

College of Sciences (COS)
Meeting of Dean's Executive Council
13 July 2009

Present:

Dean – George Perry

Department Chairs – Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, Waldek Gorski, Miguel Jose-Yacaman

Associate Deans – Neal Guentzel, Craig Jordan, George Negrete, Andy Tsin

Assistant Dean – Garry Castellanos

Director of Development – Kim Fischer

Undergraduate Advising Center – Paul Machen

Retention and Graduation Analyst – Diane Elizondo

Representative for Dr. Dutton – Eric Swanson

Representative for Dr. Psarris – Tom Bylander

Guest Speakers – Lorena Claeys, Ellen Clark, Nidia Tijerina

Summary Notes

Dr. Perry welcomed the individuals listed below from the Academy for Teacher Excellence (ATE):

Lorena Claeys, Executive Director

Ellen Clark, Ph.D., Professor

Nidia Tijerina, Recruiting Coordinator

The Academy for Teacher Excellence is based in the College of Education and Human Development. Lorena Claeys gave an overview of the Academy's activities using a PowerPoint presentation. She emphasized their goals of increasing the number of teachers in bilingual, mathematics, science and special education. Public and private universities are not graduating enough teachers to serve the community. The Academy has received five federal grants. Strong support is given to students through learning communities. The ATE is particularly focused on increasing the number of teachers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) areas.

Dr. Jordan asked how the program was recruiting. Dr. Clark responded through Career Services, their website, and in the STEM areas. Dr. Barea-Rodriguez indicated that he has sent information to the biology faculty. He mentioned that a strong component of the ATE program was mentoring.

Dr. Negrete asked how the College of Sciences can partner with the Academy. Lorena stated that informal relationships with COS have already been developed with Drs. Barea-Rodriguez, Cassill, Lazor and Travis. Dr. Clark indicated that she would like to have a formal relationship with more faculty involved. These partnerships can be especially fruitful since faculty in the College of Sciences are experts of content and faculty in College of Education and Human Development are involved with the pedagogical style. Dr. Clark is available to meet with faculty.

Dr. Clark asked if there was a way to communicate by e-mail with the COS student community. Dr. Barea-Rodriguez responded that the college's Undergraduate Advising Center has worked on

ways to communicate with students (e.g., e-newsletter, working on facebook page) and that office could be contacted.

In recent discussions with department chairs about teaching enhancement, Dr. Perry mentioned that faculty names had been collected from department chairs. These names will be sent to Dr. Clark.

The Academy will be hiring undergraduate and graduate students. Dr. Yacaman stated that proposals being submitted to funding agencies (e.g., NSF, Department of Energy, and Department of Defense) need to include information about outreach efforts. Dr. Yacaman will recommend that faculty in his department contact the Academy.

Lorena provided summary information below about collaborations with COS and the goals of the Academy for Teacher Excellence:

Collaborations:

- Establish the e-community as a way of creating a virtual discussion between faculty from both colleges. This will start the dialogue regarding science coursework and TExES content alignment. In addition, the e-community can be a way of discussing grant funding opportunities.
- Identify the most challenging science concepts for teacher candidates and create science content videos on demand based on those.
- Review the TExES Examination and how it aligns with the science coursework.
- The Academy's Equity, Education, and Entrepreneurship (E³) grant is currently hiring undergraduate and graduate research assistants. Their duties will include face to face and online tutoring to E³ participants, in addition to entering and collecting data and preparing literature reviews.
- Grant writing is a major component of ATE's sustainment and effectiveness. ATE is open to the possibility of collaborating to co-write and prepare proposals and grants.

Goals for ATE include:

- Develop and maintain the e-community platform. Ms. Lucretia Fraga, ATE Instructional Technology Manager, will be sending an invitation to all of the faculty and staff that were present at the meeting to join the e-community. Once they are members of the e-community, they will have the capability to invite other faculty to join as well.
- In order to create the science videos on demand, ATE will identify Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching Faculty members to work with COS faculty members. The participating faculty members from both colleges will be compensated for a course buyout from the E³ grant.

- ATE will provide the content review materials for the TExES examination 4-8 and 8-12 grades.
- ATE will forward the research assistants job postings to be disseminated to COS.
- ATE is open to consider grant writing opportunities that are aligned to the Academy's mission and vision.

COS Equipment List

Dr. Perry noted that the Office of the Dean maintains a list of equipment needs for our departments. It is to our benefit to keep the lists current for those occasions where the Office of the Provost or the Office of the Vice President for Research informs the COS that funds are available for equipment purchases. Dr. Perry indicated that departments have copies of the lists. Dr. Yacaman mentioned that it may be beneficial for department chairs to meet to discuss what equipment is lacking. This would help with new faculty hires to make sure they have needed equipment.

