Hart (late), Bill Kelemen, Aimee Roundtree, Vicki Smith, Chad Smith

**Guests:** Mr. Gavin Steiger, Director of Disability Services, Ms. Gwendolyn May Morel, Director, Office Distance & Extended Learning; Jason Julian for Yongmei Lu

**Absent:** Angela Murphy, Yongmei Lu, John Mckiernan-Gonzalez,

Gavin Steiger, Director of the Office of Disability Services, met with the Council to provide an overview of and answer questions about ODS. He noted that ODS is not the “compliance police”; instead, his office is on campus to provide access to students with training and advisement on disability related topics by removing barriers to learning through Universal Design and individual accommodation. He described “disability support” as a “three-legged stool,” with faculty, students, and ODS representing each leg, supporting the stool. All must talk to one another. A highly-sought goal for ODS is a new data base and software to streamline student support through communication to faculty and students. With the current process, students are able to request their accommodation letters by submitting an online form, but students then have to pick up and deliver a hard copy of the letter to the professors teaching face-to-face classes. The letter for online classes is emailed to professors. The current accommodation letter is generic and lists all of the accommodations the student is eligible to use, even if they are not needed for a particular class. The new database would allow us to email the letters to both faculty and students, which would decrease the time it took for the letters to be provided to both parties. The new database would also allow ODS to customize the accommodation letters to be specific to particular classes.

In addition, Mr. Steiger suggested that electronic information materials in alternative formats needed by students with disabilities should not be solely the responsibility of faculty members. Active students can alert ODS to their needs and the students, faculty members, and ODS can work to meet those needs for appropriate materials. ODS will encourage publishers to produce accessible textbooks if they are told about student needs early enough. Canvas is expected to be more accessible than TRACS. Dr. Roundtree asked whether disability knowledge might be conveyed to professors earlier. The Council noted that syllabi are required to have disability statement. Students must be registered with ODS to receive accommodations. Manda asked whether advising offices were required to pay for interpreters when students with disabilities are being advised. Mr.

Steiger said his current understanding is that ODS will pay for any interpreters that are directly tied to academic need (e.g. classroom access, SI, tutoring, academic advising, etc.). He noted that he is more unclear as to the “why” than the “when.” It may be that TXST is trying to separate academic and non-academic accommodation costs, but it is difficult for the University to fully understand all of the expenses related to accommodations if they do not go through a central repository. It is also difficult for other departments and units to budget for unforeseen accommodation expenses. A central repository for such payments could solve a number of problems related to paying interpreters.

Gwen Morel, Director, Office Distance & Extended Learning, visited with the Council to discuss ECF (electronic course fees) budgeting. There are three reasons of the changes in ECF budgeting she encouraged: 1. The healthy excess of departments’ UCF funds; 2. The need to reduce pressure on faculty salary budgets; and 3. The desire to be proactive toward strategic goals. The new budget approach will result in each academic unit receiving yearly ECF revenues estimate for accompanied by a list of faculty members who teach courses earning fees, as well as a budget template. This year, the budget template should be returned before Thanksgiving and faculty and staff responsible for extended learning courses this semester should have that part of their salaries paid for out of departmental ECF funds. Among the items for which ECF funds can be used are fixed expenses, faculty salaries, variable expenses (conferences, training related to delivery design and maintenance of on-line and extended learning courses) related to support for or implementation of extended learning courses. She promised that the money currently in faculty budget lines would remain there and no permanent reduction in faculty salary lines would occur. Remaining funds can be used for faculty salaries or go unspent. Only 25% of departmental ECF funds should remain as a contingency line item. The Council exposed the potential for unintended consequences, and wondered whether faculty members whose salaries were partially paid through ECF funds would have their total salaries included in merit pool. They also asked whether ECF funds should or could be saved for funding faculty in following year.

The minutes of 10.2.19 were unanimously approved by a vote of the Council on a motion by Dr. Grasso and a second by Dr. Kelemen.

The Council unanimously approved LACCC decisions related to courses and the BA in Religious Studies program on a motion by Dr. Harney and a second by Dr. Grasso.

Dean Brennan introduced a memo from Nick Schellman (Faculty Records) with instructions on a new workload approach involving a new workload report due by November 4. Stella LoPachin has created spread sheets for all departments; she will send them to chairs. Chairs, before the intercession of Dean Brennan and Ms. LoPachin, themselves would have had to pull their reports and type faculty names and information onto an Excel spread sheet. Dean Brennan also negotiated a later return time of November 8. The reports should be returned to Stella. If there are errors in report, call Nick Schellman. A chair asked how to justify time off

for a faculty member to do an on-line course; curriculum development #8 can be used. Program coordinators can be justified through #9. Dean Brennan will clarify with Academic Records.

CAD update by Dean Brennan who

- described a new social media response protocol: Call Sandy Pantlik and Yvonne Rhodes when there are biased, racially motivated social media posts or actions. This approach will insure a coordinated response to such incidents.
- revealed that enrollment growth expected to be flat for next few years. The addition of new programs will be curtailed in these are austere times. Chairs and faculty will be encouraged to “tweak” programs to respond to new possibilities.
- noted that Ronald Reagan High School organizes career day every year, and that departments may want to send an emissary on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Jason Julian described Geography’s experience at this event. Susan Day said she may represent the College if no one objects.
- encouraged hiring departments to consider whether new faculty who want to bring in years in rank will have five years in rank when they apply for promotion because that is the time period necessary to be considered for tenure and /or promotion.
- encouraged chairs to use the faculty hiring tool kit created by Equity and Access which has received positive remarks. It includes explanations for the distribution of faculty at Texas State.
- reminded chairs that classroom utilization and fill-rate failures have produced threats of centralized classroom assignments from FSS.
- reminded chairs that faculty members volunteers for outside CRG committees are needed.
- revealed that the Texas State Alumni Association is changing to become a friend, not a recruiter, of alumni; its new mission is to promote Texas State using department events. The Association will provide alumni lists to departments if asked.
- revealed that Coordinating Board (THECB) has decided to return secondary teaching degrees to Departments of Education across the state. At Texas State, this change will be made in consultation between the Department of Education and affected departments in the various colleges. This change will occur no earlier than fall 2021.

Around the table

Dr. Roundtree announced that software exists to discover faculty media hits. Chairs who are interested in having their faculty included in the University’s inclusion and diversity coverage should contact Dr. Roundtree. She will also send email for seasonal coverage so that chairs can have appropriate faculty included. The Connecting Stories event, hosted by University Marketing in search of stories about research, accomplishments, and events pertaining to our faculty, students and alumni, is scheduled for November 20, 2019, from 11-noon. Dr. Roundtree requested concise stories and offered to help potential story tellers with their work.

Dr. Harney announced that Dr. Robert Fischer's memorial would be held on November 20, 2019.

On November 6, 2019, Dr. Dwonna Goldstone, the first Director of the new African-American Studies minor, will be welcomed to Texas State in Comal 116 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Dr. Julian also reminded the Council about the presentation on November 8, by Dr. Tyra Olstad, entitled, **"Differing Perceptions of Value and Competing Expressions of Place on Alaska's North Slope" which will be held in ELA 116 at 2 p.m.**

Susan Day asked whether chairs knew when change of grade requests were denied. They replied in the negative. More research is needed.

Ended at 4:12.