

Provost's Council
November 20, 2013
3:00 – 5:00 PM
MB 3.106 Regents' Room

AGENDA

DFW Grades

Co-chairs of the Department Chair's Council, Dr. Barea-Rodriguez and Dr. Guerra presented some data on DFW grades from past semesters. As a GRIP-related initiative, they are looking at ways to improve the pass rate into these classes (which currently have a 30% or higher DFW rate). Typically, students who receive a DFW grade in their first year almost never graduate in four years. In addition, failed courses can disrupt a student's progress to their degree and may signal a need to change majors. Most of the courses shown with a 30% or higher DFW rate are science-related courses such as biosciences, basic chemistry, and organic chemistry, as well as some liberal arts (writing-intensive) courses. Dr. Barea-Rodriguez communicated the importance of developing a student-centered (rather than instructor-centered) focus on courses. Rather than begin designing a course from textbooks, syllabi, and lectures, instructors should design their courses by formulating broad learning goals and setting objectives at the beginning, and following this with the creation of a lesson plan around these goals. This would allow instructors to ask the question: "What do I want students to know at the end of the course?" He recommended a focus on course transformation through centering programs based on learning outcomes, student-centered pedagogy, professional development, and utilizing resources (like technology and teaching assistant support). By following this method, faculty will be able to help their students truly understand the material, not just simply re-communicate the topics. Some questions were asked about whether these DFW numbers are comparable to other institutions, whether students have prepared enough throughout high school, and if they have developed enough critical thinking skills to succeed in these courses. Although some of these factors may contribute to the DFW rates, faculty should ask themselves whether they are satisfied with these numbers, and if not, work to improve them.

PeopleSoft Update

- Jacquelyn Kyle, UTSA PeopleSoft Enterprise Project Manager

Jacquelyn said that the go-live date for the transition of DEFINE to PeopleSoft will be March 1, 2014. After this date, DEFINE will no longer be available for use (which applies to all UT institutions). In addition, she said that some procedures will require manual processing during this time. She said that PeopleSoft training will be available in January of 2014.

- Doug Hartzler, UTSA PeopleSoft HCM Project Lead

Doug said that faculty must make an annual election in September 2014 for salary spread elections beginning in FY 2014-2015 to be paid either 9 or 12 months. He said that if no election is made, the default is 9 months. If a faculty member is paid on a grant or anticipates a grant during the year, the election must be 9 months. In addition, faculty can no longer split out the non-grant funded portion of their salary for purposes of spreading over 12 months. However, he said that the separate funding in the summer months will remain separate. He said that beginning in the spring of 2014, 9-month faculty's (this year) summer insurance premiums for June, July, and August will be paid via double deduction over three months during March, April, and May. These deductions only apply to the flat payments (and not percentages) on an employee's paycheck. Doug confirmed that in PeopleSoft, funding is looked at independently from compensation which is why some of these requirements are necessary.

He said that student and non-exempt staff's time worked and absences must be approved and recorded in UTShare/PeopleSoft weekly and at the end of each pay period. Timekeepers will enter approved employee absences and time worked into UTShare/PeopleSoft. If absences and time are not approved by payroll deadlines, employees pay may be delayed. Because of this, Dr. Frederick said that there may be an option for teaching assistants to be paid with a salary-method to avoid this. In addition, negative leave balances are not allowed by Texas Constitution and faculty sick-related absences are required to be reported by State law.

- Rene Paniagua, UTSA PeopleSoft Financial Lead

Rene said that Research Service Centers will now need to enter subcontracts as Purchase Orders so funds can be encumbered. The DEFINE Budget Group methodology is being replaced with UTShare/PeopleSoft "Chart of Accounts". He said that chart of accounts/statement of accounts training courses will be offered in January. In addition, the available budget and YTD encumbrances/ expenses will look different in UTShare/PeopleSoft. He said that the Procure to Pay Process will include receiving reports done by departments, online tracking of the requisition through the procurement cycle, and PO changes will be now be completed by the Purchasing Department.

The following resources are available for additional questions:

- PeopleSoft Support and Sustainment Center (PSSC) at 458-SPOC (7762)
- UTShare Website, click on the SPOC icon <http://www.utsa.edu/utshare/>
- Email PSSC: spoc@utsa.edu

Research Update

Mickey Stevenson said that start-ups for seed grants are now available, and UTSA is working with the Southwest Research Institute and the San Antonio Life Sciences Institute (SALSI). She thanked those who brought specific issues forward to UTSA's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which has helped to address issues and encourage a swift transformation. She said that IRB's outside consultants will be arriving the first week of December to train staff on protocol applications, and updating policies and procedures.

Provost's Update

Dr. Frederick said that online courses will be discussed in the upcoming Dean's council meeting. He told the Provost's council that the plans to acquire the Valero building will not go forward, mostly due to budget constraints. He told the council that he would like them to hold off on opening any new faculty searches at this time. Due to a low tuition and fee budget and lower enrollment numbers this year, Dr. Frederick said he would like to be as conservative as possible. Deans will still be able to temporarily fill gaps for current faculty vacancies and will be able to continue with searches that are already underway.