

## **Faculty Senate President's Meeting Notes**

November 29, 2021

**Submitted by K. Craven**

### **Members Present:**

Stephanie Adams, Douglas Airhart, Dan Allcott, Michael Allen, Sean Alley, Troy Brachey, Debra Bryant, Steve Canfield, Melissa Comer, April Crocket, Kris Craven, Dennis Duncan, Mary Lou Fornehed, Steven Garner, Scott Hagarty, David Hajdik, Syed Rafay Hasan, Tammy Howard, Samantha Hutson, Christy Killman, Matt Langford, Emily Lee, Jane Liu, Mark Loftis, Jeanette Luna, Ann Manginelli, Lori Maxwell, Jennifer Meadows, Holly Mills, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo,

Question: In terms of recruiting, there have been a number of ads in the paper by other universities which would seem like potential students are being poached.

Answer: TTU has been placing ads in the paper for a while. We are also advertising heavily in Murfreesboro and have billboards in many areas of the state. Recruiting is highly competitive.

Question: The students are expressing confusion about the end of the semester and timing of final exams. Can we do some communication to help them understand the changes.

Answer: Sure.

Senate President Luna said that she would discuss this with the Provost.

### **Discussion about Launchpad (~40 minutes)**

**Guests: VP Johnson, Simone McKelvey**

1. Results from the first year of Launchpad – What worked? What changes expected for the next semester?
2. Spring advising and CPOS – What’s working? What needs improvement?
3. Other questions from Senators

VP Johnson gave a summary of the Launchpad project so far, including the disruption caused by the pandemic. Currently the Launchpad is fully staffed. They are responsible for the pre-enrollment of all new freshman students prior to SOAR. There have been some issues with procedures and staffing. They are working through the issues and much of the loss in staff was due to people who left for personal reasons and not due to problems with the unit. They are continuing to meet with the departments and chairs and Director McKelvey has been added on the curriculum committee. There is also work with the Learning Services and some effort with student success through some new classes. It is important to understand that the Launchpad is not just responsible for academic advising but they are also tasked with helping students navigate the other transitions to college, such as personality conflicts and financial concerns, as well as career options. Director McKelvey has developed some training and restructured procedures to better serve the students. Early indication is that the freshman students have on average increases the number of credit hours being taken by 0.5 hours. VP Johnson feels that the Launchpad is building strong relationships with the students, which is good and appreciates Simone and her team for their efforts. The pre-enrollment for spring is good and the first real data point won’t come until we can measure the fall to spring retention.

Director McKelvey reiterated some of the information given by VP Johnson. She said that although the staffing issues were primarily due to personal reasons on the part of the employee, it was still difficult to deal with. Some positive early data shows that 95% of the students being advised in the Launchpad made advising appointments and 92% of those appointments were kept. She discussed the partnership with Career Services so that more of the freshman students are using the career readiness certificate. They are also sponsoring a number of events and are

encouraging the colleges and departments to consider working with them in this effort. They have also expanded the hours two days a week and they are staggering their lunch to be open through the lunch hour for more convenience for students. Advisors are continuing to offer different options for appointments including online. She wants the advisors to work with the departments to assure accuracy in academic advising and Simone often follows up if there is a need to clear up confusion or to fix any errors.

Question: Since TTU already had the second highest retention rate of the schools in Tennessee, how will we know what metric to use to judge success? When will we know we have succeeded?

Response

Answer: VP Johnson said that this process is about more than academic schedules, although that is a major component. They are attempting to holistically engage the students. They are looking at how best to support them. How do we best serve those who are farther along at entry? We must be mindful of this more holistic approach to advising. This sounds like a good topic for future discussions. Director McKelvey clarified that the students are released from the Launchpad when the May grades post and then they are moved to the college advising system. This means that they are there in their third term.

**Office of Research and Economic Development Discussion (~**



it is underleveraged. VP Taylor is working with the Center Directors on how to best utilize the funds and to invest in the research growth that is the goal.

VP Taylor said that President Oldham stated it well. She is working with the Centers to create an infrastructure that works for everyone so they are supported as they need. She welcomes conversations with everyone, please just reach out to her.

### **Additional Questions (time permitting)**

#### **Anonymous Questions from Online Form**

1. In general, I would like to know how TTU is utilizing the property resources that have been gifted or purchased by the University. This might include such information as the properties (i.e. Golf course, Foundation Hall, Oakley/ShIPLEY Farm, etc.). Are we being good stewards of the trust placed with us to treat the properties with respect and generate either revenue or student opportunities in line with the donor's expectations? Is this information transparent and if so, where can it be found?
2. Can the OVC room be made available for lunch time dining? The cafeteria is too crowded, and there's too much possibility of COVID transmission.
3. When can we expect the national search for the new Associate Provost for faculty engagement? We have two administrative positions whose missions are about faculty engagement. One, Director for the CITL, was filled during a brief search in the summer when most faculty were not on campus. Will faculty have a voice in selection of the individual responsible for faculty excellence?

Senate President Luna suggested that we start with #3 first. President Oldham's answers.

Answer: He does not know the timeline, but he believes it will be quick. This is a question for the Provost Office.

#### #2

Answer: This was first discussed in the summer. However, the SGA disagreed because the room is used for a number of events regularly. So, they looked for a different approach to the issue. The current plan is to relocate the offices for the Chartwells personnel. Then we will be able to open the entire back section of the cafeteria. There is also a plan for a major expansion of the RUC which could start this summer and help to optimize space.

#### #1

Answer: Yes, we are leveraging these well. The Oakley farm is fulfilling the vision of a working farm with many improvements and the ability to provide research opportunities to students. Both the golf course and the farm are currently cash flowing.

Senate President Luna concluded this part of the meeting and stated that there was one other piece of business to conduct after President Oldham signed out. She discussed the evaluation of the President that is being conducted and encouraged the Senators to complete the survey.

**Adjourned** at 5:40 p.m.

**Approved:** January 24, 2022