

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR'S COUNCIL MEETING September 11, 2013

Those in attendance were: Michael Almeida; Yoris Au; Edwin Barea-Rodriguez; Bruce Barnett; Mark Bayer; Janis Bush; Vince Canizaro; Mari Cortez; Thelma Duffey; Alan Dutton; Ann Eisenberg; William Flannery; Belinda Flores; David Frego; Robert Fuhrman; Julius Gribou; James Groff; Norma Guerra; Richard Hartley; Paul LeBlanc; Laura Levi; Gregg Michel; Stewart Miller; Sandy Norman; Marita Nummikoski; Anson Ong; Daniel Pack; Drew Johnson (for Thomas Papagiannakis); Chris Reddick; Raydel Tullous; Xiaohe Xu; Wan Yao; Yinlong Zhang

Those absent were: Rajendra Boppana; Susan Colorado (excused); Mansour El-Kikhia; Gregg Elliott; Waldemar Gorski; Yilmaz Hatipkarasulu; Lalatendu Misra; Gail Pizzola; Joachim Singelmann (excused); Martell Teasley; Ken Weiher; Tammy Wyatt (excused); Miguel Yacaman

Guests: John Frederick; Sarah Leach

Welcome

Edwin Barea-Rodriguez and Norma Guerra, Department Council Co-Chairs

Dr. Barea-Rodriguez gave a brief update on the GRIP. He said that there was a meeting in June with the UT System who are looking for an expansion of metrics and timelines related to the GRIP. He discussed how some of these will affect department chairs and that feedback was needed to send to the UT System. He said that System applauded UTSA's ambitious GRIP plan and it is important going forward to discuss whose role is most important in each activity.

Chairs' Discussion: Making the Council More Effective

The chair's council discussed ways that their meetings could be more effective going forward. A compilation of the discussion is summarized below:

What would you like to obtain from these meetings?

- Pitfalls to watch out for
- Success stories, practices, and policies
- Information from Provost
- Best practices from chairs
- Consensus from department chairs on important issues
- Clarity on confusing issues (ex – travel)
- Information about issues being discussed by Grad Council, Senate, Grad School

- Opportunity for input prior to the adoption of initiatives (ex – GRIP, advising restructuring)
- More opportunity to share successful ways of addressing problematic issues
- More opportunities to collaboratively address problematic issues for which no reasonable solutions have arisen

What do you like the best?

- Learning from other chairs
- Chance to discuss policy with the Provost
- Monthly update from Provost

What would you like to modify?

- Meet only twice a semester
- Mentor new chairs
- Guest speakers should ask for input
- Providing time for discussing how we are implementing policies
- Fall chair orientation – provide only new info.
- Consider alternating meeting times (am and pm) and location (1604 and downtown)
- Need more discussion rather than rules to obey
- Chair's council should be more advisory – our input should be sought before policies are announced, should act as a deliberative body (similar to Faculty Senate)
- Items directly relevant to chair's job
- Active chair participation in university decision-making process
- Have Faculty Senate chair report each month - all issues brought to senate presented to chairs

What would you like to eliminate?

- Monthly meetings
- Redundant presentations, agenda items and comments
- Announcements by informational speakers – put this info online instead
- Admission presentations

How would you like to modify our meeting time?

- Discuss/share best practices
- Fewer presentations/non-essential trainings
- More time for chair feedback
- Schedule first meeting later in the semester
- Meeting at lunch time and provide food
- University-wide curriculum issues
- No downtown meetings
- Follow-up on proposals/suggestions
- Include group in loop of major decisions (QLP, Core, evaluations)/action items

Topics

- Personnel management
- Financial training/account management/budget
- Presentations relevant to the group
- How to increase graduation attendance of faculty
- Succession plan for next chair/leadership development in department
- Travel- How are departments dealing with the new processes
- How the requested information on milestones and gateway courses will be used?
- What to do when faculty use digital measures as the venue to post a grievance
 - Potential solution- eliminate the comment box and add boxes with “approve” or “disapprove “ options

Other thoughts

- Academic calendars should be published one year in advance
- Academic/administrative calendar straight to Outlook
- Act as advisory body to administration on academic issues
- Graduation request - should be on “online” poll
- Establish a website that contains important info (no more paper handouts or emails)
- Add an early spring training workshop on NTT hiring

The next Department Chair Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9, 2013 beginning at 3:00 p.m. at the BSE 2.102 Multipurpose Room.