Garry mentioned there are several lists:

1. Academic Enhancement Equipment (Higher Education Incentive Funding) - This was a one-time allocation made to several areas across campus to support improvements to instructional delivery capabilities and included support for:
 - a. Department of Biology to upgrade undergraduate teaching laboratories (\$163,302)
 - b. Department of Chemistry to modernize freshman chemistry lab (\$142,330)
 - c. Department of Computer Science to upgrade computers in instructional support labs (\$304,800)
 - d. Department of Physics and Astronomy to equip instructional support labs used for introductory courses, advanced physics labs and graduate seminars (\$200,671)
 - e. Department of Mathematics received funding to execute Math Summer Boot Camp, summer 2009 (\$20,000)
2. Ongoing Research Equipment - this is a multiple department list and has evolved over two years. Some equipment was purchased by COS and funding was also provided by the Office the Provost, Office of the Vice President for Research, COS gifts and external funding. Some purchases were made and some are in progress. The list was sent to department chairs last spring.

Garry suggested that directors of centers and institutes also be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss equipment lists. Garry will send equipment lists to COS Chairs. (Lists were sent on July 16 via e-mail to department chairs.)

Laboratory Safety Committee

Dr. Perry mentioned the copy of the e-mail from Mr. Gribou, Executive Vice Provost, requesting a representative from the COS to serve on a university laboratory safety committee. Dr. Gorski

will follow up with a teaching laboratory coordinator in chemistry to see if he would be able to serve on the committee.

Professional Science Master's Degree

Dr. Perry referenced a copy of the e-mail from Dr. Keith McDowell, UT System, about the development of a professional science master's degree. Dr. Perry and Dr. Barea-Rodriguez have met with Dr. Flannagan about the degree. Department chairs should review the e-mail and if there is interest, they should contact Dr. Perry.

Doctoral Degree in Translational Science

Dr. Jordan referenced the handout on the doctoral degree in Translational Science. This summary document explains that Translational Science is emerging as an academic and scientific discipline. "Translational research aims to utilize systematic assessments of scientific evidence to close the gaps between knowledge gained at the different levels of the research process – the basic science laboratory, the clinical research discoveries, and application of these research findings toward prevention, disease management, and strategies to improve health outcomes." UTSA is one of four components in the UT System involved with this joint degree. Approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is contingent on multi component involvement. Dr. Perry feels the degree is related to the large grant, Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA), awarded to the UT Health Science Center in 2008. UTSA is a component of the grant. Dr. Jordan has a complete copy of the proposal.

Informing Leadership Chain of Events and Activities and Status of Faculty, Students and Staff

Dr. Perry requested that college administrators inform the Dean's Office about any injuries and he will obtain information about employees with zero percent appointment who are injured.

Four-year Graduation Recognition

Dr. Perry stated that he has been working with Amanda Beck and Diane Elizondo to provide special recognition of students who graduate in four years. One possible way would be a COS cord worn at commencement. Dr. Perry asked members of the Dean's Executive Council for permission to proceed and they agreed.

Spring 2009 Strategies for Academic Success Report

Paul Machen, COS Undergraduate Advising Center, distributed a probation report for Spring 2009. When the GPA of a COS major falls below 2.0, the student has to meet with an advisor for an assessment. Strategies are identified and an advisor will track progress to see if efforts are helping the goal of improving the GPA. Paul reviewed some of the pages of the report with administrators. The report shows that those students who pursue recommended strategies improve in academic performance. Specific questions about the report can be directed to Paul Machen and Kim Rolf in the COS Undergraduate Advising Center.

New Business

Dr. Jordan informed administrators that the Graduate School will now be in the approval process for graduate and research assistant appointments.

Dr. Jordan stated that he had received information from Lorraine Harrison, Disability Services, about the loss of space for that office. Ms. Harrison was inquiring as to the possibility of the various departments assuming some of the responsibility for administering exams to students registered with disability services that require extended time to complete exams. This would require proctoring as well as providing necessary space and desks. Some departments would be impacted more than others. Dr. Perry suggested meeting with Daniel Sibley. Dr. Barea-Rodriguez asked if the Tomas Rivera Center could assist.

Dr. Gorski asked the other department chairs if they had any issues with working relationships between post doctoral fellows and principal investigators. Dr. Gorski was dealing with an issue in his department. He explained that often post doctoral fellows are foreigners with limited language skills. They sometimes do not understand their employee rights and are afraid to complain. He suggested an orientation for post doctoral fellows. Garry felt this might fall under the purview of Dr. Tsin. Dr. Perry and Dr. Gorski will meet for follow-up discussions.