Academic Council Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2020


Absent: A. Bigby, B. Lagal

I. Minutes

The September 2, 2020 minutes were approved unanimously. The past meeting minutes from February 19, 2020 and April 1, 2020 were also approved unanimously.

II. Business

a. SACSCOC Letter

Dr. Bailey reported that UHV was found out of compliance on three standards. We have been asked to submit a report by April 1 and we must be in compliance by then. If not, the consequence would likely be to respond to over 70 standards. Failure to document compliance with Core Requirement at the time of the institution’s next review will result in being placed on sanctions. Sanctions is the next step before “warning.”

The first and main standard is Core Requirement, which is student achievement. The main reason we were found out of compliance is because we provided goals for the graduation rate but did not provide goals for any of the other measures. Dr. Bailey said we need to set some goals and explain how we are going to reach them. Examples would be graduation rates, retention rates, employment rates, etc.

The second standard is Student Outcomes: Educational Programs. This is a common one for institutions to be out of compliance. This is the annual assessment report that each unit/program must complete by October 15. We were found out of compliance due to the quality of report. It is unknown which programs did not comply. All reports need to be complete and in good quality. This is new for UHV; there has not been anything to force well written assessment reports and there are no penalties for not doing one. Dr. Glenn stressed how important this is for the university and asked deans and the faculty senate president to communicate this to faculty.

The third standard found out of compliance is federal and state responsibilities that we report on Title IV obligations, such as federal financial aid (Stafford loans and Pell grants). The reason is because there was no audit. It has been six years since our last reaffirmation. Dr. Bailey’s suspicion is we were audited, but we do
not have the audit to provide. She has been in contact with Dr. Cantu, VP for Enrollment Management, trying to find out more information. She said we did provide one audit on student financial aid assistance, but it did not address Title IV financial aid.

Lastly, there was a comment about our QEP Impact Report from the Living and Learning community. Their comment was, “the institution has adequately described the initial goals … discussed the limited changes, discussed the impact and described what the institution has learned.” Dr. Bailey said we described and discussed in the impact report whether the QEP project was a good experience or not. This is something we decide for ourselves. Dr. Glenn commented that he would like to see our next QEP align with the overall goals of our academic strategic plan.

b. Faculty/Staff Evaluations
Dr. Glenn said as the fall enrollment numbers are assessed, we will hopefully be able to implement equity and merit. Merit is tied to evaluations and some are looking at improving our evaluation tool. Supervisors are able to award merit based upon the assessment of their people. The evaluations should be meaningful, real, and consistent within their groups. Dr. Teixeira said Faculty Senate discussed the faculty evaluations and he asked how to make one standard evaluation for all faculty. Dr. Glenn said the faculty evaluations can have the same basic information, but then some areas will be specific for each school. It does not have to necessarily be one standard evaluation, but it needs to be consistent.

c. COVID-19 Update
Dr. Glenn reported only 30 COVID cases since March. He believes it is a testament to student, faculty, and staff cooperation. We are moving in the right direction; numbers are going down. As the task force meets, the discussion to move to phase 4 will be entertained. The only difference from phase 3 will be the percentage of how many can come into the office or classrooms. Dr. Tomek asked about the two or three staff shouldering the burden of the department and how to get others to share that burden. Dr. Glenn said this is a supervisory/management issue; we cannot ‘make’ anyone come in, but it does need to be shared. An office may be closed on days when no one is there, but their hours should be posted on the door.

d. Commencement Plans (to date)
Dr. Glenn reported the commencement plans are being discussed and it is related to COVID. Nancy Gresham and Michael Wilkinson will be joining the Task Force to Reopen UHV meeting tomorrow to talk about the options. In discussion now is two days—one in December and one in January, one day in Katy and one in Victoria and on each day, three ceremonies (one for each school). There will be social distancing, wearing masks, and minimal contact (indoor venue) with the
idea of trying to give the students a commencement experience. They are looking at outside venues but obviously considering the weather. The President is firm on wanting to give the students a face to face experience. The majority want it and if there is a way to do it safely, we plan to try. After discussions, the recommendation will be made to the Executive Committee and a decision will be announced.

e. **Procedure for Academic Appeals (R. Teixeira)**
Dr. Glenn said the academic appeals end up in this group, but he feels Academic Council is not necessarily built to address appeals. He suggested we should convene an academic appeals committee to weigh in on these appeals when they come through. Dr. Bailey recommended gathering up all the academic appeals from the past several years that have reached this level and setting up a process. The committee would need to be reflected in the policies of the handbook and faculty manual. Dr. Teixeira advised having a more faculty heavy committee, made up of deans and chairs, but a student representative and possibly a librarian is also important. Another set of policies exist for appealing/complaints in Student Affairs. Dr. Lambert offered the option of running an appeals committee out of Student Affairs, chaired by one of their judicial officers who are trained for this. He said the chair only votes in a case of a tie and makes sure there is due process. Dr. Lambert shared that he prefers student heavy committees, and throughout his experiences, students are much harder on other students. Dr. Colwell disagreed and feels Student Affairs nor students should be involved at all. Dr. Glenn believes a student on the committee would be able to weigh in on the appeal. Ms. Duke feels strongly that at least a couple of students should be involved and suggested upperclassmen in SGA since they are already student leaders in the community. She agreed with Dr. Lambert’s comment that students are usually harder on other students. Dr. Martinez suggested having a faculty heavy committee since it involves academics and grades, with possibly a couple of students.

f. **Task Force on Diversity and Race Update**
Dr. Glenn reported that a task force has been established and they have been very active. Various working groups are carrying out several issues. More information is on the website. They are working with the City and the mayor’s office to establish a round of discussions on race and diversity in the greater Victoria area.

g. **Curriculum Changes/Academic Catalog/Course Inventory/New Programs (S. Bailey)**
Dr. Bailey reported that she and Angela Bigby have been working hard to carry out last year’s curriculum changes from Faculty Senate and they are having moderate success. Almost all the courses proposed last year are still not officially listed in the curriculum because they need to go to the Coordinating Board. Some
courses may be running and may not be in the curriculum. Requests for catalog changes are being sent to Ms. Bigby, but we are mid-year and students are already using the catalog. Changes must go to the Provosts’ Council and Coordinating Board (and some to SACS). The curriculum development needs to be done in time to put in the catalog. Dr. Glenn said there are regular Provosts’ Council meetings where they can bring things in for approval and then it moves forward to the Coordinating Board and SACS on a routine basis. He stated there will be no programs/curricular changes put forward that do not meet all the approvals beforehand. He asked the deans and Dr. Teixeira to make this clear to the faculty.

III. Unit Updates

**Information Technology** – Mr. Faulk asked for confirmation that Teams should be set up for the spring classes. Dr. Glenn agreed and said we still need to offer Teams as an option. If circumstances are better at that time and more students can come on campus, we can always dial back on Teams.

IV. Announcements

- There will be an early voting site at UHV campus on October 24.

V. Academic Appeal Hearing (at 11:00 a.m.)

As recorded by:
Kendra Matthews